



Joseph E. Martin
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THE MAINE SENATE
132nd Legislature

3 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology
LD 515, An Act to Reverse Recent Changes Made to the Law Governing Net
Energy Billing and Distributed Generation
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Good morning, Senator Lawrence, Representative Sachs, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology. I am Joe Martin and I proudly represent the citizens of Senate District 19, which includes much of Northern Oxford County and communities in Franklin County. I am here to testify in support of LD 515, "An Act to Reverse Recent Changes Made to the Law Governing Net Energy Billing and Distributed Generation."

As I campaigned across my district last year, one of the biggest issues brought up by constituents was the increasingly high cost of electricity. Many of my constituents live on fixed incomes and struggle to make ends meet. Any additional expense can make a huge difference in their monthly budgets.

These constituents cannot afford to install solar panels on their homes so they will not see the financial benefits from the net energy billing policy. Instead, they are paying to subsidize people with higher incomes who can already afford to install solar panels. Sadly, many of those benefitting from the current policy are out-of-state or foreign venture capital firms. Mainers are paying to bankroll them.

The added expense on individual ratepayers is nothing compared to what some companies are paying. Businesses in my district, and across the state, have had to shut their doors after their electricity costs have increased by tens of thousands of dollars.

When the legislature enacted the net energy billing policy in 2019, I think few people understood just how generous the subsidies were and how much of a burden this would put on Maine ratepayers. But now that we can see the pain and hardship this is causing so many Mainers, it is time to repeal.

This is unsustainable. We must act to make electricity more affordable. Thank you for your consideration of LD 515. I urge you to vote "ought to pass."