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LD 1730

This testimony is in support of LD 1730.

As a 76 yr old Mainer on a fixed income, I am unable to afford to purchase a whole house solar array today. However, I could budget to pay for a low cost plug in solar device. I know first hand how accessible and effective solar energy is to produce electricity at the residential level in Maine.

Maine as you know has the same solar gain in a year as more southern states such as Kentucky & Tennessee. Back in the 1970's, for 15 years, I successfully lived off grid meeting my electrical needs in rural Maine with 4 solar panels, a battery bank and a backup propane generator. The solar technology at that time was rudimentary and more expensive compared to today.

Solar and wind are both the fastest growing electric energy sources in this country and countries around the world. This is due to lower cost, infinite accessibility, efficiency and ability to ramp up quickly in comparison to any fuels that burn. In addition, battery technology, efficiency & storage capabilities has advanced significantly. This includes forthcoming batteries that will run on sodium and won't require lithium.

I recently read in Bill McKibbens latest book, Here Comes the Sun, that in 2024, 1.4 million German apartment owners began hanging plug in solar devices from their balconies. By the end of the year, many of these individuals were producing 1/3 of their household electrical demands with these devices. Citizens, in Spain, Italy, Poland & Belgium also are now successfully using these same devices with legislative rulemaking support from their governments.

All types of solar systems and devices are necessary for our ever increasing electrical needs both commercial and residential, to help keep electricity expenses more affordable for Mainers over the long term and to save our planet from burning up.

Please vote yes for LD1730 so that Mainers of all income levels can contribute to saving our planet in an affordable way.