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Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

RE: LD 2037 An Act to Update the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative Allowances

Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, my name is Karen Blakelock, and I work with the Nature Conservancy in Maine. I appreciate this opportunity to testify in support of LD 2037.

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) is a nonprofit conservation organization dedicated to conserving the lands and waters on which all life depends. Guided by science, we create innovative, on-the-ground solutions to our world's toughest challenges so that both nature and people can thrive. We work in more than 70 countries, and use a collaborative approach that engages local communities, governments, the private sector, and other partners.

TNC asks this committee to vote in favor of LD 2037 to continue allowing Maine to benefit from being part of this regional program. At a time when the rising cost of electricity remains a top concern for most Maine households, we must do everything we can to ensure we are working towards reliable and affordable clean energy for Maine. As Maine is part of a larger regional grid, ISO- New England, failing to pass this bill will do nothing to lower electricity prices. Mainers will still be subject to the associated costs of the program without experiencing any of the benefits.

In Maine, Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) funding is directed to the Efficiency Maine Trust (EMT) and flows to programs that support energy efficiency technologies that save money for Maine households and businesses. According to RGGI's 2023 report, Maine received \$182 million in proceeds from 2008-2023 by participating in the program and in FY2023 alone, RGGI funded investments resulted in avoided energy costs of more than \$130 million.¹

While some states have chosen to join or leave RGGI over the years, Maine is one of nine states that has participated since the program's inception in 2008. As each RGGI state has full discretion over the investment of RGGI proceeds and the administration of the RGGI-funded programs, Maine has been able to direct the benefits of participating in RGGI to programs that make sense for Mainers. In 2023, funding mostly went to:

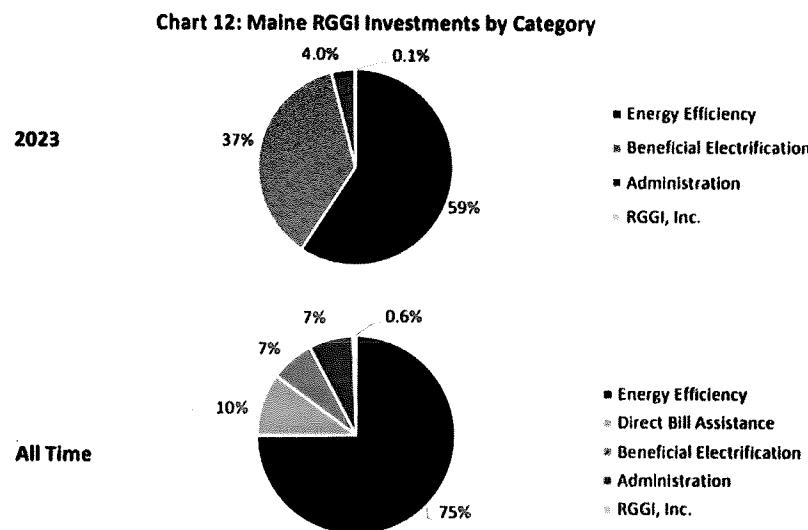
1. Home energy savings programs such as weatherization and heat pump rebates,
2. Low-income initiatives to support enhanced incentives for low-income customers, and
3. Commercial and industrial energy efficiency and beneficial electrification measures

¹ The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative: An Initiative of Eastern States of the United States, "The Investment of RGGI Proceeds in 2023" Published July 2025,
https://www.rggi.org/sites/default/files/Uploads/Proceeds/RGGI_Proceeds_Report_2023.pdf

Thanks in large part to RGGI, Maine is a national leader in heat pump installations, a technology that can improve indoor air quality, improve resident health, help Mainers save money on fossil fuels, and comfortably heat and cool their homes.

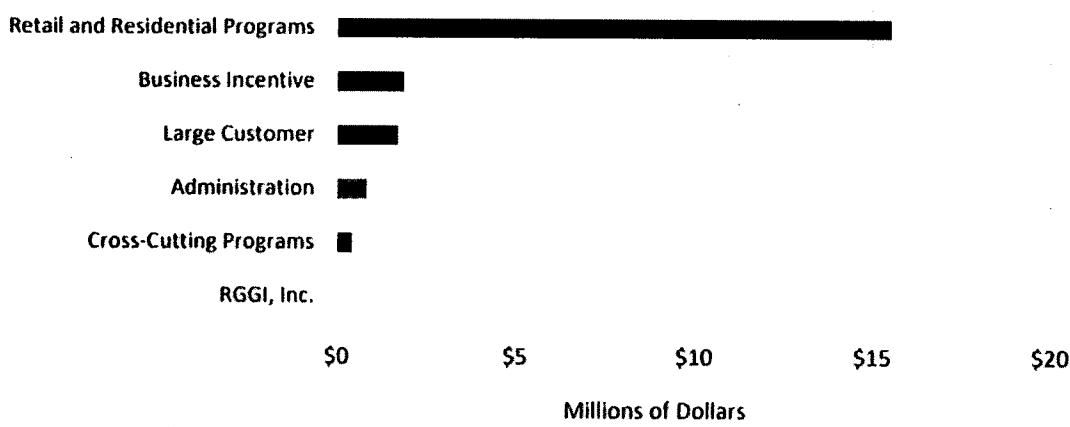
The Nature Conservancy envisions a world where both people and nature can thrive. We feel strongly that programs such as RGGI, that result in both saving money and reducing environmental harm, are the key to achieving our mission for the benefit of all living things.

Thank you for your time, I ask that you vote Ought to Pass on LD 2037.



Maine received \$182M in proceeds from 2008-2023. RGGI investments represent \$20M in 2023, and \$139M cumulatively. \$24M is committed to 2024 and future investments.

Chart 13: 2023 Maine RGGI Investments by Recipient



Maine RGGI investments represent \$20M in 2023.