



Environmental Priorities Coalition

Testimony in support of LD1868, *An Act to Advance a Clean Energy Economy by Updating Renewable and Clean Resource Procurement Laws*

May 6, 2025

Senator Lawrence, Representative Sachs and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology, my name is Cathy Breen. I am here today to speak for the Environmental Priorities Coalition (EPC), an inclusive statewide alliance of 39 conservation, climate action, and public health organizations that is marking its 20th anniversary this year. Each year we work together to develop and identify a slate of policy priorities to act on the climate crisis, further environmental justice, protect land, water, and wildlife, and cultivate healthy Maine communities. This is a lengthy and rigorous process that takes place over the summer and fall before each legislative session. For this current session, the EPC has prioritized LD1868, *An Act to Advance a Clean Energy Economy by Updating Renewable and Clean Resource Procurement Laws*.

Many of us in the EPC have participated in the development and implementation of Maine's climate action plans, the most recent of which is *Maine Won't Wait, 2.0*.¹ Whether joining in the work of various Climate Council Working Groups, advocating for legislation and investments to implement recommendations, or connecting our communities with state resources that help prepare for severe storms and conditions that are on the horizon, EPC members are deeply engaged in meeting the climate crisis all across Maine. And like you, EPC members are well aware of the drivers of increased utility costs for Maine people and businesses in recent years: the rising price of natural gas and the increase in severe storms in Maine. Both of these factors illustrate the urgent need for Maine to transition off of fossil fuels, which this bill will accomplish.

Passing LD1868 is consistent with *Maine Won't Wait, 2.0*, and it will help lower energy costs and power more growth in Maine's clean energy economy. The bill puts into statute the most critical goal of the entire climate plan - ending our dependence on fossil fuels, the single most important cause of climate change. Every member of the EPC is 100% behind this goal

¹https://www.maine.gov/climateplan/sites/maine.gov.climateplan/files/2024-11/MWW_2024_Book_112124.pdf

because it's not only good for the planet, it's good for Maine's economy. Maine's Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) has already resulted in a billion dollars in investments, \$21.5 million annually in ratepayer benefits and more than 1,000 new clean energy jobs. More than 15,000 Maine people now work in the clean energy industry, and this bill will help that number grow. In addition, responsible development of clean, renewable energy will help protect Maine's legacy industries of fishing, farming and logging.

For all of these reasons, the 39 members of the EPC urge your support for LD1868, and we thank you for your consideration.

ACHIEVE 100% CLEAN ELECTRICITY FOR MAINE BY 2040

Create new jobs and reduce fossil fuel dependence by investing in homegrown clean energy.

Maine's dependence on oil and gas saddles families and businesses with high, volatile energy costs.

- Maine's dependence on fossil fuels for heating, transportation, and electricity generation is the primary driver of the high energy prices facing Maine families and businesses.
- Burning fossil fuels is the primary cause of climate change, which is already harming our communities through flooding and extreme storm damage.
- Maine sends more than \$4 billion out of state every year to pay for oil and gas -- money that could be spent creating homegrown clean energy jobs instead.

100% clean electricity by 2040 is a practical path forward to a lower-cost energy future and a strong clean energy economy.

- Low-income families and businesses across our state are struggling because of rising energy costs linked to our region's dependence on oil and natural gas, as well as the costs of responding to storms made worse by climate change.
- Because of the falling costs of clean energy, Maine's *Pathway to 2040* analysis shows reaching 100% clean electricity by 2040 could lower average household energy costs by about \$1,300 per year.
- Transitioning to clean electricity through Maine's Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) has already resulted in a billion dollars in investment, \$21.5 million annually in ratepayer benefits, and more than 1,000 new clean energy jobs. More than 15,000 Maine people already work in the clean energy industry.



Creating more homegrown clean energy sources will save Mainers money, create good-paying jobs, and benefit the environment for generations to come.

- Investing in homegrown clean energy solutions creates good-paying jobs that keep people here in Maine.
- Clean energy solutions help save Mainers money and make us more energy independent by diversifying our energy mix and reducing our reliance on expensive out-of-state fossil fuels like home heating oil and natural gas.
- Responsible development of clean energy protects Maine's heritage fishing and farming industries while preserving our rural character and conserving natural resources.
- Advancing the clean energy transition will reduce air pollution and help us avoid the worst impacts of climate change.



ReVision Energy

Invest in Maine people and energy. Achieve 100% Clean Electricity by 2040.

For more information, please contact
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Acadia
Center



**BICYCLE
COALITION**
OF MAINE



Conservation
Law Foundation



Solutions for a
Toxic-Free Tomorrow



Friends of Casco Bay
CASCO BAYKEEPER

Gateway Community Services Maine



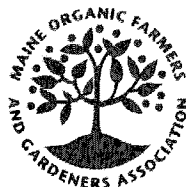
Immigrant Welcome Center
GREATER PORTLAND



MAINE
AUDUBON



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Maine
Environmental
Education
Association



MPHA
Maine Public Health Association



Natural Resources
Council of Maine



Union of
Concerned Scientists
Science for a healthy planet and safer world