

Testimony of Anthony W. Buxton, General Counsel, Industrial Energy Consumer Group
in Opposition to
LD 327, An Act to Provide Maine Ratepayers with Equitable Access to Interconnection of
Distributed Energy Resources
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology
May 10, 2023

Senator Lawrence, Representative Ziegler and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology:

IECG respectfully offers testimony in opposition to LD 327, An Act to Provide Maine Ratepayers with Equitable Access to Interconnection of Distributed Energy Resources.

The Legislation is well intended. However, the Bill proposes a dramatic change in Maine utility regulation that requires careful thought. Here are just a few of the issues:

- The Bill would be most important to the projects which voluntarily have chosen the most difficult and expensive projects or locations to interconnect with the grid. There are approximately 400 Mw of NEB projects tied up in cluster studies to which this legislation would be most attractive. These projects would suffer no penalty for their decisions to locate in a difficult place.
- The Bill proposes to give subsidies in unlimited amounts to the interconnection of one specific technology – solar – with no standards or principles. This could, and likely would, add millions to ratepayer costs.
- The Bill potentially would subsidize interconnection costs, including legal fees, of NEB projects, which already are charging ratepayers four to five times the cost of competitively procured solar, now more than 20 cents/ kWh. These are the last energy projects on earth needing another subsidy.

- The funding of the ombudsman is highly inappropriate. This would allow the solar industry to fund the ombudsman. This is surely unintended. Private sector funding should not be allowed.

We would be pleased to answer any questions.