



Denise Tepler  
Senator, District 24

THE MAINE SENATE  
132nd Legislature

3 State House Station  
Augusta, Maine 04333

**Testimony of Senator Denise Tepler presenting LD 2140, “An Act to Reduce Household Energy Costs in Response to Federal Cuts”**  
February 19, 2026

Senator Lawrence, Representative Sachs and distinguished members of the Committee on Energy, Utilities & Technology, I am Senator Denise Tepler. I represent all of Sagadahoc County and the Town of Dresden in Lincoln County. I am here to present my bill amendment to LD 2140, “An Act to Reduce Household Energy Costs in Response to Federal Cuts.”

This amendment replaces the bill in its entirety. This bill originally began as a series of tax credits meant to help counteract the cuts made to energy subsidies by the Federal Government. However, in working the bill, we realized that tax credits would require that Mainers still bear the upfront costs of utilities until the next tax year, when they could then recoup those costs. For Mainers struggling to afford everyday costs, this is not a viable solution.

Given that there are already several substantial rebates offered to Maine residents through Efficiency Maine, I consulted the organization’s director, Michael Stoddard, on how to best lower consumer energy costs. The bill now outlines a plan for Efficiency Maine to conduct a pilot program for utility customers who are currently paying low-income rates to encourage households to reduce their energy usage during peak demand hours, especially in the summer. This will be an opt-in program that includes an incentive in addition to the reduction in costs that will be incurred. Additionally, the reduction in grid demand during peak usage periods will benefit all electricity customers.

While the program design will not be fully complete until Efficiency Maine has the go-ahead from the Legislature, I am hopeful that this future plan will reduce energy costs for those who need relief the most.

I am happy to attempt to answer any questions you may have, but I know that those behind me — particularly Director Stoddard and the Office of the Public Advocate — are better positioned to offer more details.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this bill.