



Maine Forest Products Council

The voice of Maine's forest economy

Testimony in Opposition to LD 2099

"An Act to Make Changes to Certain Laws Governing Renewable Energy Projects"

January 23, 2024

Krysta West, Deputy Director

Senator Lawrence, Representative Zeigler and members of the Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology, my name is Krysta West, and I am here today to present testimony on behalf of the Maine forest Products Council in opposition to LD 2099, "An Act to Make Changes to Certain Laws Governing Renewable Energy Projects."

Last June, this Committee amended LD 1986, "An Act Relating to Net Energy Billing and Distributed Solar and Energy Storage Systems" to specify that, regarding the newly established Distributed Solar and Energy Storage Program, "ratepayer funds may not be used to implement the program or provide funding under the program to distributed solar facilities or energy storage systems."

Now here we are, less than a year later and before the program is even developed, considering LD 2099, a bill to modify the program to allow for the use of ratepayer funds. This arrangement is not what was agreed upon last year, so the Council is opposed to modifying the program at this time.

As enacted, the Distributed Solar and Energy Storage Program's goal is to leverage federal funds to "foster the continued growth of cost-effective distributed solar facilities and energy storage systems in the State." The Council agrees with the EUT Committee amendment from last year that this should be the revenue source for this program. The amendment struck an important balance between ratepayer interests and renewable energy investments.

Ratepayers in Maine are already under tremendous pressure with energy and T&D costs that are not competitive. As an industry, energy costs are of great concern, both for existing facilities and for companies looking to potentially locate in Maine.

For these reasons, we urge you to vote **'Ought not to pass'** on LD 2099. Thank you for your consideration.

Companies represented on the MFPC Board

A & A Brochu Logging
American Forest Mgmt.
Baskahegan Co.
BBC Land, LLC
Columbia Forest Prod.
Cross Insurance
Family Forestry
Farm Credit East
Fontaine Inc.
H.C. Haynes
Huber Resources
INRS
J.D. Irving
Katahdin Forest Mgmt.
Key Bank
Kennebec Lumber
LandVest Inc.
Louisiana Pacific
Maibec Logging
ND Paper
Nicols Brothers
Pingree Associates
Prentiss & Carlisle
ReEnergy
Richard Wing & Son
Robbins Lumber
Sappi North America
Southern Maine Forestry
Stead Timberlands
St. Croix Tissue
St. Croix Chipping
TD Bank
Timber Resource Group
Timberstate G.
Wadsworth Woodlands
Wagner Forest Mgt.
Weyerhaeuser
Woodland Pulp