



Kathleen Newman, Director of Government Affairs and Community Relations

LD 1232 An Act to Increase Adoption of Solar Power in Maine

April 4, 2023

Testifying: In Opposition

Senator Lawrence, Representative Zeigler, Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology (“EUT”), my name is Kathleen Newman, presenting testimony in opposition to LD 1232 An Act to Increase Adoption of Solar Power in Maine.

This bill requires new buildings of at least 25,000 square feet to reserve 40% of applicable roof space for future installation of a solar energy system and requires the Public Utilities Commission to amend its interconnection rules to allow small electric power generators of up to a 100-kilowatt power rating to interconnect to a transmission and distribution utility under the commission's current level 1 screening criteria and process.

Our testimony in opposition to this bill is specific to Section 2 which we believe could lead to increased costs for our customers.

Level 1 applications are smaller in size (25kW) and able to be screened by non-engineer utility analysts. The \$100 application fee, in most cases, sufficiently covers the our cost for that review. An engineer level of expertise is required to review larger application sizes presently captured under the Level 2 category. The \$100 Level 1 application fee will not adequately cover costs for this engineer level review, resulting in more costs shifted to other customers. CMP does not believe that current Level 2 application fees are cost prohibitive to these larger projects.

Alternatively, if the impetus for this bill is to avoid the Level 2 project screening process that is needed to identify potential technical problems that could arise from interconnection, we would have serious concerns about such a recommendation. We are responsible for the safety and reliability of all interconnections to the grid, for our customers and employees alike. This proposal would erode our ability to ensure safe and reliable service and we urge the committee to amend the bill to remove Section 2 or vote Ought Not to Pass.

Thank you for your consideration.