

Rozanna Patane  
York  
LD 1967

I am testifying today in support of LD 1967 "Resolve, to Establish the Maine Home Energy Navigator and Coaching Pilot Program." This bill can build on the efforts of several Maine communities that have already demonstrated that energy coach programs are a key component of decarbonizing Maine's homes.

It's a complex process, electrifying and insulating a home, and most homeowners don't know where to start. That's what coaches do, walk people through the process from start to finish, whether the homeowner just wants to install a heat pump or do a major energy retrofit. We help them clarify their goals, get answers to their questions, refer them to professional installers, explain the changing structure of financial incentives, and keep the process moving.

As a member of York Ready for Climate Action, I developed our energy coach program in 2022, adapting the Heatsmart Alliance heat pump model in Massachusetts. A Maine Community Resilience Partnership grant in 2023 helped launch the program and today our 9 volunteer coaches have helped York homeowners transform their homes with nearly 150 installations, including energy audits, insulation, heat pumps, solar, window inserts, and other electrification projects.

As other Maine communities have contacted us, I've helped them establish their own energy coach programs and I've worked with a small group of individuals across the state to develop a statewide model and budget – members of A Climate To Thrive, passivhausMaine, College of the Atlantic, York Ready for Climate Action, Resilience Works, Southern Maine Planning and Development Commission, and others have collaborated on the vision for a statewide energy coach model.

I agree with Michael Stoddard that such a program would be an important component of the State's heat pump accelerator program and more generally, of its efforts to implement the State's climate action plan, Maine Won't Wait.

I trust that the Energy Utilities and Technology Committee will issue a strong recommendation to the legislature to pass LD 1967.

Thank you for the chance to testify in support of LD1967.

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