

SUPPORT

LD 32 An Act to Repeal the Laws Regarding Net Energy Billing
LD 257 An Act to Eliminate the Practice of Net Energy Billing

February 27, 2025

Esteemed Members of the Energy, Utilities, and Technology
Committee:

My name is Heather Sirocki. Formerly of Scarborough, I now live in Windham, but I grew up in West Newfield, located in rural Maine. It was and is a poor community.

In the 1970's, some of my classmates were known as "cellar hole people" because their families could only afford to build their foundations, which they capped off with a flat roof until enough money was saved to build the house.

Sometimes I envied them; I lived two miles down a dirt road with no running water or electricity. Yes, they had electric bills, but what a luxury to turn on lights at the flip of a switch and not have to fill kerosene lamps every day.

Maine has the oldest housing stock in the country. Some of Maine's poorest people still live in their cellars with flat roofs, some live in very old and unstable housing that is unable to support the heavy weight of solar panels, and others live in what we once called trailers. These people are poor. These people will never have solar panels.

Ten days ago we had a snow storm. My next door neighbors have expensive solar panels on their lovely new home. Six sunny, but cold days later, as I sat drafting this testimony, their subsidized solar panels were still 100% covered in snow.

Why am I here to today to support the repeal of the statute that established Net Energy Billing (NEB)? Two words. The cost.

It is not fair or equitable to shift this heavy burden from the rich to the poor. The poor in this state are suffering enough.

There is another important reason I stand in support of repealing Net Energy Billing as a source of revenue. As a former state representative myself, I know you all raised your hands and took a serious oath to uphold the Maine Constitution.

As you know, Article 4, Part Third, Section 9 of our Maine Constitution clearly states, "*all bills for raising a revenue shall originate in the House of Representatives.*" **Not the Senate.**

But in 2019, Senator Dana Dow sponsored LD 1711,

"An Act To Promote Solar Energy Projects and Distributed Generation Resources in Maine"

which established Net Energy Billing, but it clearly did NOT originate in the House. Senator Dow's bill has not only been a heavy burden on the poor, it has also been UNconstitutional from day one.

There have been other attempts to repeal this law, but they failed.

Today, I urge you to eliminate Net Energy Billing (NEB) by supporting LD 32 and LD 257.

Heather Sirocki, Windham, Maine