

# Maine Climate Action **NOW!**

To: Maine Legislature Committee on Energy, Utilities, and Technology

From: Ezra Sassaman, Advocacy Coordinator, Maine Climate Action Now

Date: January 22, 2026

Re: LD 2038, An Act to Require Maine Transmission and Distribution Utility Participation in a Regional Transmission Organization

Senator Lawrence, Representative Sachs, and members of the Committee on Energy, Utilities, and Technology, my name is Ezra Sassaman. I live in Bar Harbor and represent Maine Climate Action Now (MCAN), a coalition of eighteen nonprofit organizations united by a shared desire for transformative action in response to the climate crisis.

At a time when Mainers are suffering under increasing electricity prices, any efforts to decrease utility profits and lower rates are welcome. As it stands, lower income families in the state spend as much as 8% on electricity costs alone – twice the level recommended by consumer experts. Around 100,000 Maine families struggle with high energy costs.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, utility executive compensation is higher than ever, with investor-owned utility CEOs raking in tens of millions of dollars in a single year.<sup>2</sup>

Reducing investor owned utilities' guaranteed rate of return through their membership in a regional transmission organization does many things that are beneficial to ratepayers and the climate, including:

- Lowering electrification costs, protecting low-income customers
- Discouraging unneeded grid expansion, encouraging better load management
- Aligning utility incentives with climate goals

Lowering the guaranteed return on investment for investor-owned utilities is crucial if we want to make progress towards Maine's climate action plan. Affordable electricity opens the doors to replacing fossil fuels with efficient, renewable electric technologies across transportation, buildings, and power generation – exactly the change we need for a healthy and sustainable future in our state.

For the above-stated reasons, we urge you to vote "ought-to-pass" on LD 2038. Thank you for your time.

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<sup>1</sup> Maine Office of the Public Advocate. "[Citizen Advisory Council Sends Recommendations to Legislature to Lessen the Burden on Low-Income Electricity Ratepayers](#)". Annual Report. December 2, 2024. Accessed January 21, 2026.

<sup>2</sup> Itai Vardi and Matt Kasper. "[As Customers Struggled, Utility CEOs' Pay Spiked Last Year](#)". *Energy and Policy Institute*. July 18, 2024. Accessed January 21, 2026.