

Rozanna Patane  
York Harbor  
LD 2220

I'm submitting this testimony for myself but also on behalf of the Maine Energy Coach Network – convening organizations have added their signatures to this letter.

First, thank you to the Committee for moving forward with establishing a Coaching Resource Hub. It will be an important tool particularly for new coaching start-ups in the state, but also for established programs as we grow and learn how to tackle new challenges. It's good that there is a \$100,000 funding note attached to the draft bill; it will take someone's dedicated time to do a good job reaching out to all of us who have been developing the resources that the Hub can store and make available to activists throughout the state.

The language of the bill that I heard at the Committee hearing on February 12 called for the Resource Hub to be housed in the DOER. That may be fine, but I see two risks with that approach:

1. The existence of the Resource Hub may be uncertain if a new state administration is less friendly than the current one to climate initiatives and chooses to de-fund the initiative.
2. It may unnecessarily duplicate — or contradict — the work that is already being done by the Maine Energy Coach Network (MECN), a collaboration of coaching programs that has been facilitated by A Climate To Thrive under Johannah Blackman's leadership. Considerable on-the-ground experience has gone into this process to date, and a full-bodied process of soliciting templates, notes and structural tools from people in and out of the state to create a reference body already. MECN members have put a lot of informed thought into WHAT should be in the resource hub and HOW it should be organized for accessibility and updates, based on on-the-ground experience both developing and running programs in communities with limited resources. Having different "hubs" in two locations would confuse rather than facilitate the process of encouraging coaching programs. Additionally, the development of a resource hub is an ongoing process, so maintenance and updates by DOER may also be cumbersome and unnecessary duplicative. Or is my understanding incorrect, and will the DOER effort simply list links to other sources of information and tools? In that case, its utility may be limited if it forces users to hunt down a long list of other sources.

I'd like to offer an alternative: Use the \$100,000 to fund the efforts of a community-based organization such as ACTT to establish and maintain a user-designed-and-managed Resource Hub. ACTT, in fact, is an organization with the experience and expertise to perform that function.

Finally, may I say that, as much as I appreciate this bill, I am disappointed that the Committee did not support a more robust program of facilitating a statewide network of coaching programs. Of the three alternatives presented by Dan Burgess, Molly Siegel and Sy Coffey, the Resource Hub was the one with the smallest financial commitment, and it very nearly didn't pass — it took Sophie Warren ("small but mighty Scarborough!") to speak up by zoom and add her vote to put it over the line.

I profoundly hope that this is just the first step and that the Committee and the Legislature will demonstrate a much more serious commitment in the next session. If the state is to meet its climate plan targets, we need to build a robust network of coaching programs to dramatically increase home retrofits, particularly with our low- and moderate-income residents and our renters. We can do it, but it will take true commitment from our political leaders.

Rozanna Patane, on behalf of the Maine Energy Coach Network (MECN)  
York Ready for Climate Action