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WRITTEN STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD
FOR THE HEARING ON OCTOBER 30, 2025
MAINE LEGISLATURE
JOINT COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, UTILITIES, AND TECHNOLOGY

BY REPRESENTATIVES OF NAUTILUS SOLAR ENERGY, LLC
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DATE OF SUBMISSION: Wednesday, October 29, 2025

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on this legislation and for the Committee's continued work to make Maine's clean energy programs more accessible, transparent, and consumer friendly.

My name is Sid Shah, and I am the Policy Director at Nautilus Solar Energy. We are a long-term owner and operator of community solar projects, with nearly 160 megawatts operating in Maine today and close to 14,000 Maine households and small businesses subscribed. To date, we have invested nearly four hundred million dollars in development, construction, and local grid upgrades across the state. Our work in Maine continues to be guided by the principle that clean energy should be affordable, reliable, and easy to participate in.

LD 1966 represents a practical and important improvement by establishing consolidated billing through net crediting. Under the current dual billing structure, customers receive one bill from the utility and another from the project sponsor. These bills rarely align in timing or presentation, and customers are often left to reconcile how their credits and savings are being applied. Even when customers are receiving the savings they expect, the lack of clarity and the need to manage two separate payments create real confusion and can lead to customer frustration or attrition.

Net crediting resolves this challenge by consolidating the experience into a single utility bill where savings are displayed directly and applied automatically. The customer does not need to manage an additional monthly payment, and the benefit of participating in community solar becomes easier to see and understand. This is particularly important for low and moderate income households, where the additional administrative step of juggling two bills can be a barrier to both participation and long-term retention. When the experience is simple, clear, and familiar, more customers can enroll and stay enrolled.

We also want to highlight that consolidated billing will help streamline handling of customer billing and incentive administration for project owners. In light of the recent revisions to the Net Energy Billing program under LD 1777, providing clarity and stability in billing and payment structures is essential for continued investment. By reducing administrative friction and uncertainty, net crediting supports program durability and lowers operational risk. This benefits customers, project owners, and the long-term success of community solar in Maine.

We have seen this approach deliver strong results in other states. In New York, where net crediting is already in place, customer turnover is significantly lower than in dual billing markets like Maine. When the process is straightforward and transparent, customers remain engaged and the savings continue to flow to households and small businesses.

For these reasons, we strongly urge the Committee to advance net crediting reform. Consolidated billing improves the customer experience, expands access to savings, supports program stability, and reinforces Maine's commitment to delivering equitable and affordable clean energy opportunities.

Thank you for your consideration. I would be pleased to provide any additional information that may be helpful.

Sincerely,
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