



MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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February 24, 2025 - Testimony in support of LD 495:

An Act to Require Rules Designed to Reduce Climate Change to Include Estimates of the Reduction in Adverse Climate Effects and of the Cost to Consumers

Good Morning Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera, and members of Joint Standing Committee on the Environment and Natural Resources. I am House Republican Leader Rep. Billy Bob Faulkingham and I am here to present my bill, LD 495, ***An Act to Require Rules Designed to Reduce Climate Change to Include Estimates of the Reduction in Adverse Climate Effects and of the Cost to Consumers.***

This bill is a crucial step in ensuring that climate policies adopted by the state of Maine are not only effective in reducing greenhouse gas emissions but also transparent and equitable for the consumers who will bear the financial burden of these policies. By requiring the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to issue estimates of both the climate benefits and the costs to consumers, LD 495 strikes a necessary balance between environmental responsibility and economic fairness.

LD 495 ensures that our climate policies are informed by comprehensive analyses that align with both scientific research and economic realities. It is essential that we fully understand the economic impacts these climate policies will have on Maine's households and businesses. As the cost of living continues to rise, providing consumers with clear and accurate information is more important than ever. This bill directs the DEP to evaluate not only the benefits in terms of emissions reductions and climate impacts but also the effects of these rules on the cost of everyday goods and services, such as gasoline, electricity, and heating oil. This level of transparency guarantees that the public is not left in the dark about the financial costs they will shoulder as a result of emission reduction policies.

Maine families and businesses are already struggling with high energy costs, particularly in rural and coastal areas, where fuel oil and propane are the primary sources of heating. The winter months are especially tough for those on fixed incomes, and any increase in the price of heating fuel or electricity can be devastating. For many, these price hikes are not just an inconvenience, but a matter of economic survival. By requiring cost estimates, LD 495 ensures that we have a clear understanding of the financial impacts of climate policies and allows us to take proactive steps to mitigate any unintended consequences, especially for our most vulnerable residents.


Moreover, this bill promotes careful consideration of policies that reduce emissions without disproportionately harming low-income residents or small businesses. By incorporating cost estimates into the rule-making process, we ensure that any measures adopted will be fair, balanced, and mindful of Maine's unique economic landscape.

LD 495 is a vital piece of legislation that champions transparency, fairness, and accountability in the development of climate policies. By requiring the Department of Environmental Protection to issue estimates of both the climate benefits and consumer costs of emission reduction measures, we are taking a responsible approach to tackling climate change—one that is effective, equitable, and mindful of Maine's residents and businesses.

I urge the Committee to support this important legislation and help us create a future where both our climate and our communities can thrive.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Billy Bob Faulkingham".

Rep. Billy Bob Faulkingham
House Republican Leader