To: Maine Legislature Committee on Energy, Utilities, and Technology
From: Amy Eshoo, Director, Maine Climate Action Now
Date: January 6, 2026
Re: **LD 1730: *An Act to Make Small, Portable, Plug-in Solar Generation Devices Accessible for All Maine Residents to Address the Energy Affordability Crisis***

Senator Lawrence, Representative Sachs, and members of the Committee on Energy, Utilities, and Technology, my name is Amy Eshoo. I live in North Yarmouth and am the Director of Maine Climate Action Now (MCAN), a broad coalition of eighteen progressive grassroots organizations representing communities from across the state.

Clear majorities of Americans, regardless of political background, support solar power.[1]

In recent years in Maine, however, large-scale solar arrays, heated disputes about net energy billing, misleading ads and invasive door knockers with big promises about solar reducing costs, threaten to turn the public against this type of renewable energy.

At the same time, Maine's electricity costs are rising much faster than any other state, with a 36.3% increase between May 2024 and May 2025.[2] Our state's households face some of the highest electricity rates in the country, landing in the highest ten states.[3] Even before this full increase, low-income Mainers spent twice their recommended share of income on electricity costs.[4]

Small, portable solar generation is a perfect fit for this moment. It affirms increased affordability and self-reliance from a renewable energy resource. It allows Mainers to see renewable energy's potential for the state firsthand.

Plug-in solar will expand clean energy to more people – those without ideal rooftops for larger solar panels, renters, and those unable to afford large out-of-pocket costs. My husband and I are good candidates for this system. We bought our current house late in

[1]https://www.pewresearch.org/science/2025/06/05/americans-views-on-energy-at-the-start-of-trumps-second-term/ps_2025-6-5_energy_00-02/
[2]https://www.axios.com/2025/08/04/electricity-costs-bills-data-centers-ai
[3]https://www.thisoldhouse.com/electricity/electricity-rates-by-state
[4]https://www1.maine.gov/meopa/about/news/citizen-advisory-council-sends-recommendations-legislature-lessen-burden-low-income

life; rooftop solar is prohibitively expensive for us, especially since we won't live in our house long enough to see a return on investment. Now, with plug-in solar we have a chance to buy a renewable energy system that we can take with us when we move. Having the investment be portable will be a boon to many Mainers as well as us.

Plug-in solar does not require users to wait on burdensome and lengthy interconnection processes, does not require large-scale land use, and does not use net energy billing. In Utah, California, and Germany, where this technology is already underway, users have seen immediate cost savings.[5] Now it is the time to open up plug-in solar to Mainers as well.

Solar technology is an important part of Maine's future, but the way it is implemented – with wide accessibility and public trust – is also important. This is why we urge you to support LD 1730. Please vote Ought To Pass. Thank you for your consideration.

[5]https://cleantechnica.com/2025/11/12/the-peoples-solar-how-plug-in-solar-could-bring-affordable-energy-to-60-million-americans/