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WRITTEN STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD
FOR THE HEARING ON APRIL 10, 2025
MAINE LEGISLATURE
JOINT COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, UTILITIES, AND TECHNOLOGY

BY REPRESENTATIVES OF NAUTILUS SOLAR ENERGY, LLC
396 SPRINGFIELD AVENUE, 2ND FLOOR
SUMMIT, NEW JERSEY 07901

DATE OF SUBMISSION: Wednesday, April 9, 2025

Chairs Sen. Lawrence and Rep. Sachs, and Members of the Committee

Thank you for the opportunity to share thoughts on today's discussions around community solar and Net Energy Billing, and for the work you're doing to shape Maine's energy future.

My name is Sid Shah, and I'm the Policy Director at Nautilus Solar Energy. We're a long-term owner and operator of community solar projects, with nearly 480 megawatts built across ten states, including 160 megawatts operating in Maine. Our mission is to bring affordable, clean energy to households and small businesses, including right here in Maine, while making thoughtful, lasting investments in the local grid. To date we have invested nearly \$400 million in development, construction and interconnection upgrades in the state of Maine.

We deeply respect the work happening in Maine to support clean energy innovation. That's why I'd like to respectfully raise a concern: **any retroactive changes to compensation terms for existing community solar projects would create significant uncertainty** not only for companies like ours, but for the almost 14,000 Maine residents and businesses that subscribe to our projects, and for the wider business and investment community looking to invest in the state. When the rules change after projects are already built and operational, it raises real questions about the predictability of the policy environment. And for long-term infrastructure investments, predictability is everything.

Community solar brings value far beyond bill savings. Our projects provide lease income to local landowners and fund grid upgrades from modern transformers, voltage regulators, and monitoring equipment that strengthen local reliability, reduce congestion and energy losses, and lay the groundwork for more distributed energy resources like EV chargers and battery storage. Each project employs 20-30 local general contractors to build the system,

further bolstering local jobs. These upgrades benefit everyone connected to those circuits, not just solar subscribers. And importantly, developers pay for these improvements up front, helping move along much-needed modernization of the grid.

That's why we're concerned that a retroactive policy shift would not only risk the viability of individual projects but also send a broader message that Maine may not be a stable or welcoming place for long-term investment. We know that's not the message you intend to send but unfortunately, that's how investors and developers would interpret it. It would likely deter future investment and could also disrupt the benefits already being delivered to thousands of Mainers who rely on these projects for savings and local economic opportunity.

We respectfully ask that any future changes to the program be made on a forward-looking basis, and that Maine continue to uphold the commitments made to projects already in operation. A stable, predictable policy environment is the best way to keep building on the progress you've already made and to attract the kind of partners who will help make your clean energy goals a reality.

Thank you again for your time and thoughtful consideration. I would be happy to answer any questions or provide further information as helpful.

Sincerely,
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