



May 15th, 2025

Testimony in support of LD1949: An Act Regarding Energy Fairness

Good morning Senator Lawrence, Representative Sachs, and esteemed members of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology.

My name is Eli Durand-McDonnell, I am from Bar Harbor, Maine and I am the Policy Coordinator at Maine Youth Power, a youth-led, youth movement throughout rural and suburban Maine fighting to win human dignity, equity and a livable future for all. I am here today on behalf of my organization to ask that you support LD1949: An Act Regarding Energy Fairness.

Maine Youth Power is proud to support LD1949, because we see this bill as a crucial step towards real climate action that also addresses issues of energy affordability and creates new career opportunities for young Mainers. As young people, we look towards the coming decades and we know that climate change will continue to affect our lives with ever-increasing intensity. I consistently hear our members say that they want to see Maine take the climate crisis, and our futures in this state, seriously. By bringing more clean energy into the grid, this bill would help reduce our emissions as a state overall, and show young Mainers that our leaders care about mitigating the worst impacts of climate change for generations to come.

However, we also know that we need to balance the transition to clean energy with the immediate needs of everyday Mainers, as well as create new career opportunities for residents. LD1949 does both. Just like everyone else, young people across the state are facing skyrocketing cost of living expenses. However, oftentimes young people often haven't had the time to build a financial safety net to safely navigate this volatility. We all know how brutal Maine winters can be, and many young Mainers simply don't have the money to properly heat their homes in the colder months. LD1949 would help protect young people from predatory advertising by competitive electricity providers, and limit what expenses utilities are allowed to pass on to customers. These provisions would help young renters and homeowners navigate rising costs and help them live as stable, secure members of their communities. This is energy justice for Mainers.

Finally, LD1949 ensures that our transition to clean energy creates stable career opportunities across the state, by requiring new standards for how many qualified apprentices would help build or repair generation facilities. This is of particular note to Maine Youth Power, since qualified apprenticeships are often a key stepping stone in the career of young Mainers in the skilled trades. This bill makes sure that we are tackling climate change and affordability simultaneously, while also creating long term career opportunities.

Thank you for your consideration,
Maine Youth Power staff