

Jacob Roche
Berwick
LD 2037

Dear Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera, and distinguished members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee,

My name is Jacob Roche, and I live in Berwick, Maine. I am the Northeast Campaign Manager for the Climate and Energy Program with the Union of Concerned Scientists. The Union of Concerned Scientists puts rigorous, independent science into action, developing solutions and advocating for a healthy, safe, and just future. UCS is the nation's leading science-based non-profit organization with more than a half a million supporters, including more than 2,500 in Maine. I am providing testimony in support of LD 2037, Invest in Energy Efficiency for Maine.

Since 2009, the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) has been a resounding success. RGGI has boosted clean energy investments across the region and generated \$5.7 billion in net economic benefits – all while creating tens of thousands of jobs. Through RGGI, polluting power plants pay for every ton of carbon pollution they create. That money is invested back into Maine and its partner states while providing an ongoing incentive for power plants to reduce their emissions. Between 2008-2020, RGGI contributed to a 46% reduction in carbon emissions from power plants in participating states.

Dollars generated from RGGI are important to Maine families and businesses. Funding in Maine goes to Efficiency Maine Trust to support proven energy efficiency and beneficial electrification technologies that save money for Maine households and businesses. Since its inception, Maine has received a total of more than \$246 million in funding as an RGGI participant.

Mainers are struggling with rising energy costs. A significant portion of RGGI funding in Maine goes to working families through initiatives like Efficiency Maine's heat pump and weatherization programs. Over \$12 million went into projects that reduce carbon emissions, save energy, and directly benefit low-income households in our state.

Part of the success of RGGI has come from the regular tightening of the amount of carbon allowances available to power plants to reflect both the importance of reducing power sector pollution and the ability to do that because of energy efficiency progress, clean energy advancements, and the powerful success of investment of RGGI funding in programs like Efficiency Maine.

LD 2037 is necessary to incorporate the latest updates to the carbon allowance budgets agreed on last year among Maine and the other RGGI states. Because Maine is part of a regional electrical grid, carbon allowance costs paid by power plants in the region are reflected in the wholesale electricity costs paid by ratepayers in Maine, as in the other states. Passing LD 2037 will allow Maine to receive its portion of the revenues that come from the sale of carbon allowances. Failing to pass this bill—and thereby ceasing to be part of RGGI—would do nothing to lower electricity bills, and would cut Maine out of tens of millions of dollars of funding per year for investing in programs that do lower electricity bills.

The Union of Concerned Scientists is asking this committee to stand up for the people of Maine, address electricity affordability, and pass this beneficial bill. I urge you to vote Ought to Pass on LD 2037. Thank you for your time and consideration.

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