



1 May 2025

Public Testimony on LD 1777 and Small General Service Thresholds

Senator Lawrence, Representative Sachs, and distinguished members of the Committee,

My name is Tyler Eads, and I'm here on behalf of SolarLogix to express concern with LD 1777 and to urge action on another critical issue: modernizing the kilowatt threshold for Small General Service customers.

First, on LD 1777: While we appreciate the bipartisan effort from Representatives Warren and Foster, this bill misses the mark. It gives the PUC unchecked authority to change Tariff Program compensation rates at any time, without clear guidelines or timing. Creating deep uncertainty for Maine schools, towns, and small businesses, many of whom have already made significant investments in Maine renewable projects with the expectation of stable rates and good faith program stewardship.

The vague mandate for a "just and reasonable" rate offers no clarity on how the PUC would make that determination. The lack of direction here could grind the program to a halt, and that hurts the very communities the program was intended to support.

Regardless of what direction you take this session, I urge you to explore a solution that would allow small businesses across Maine to install rooftop solar and be meaningfully included in our state's clean energy programs. Right now, many of these businesses, such as local car dealerships, restaurants, municipalities, and even family farms, are unable to participate in the NEB kWh program simply because of their rate class. They're billed based on demand rather than kilowatt-hours, which puts them under the Tariff rate program by default, even when installing rooftop solar directly on their own buildings. That's not a choice they're making, it's a function of outdated policy. If we want rooftop solar adoption to grow in a way that supports small businesses and aligns with our state's climate goals, we need to fix this. One practical step this Committee can take is to raise the kilowatt threshold for Small General Service customers. Doing so would give these businesses a pathway into the NEB kWh program, simplifying interconnection and administrative burdens while helping maximize the benefits of solar investment for all ratepayers, through load reduction, and creating in-state jobs in the process.



Current limits of 20–25 kW are outdated. Maine businesses often cross that line simply by operating normally and are pushed prematurely into Medium General Service rates with higher costs and complex charges, for example the Maine Blue Berry growers that we have heard from before on this topic. Other New England states use thresholds of 30 to 60 kW or more. Maine should do the same.

Raising the threshold evens the playing field for Maine small businesses, aligns with regional norms, and supports Maine's clean energy goals that benefit all rate payers, rather than penalizing businesses that invest in efficiency.

In short: LD 1777, as written, creates regulatory instability and undermines the solar investments Mainers have already made. And it's past time we modernize Small General Service thresholds to reflect today's realities, a simple solution that gets at the heart of LD1777.

Thank you for your time and continued leadership.

Tyler G. Eads

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