

To: Committee on Energy, Utilities, and Technology  
From: Jackson Chadwick, Maine Youth for Climate Justice  
Date: Thursday, May 15, 2025



RE: Testimony in Support of L.D. 1949: An Act Regarding Energy Fairness

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Senator Lawrence, Representative Sachs, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities, and Technology,

Good morning, my name is Jackson Chadwick, and I am the Advocacy Director for Maine Youth for Climate Justice (MYCJ). MYCJ is a statewide organization of over 500 youth advocating for bold climate policy. We connect youth with the Maine Legislature through educational programming and events, such as the annual Youth Day of Action on April 17th, which welcomed over 150 young people to Augusta.

I'm excited to testify today supporting L.D. 1949: An Act Regarding Energy Fairness. We consider accountability, fairness, and transparency for Maine's electric consumers to be core tenets of this legislation and are proud to support it.

Our organization is particularly excited about this bill because it protects vulnerable populations from having their electric service disconnected. For instance, it prohibits electric utility companies from issuing disconnection notices to Mainers over 65, households with infants under one year old, and individuals with a certified medical condition or disability. Fairness means prioritizing Mainers, not the profits of individual companies.

Additionally, this bill ensures greater accountability for utilities. Specifically, it sets rate limitations to prevent utilities from passing the costs of fines, penalties, or contributions to political candidates onto Maine consumers. Mainers shouldn't bear the burden of expenses utilities can easily manage, especially considering their record \$200 million in profit in 2023.

We also ask for transparency. Part C of L.D. 1949 establishes new requirements for customer hardship reporting, administrative charge limitations, and clarity on public policy charges. We do not have regularly available public data on how many customers are in debt to the utilities, nor how many residents are enrolled in payment plans. Having this information on hand is critical to better understanding the state of customer hardship.

Consumers also need clarification regarding the data on their actual bills. Section C-5 permits utilities to include a list of public policy charges on electric bills with a comprehensive description. This list may include, but is not limited to, energy efficiency programs, low-income assistance programs, and renewable energy programs. We have a right to know what we're paying for.

Climate justice *is* energy justice. It means holding our utilities to higher standards of fairness and transparency while establishing directives that protect some of our most vulnerable communities. In a challenging world, we should prioritize what is just and fair.

We sincerely hope you will vote to pass this bold, bipartisan, and practical legislation.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Jackson Chadwick". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

Jackson Chadwick  
Advocacy Director  
Maine Youth for Climate Justice