

Testimony in support of LD 1730: An Act to Make Small, Portable, Plug-in Solar Generation Devices Accessible for All Maine Residents to Address the Energy Affordability Crisis

LD 1730: Solar for all!!! What's not to love about plug-in solar?? There are many benefits that can be highlighted. Here are just a few.

In important and consequential ways, plug-in solar addresses the issue of accessibility. For many Mainers, expensive roof-top photovoltaic arrays are out of reach, particularly for renters, folks with low incomes, seniors on fixed incomes, and homeowners whose roofs are not appropriate for whatever reason. Plug-in solar offers a simple and practical alternative.

Plug-in solar also addresses the issue of affordability. We are all aware of the significant increases in the cost of electricity. As these costs continue to rise (and we all know that they will), Mainers need relief. Short of changing the playing field for our electric utilities and forcing them to be responsive to Mainers instead of their shareholders, plug-in solar can provide some meaningful relief.

Plug-in solar supports the important energy-transition goals of Maine's Climate Action Plan. Maine will continue to move toward renewable energy sources. Maine can do its part to adopt clean energy and make it as widely available as possible, and plug-in solar offers us an opportunity to assist with this transition.

Plug-in solar offers the state a budget-neutral opportunity to achieve these stated goals. Finding solutions that help to meet the state's clean energy needs without incurring a fiscal impact is a no-brainer opportunity that Mainers should seize, particularly given the otherwise high costs of making our infrastructure more resilient.

Speaking of resilience, plug-in solar can provide a practical work-around for maintaining a power source during grid outages, notably a work-around that is not fossil-fuel based. Given the proliferation of propane and gasoline-powered generators across the state, we should be giving serious consideration to clean alternatives such as this and facilitating their deployment.

As we've seen with CMP's disastrous attempt at a multi-year rate hike, global corporate greed will continue to put the squeeze on Mainers' pocketbooks and their ability to find relief. Passing this bill would be a modest step for individual Maine households, and one significant step for democratizing (clean) energy in our state.

Please support the passage of LD 1730. Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,
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