

Tom Mikulka
Third Act Maine
LD 1730

Testimony submitted to The Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology

Dear Chairpersons Senator Mark Lawrence and Representative Melanie Sachs and esteemed members of The Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology. I am writing in support of LD 1730, An Act Regarding the Beneficial Electrification Policy of the State.

As we are all painfully aware, electricity rates in Maine are among the highest in the nation with prices forecast to continue to rise. The average Maine household pays \$120/month to power their home. The passage of LD 1730 will allow for moderate income home owners and renters to reduce their monthly bill by about \$43 by purchasing up to 1200 Watts of solar capacity at a present cost of \$3000.

This advance in solar technology, known as plug-in solar, allows renters and homeowners to place their panels in a sunny location such as a patio or balcony and plug into a household outdoor outlet. These systems were introduced in Germany 10 years ago and have gained in popularity. A recent survey found that 25 % of German households plan to install a plug-in solar system.

The state of Utah leads the way in the USA. Utah recently passed legislation to allow up to 1200 Watts of plug-in solar energy on a home. It passed with strong bipartisan support.

Market analysis predicts that if just 5 states in the USA pass similar legislation the price will drop from \$3000 to around \$600 in a few years. New York, Vermont, New Hampshire and Pennsylvania have drafted plug-in solar legislation. More are expected to follow. This will only have a positive impact on the lives of your constituents. There is no downside to this. It should appeal to Republicans and Democrats alike. It gives people the ability to take control of an important part of their lives, powering their home. . I urge you to vote in favor of LD 1730.

Tom Mikulka, Ph.D.