



Stacy Brenner
Senator, District 30

THE MAINE SENATE
132nd Legislature

3 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

Testimony of Senator Stacy Brenner in Support of LD 819, "An Act Concerning the Status of Battery Storage Systems with Regard to the Business Equipment Tax Exemption"
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Taxation
March 12, 2025

Senator Grohoski, Representative Cloutier, and esteemed members of the Joint Standing Committee on Taxation, my name is Stacy Brenner. I represent Senate District 30, which includes all of Gorham and most of Scarborough. I appreciate the opportunity to provide cosponsor testimony on LD 819, "*An Act Concerning the Status of Battery Storage Systems with Regard to the Business Equipment Tax Exemption*".

Energy storage is a critical component of Maine's transition to a more resilient and sustainable energy future. Battery storage facilities help stabilize the grid, integrate renewable energy sources, and improve energy reliability. As Maine continues to invest in clean energy, we must ensure that our policies provide clarity and fairness in how these facilities are classified and taxed.

In my district, the Cross Town Energy Storage project is under development in Gorham. Under current law, there is uncertainty regarding whether battery storage facilities qualify for the Business Equipment Tax Exemption (BETE) program, which exempts certain business equipment from property taxes while reimbursing municipalities at only 50% of the lost revenue. This lack of clarity has already resulted in inconsistent interpretations of the law.

This bill seeks to clarify the definition of "certain energy facilities" under 36 M.R.S.A. § 691 (2)(A), (2) to explicitly exclude battery storage systems with a total capacity of two megawatts or more from BETE. This clarification is essential to ensuring that tax incentives for energy infrastructure do not come at the expense of local property taxpayers.

The tax base in Gorham consists largely of local residents. If this facility were granted the BETE exemption, the remaining taxpayers in Gorham would have to make up the difference in lost property tax revenue. This issue extends beyond my district—rural towns across Maine will face similar financial challenges as battery storage projects become more common. Balancing the support of economic development with the burden of exempting business from property tax liabilities in a municipality is a balancing act that requires state and local conversations to be robust and thorough. We need to be able to parse out how to incentivize commercial and industrial business without creating an undue burden on individual families.

This bill is not about discouraging battery storage investment in Maine. It is about ensuring that the costs of economic development are not unfairly shifted onto local taxpayers. By amending



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the statute, we provide much-needed clarity, helping municipalities and energy developers make informed decisions about their financial future.

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