

Meret Bainbridge, Saco, Maine

Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology

Written 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

Senator Lawrence, Representative Sachs and valued Members of the Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology

I strongly advocate for passage of LD 1730.

These smaller, portable solar plug-in devices have been used in my home country of Germany and other European countries for years and have truly revolutionized access to solar energy for renters and lower income households who either don't have access to or cannot afford a rooftop solar array. I read that Utah was the first US state to allow them, leading the way – and I was hoping Maine would be next in approving these devices.

Like many Mainers, I live in an older home with high heating bills. I installed two sets of heat pumps in my home to reduce my fossil fuel use – but I have not found any financial savings. The reduced cost in propane is offset in higher cost of electricity – that seem to get higher and higher each year. I had looked into getting a solar array – back when there were federal subsidies available - but was told this would not be efficient on my roof because of heavy tree shading. But I do have sunny outside walls and am eager to explore the solar plug-in options for energy savings.

In addition, plug-in solar combined with small batteries can provide resilience during power outages, ease the burden on the energy grid, and serve as an affordable tool in our transition to a carbon neutral future. I think they are a “no brainer”.

Please vote ought to pass on LD 1730.

Make Maine the next state to lead the way in expanding access to affordable solar power.