

Chair Lawrence, Chair Sachs and Esteemed Members of the EUT Committee

I stand in opposition of LD 946, Resolve to Increase Access to Energy Efficiency Programs by Low-income and Moderate-income Residents.

There are times when I believe our Maine government is certain that electric customer payments accumulate in a bottomless well to fund a multitude of programs, such as Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), Renewable Energy Credits, Net Energy Billing, Long Term Renewable Contracts, Efficiency Maine and Low Income Assistance Programs, and these programs will eventually eliminate fossil fuels, which as a consequence will raise electric costs all the way to elimination and beyond.

Alas, sometimes, I even believe all these programs are designed to increase rates regularly, ad infinitum.

LD 946, although it does not acknowledge the Low-Income Assistance Program, could provide participants an opportunity to purchase a BEV or PHEV.

The Low-Income Assistance Program mandates the Department of Human and Health Services (DHHS) provide notification of eligibility for potential LIAP participation. Eligibility requirements include electric customers with incomes 150% below the federal poverty level.

LD 946 would have Efficiency Maine Trust expand the allocation of ratepayer money to low-income Maine folks to purchase a Battery Electric Vehicle (BEV) or a Plug-In Hybrid Electric Vehicle (PHEV).

I would, humbly, propose that this program will cause additional demand on New England electricity generation, which, in turn, will cause supply rates to increase.

As supply rates increase, low-income customers will be further pinched. Low-income people with a BEV or PHEV and charging at home will additionally increase their monthly electricity use. Will there be a need for a revolving door to increase assistance for their higher electric bills?

Are ratepayers subsidizing their own recurring rate increases by providing the money for a BEV or PHEV while also providing money to keep low-income electric customers from utility disconnections?

The other question is how can low-income electric customers afford a BEV or PHEV purchase.

Thank You Clayton McKay Dixfield