



Russell Black
Senator, District 5

THE MAINE SENATE
132nd Legislature

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**LD 1207, "An Act to Require the Department of Environmental Protection to Monitor Air and Water Temperatures Around Commercial Solar Energy Developments"
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
March 31, 2025**

Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources:

My name is Russ Black and I represent Senate District 5. I am here today to present LD 1207, An Act to Require the Department of Environmental Protection to Monitor Air and Water Temperatures Around Commercial Solar Energy Developments."

I was happy to submit this important legislation on behalf of the Sportsman's Alliance of Maine (SAM). As Maine invests more in renewable energy, it's important we make sure these projects are done in an environmentally responsible way. This bill sets up a program to monitor air and water temperatures around solar energy developments, helping us understand the impact these projects may have on the environment that surrounds these solar fields.

The bill asks the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), working with the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, to create a monitoring program. It will focus on solar developments that are 3 acres or larger and use ground-mounted panels. Monitoring air and water temperatures is important because even small temperature changes can affect water quality, aquatic life, and local habitats.

The bill also gives DEP the authority to access these solar sites and collect the necessary data. It requires DEP to share the findings with the solar operators, other state agencies, and the public. Clear rules will be set up for how the program works, ensuring it's effective and transparent.

This bill is a step forward in balancing Maine's clean energy goals with protecting our natural resources. As we grow our solar energy usage, we need to make sure it's not negatively impacting Maine's ecosystems. This bill will help us stay on top of any potential issues before they become problems.

I urge you to support this bill, and I look forward to working together to ensure Maine pursues responsible, sustainable energy development. Thank you.