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Testimony of the Maine Municipal Association (MMA) In Opposition to

LD 2174, An Act to Increase Predictability in the Permitting of Renewable Energy Development

February 25, 2026

Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, my name is Amanda Campbell, and I am submitting testimony on behalf of the Maine Municipal Association's 70-member Legislative Policy Committee (LPC) in opposition to LD 2174.

Municipal officials are opposed to the proposed sections of LD 2174 that would enact new preemptions on municipal home rule authority as it is outlined in Section Eight, Part the Second of Maine's Constitution.

This bill's blatant preemption of local decision-making processes would prevent municipalities from having prospective conversations surrounding clean energy development within their communities that could be more stringent than state law. It would also declare already existing, voter approved municipal ordinances that include more stringent language as void and with no force or effect. Of Maine's 483 municipalities, 87% function under a town meeting form of government where enactment and amendment of local ordinances must be approved by a community's voters. LD 2174's one size fits all, prescriptive approach to clean energy permitting completely disregards the important work that communities have already done through the enactment of ordinances that were carefully developed to balance renewable energy goals with local impacts.

In January, the Department of Energy Resources published the Solar and Energy Storage Handbook for Maine Communities – A Planning Resource to Support Responsible Development of Solar and Battery Energy Storage Projects. The handbook's introduction recognizes that, "Every municipality in Maine has a unique geographic, economic, land use, and community context," and explains that the information provided therein is, "intended to meet communities where they are based on their own circumstances, so that each community can make informed local decisions and can consider specific benefits that they'd like to achieve through solar and battery storage projects."

Rather than restrictive and prescriptive statutes that stifle community conversations, municipal leaders ask for collaboration and partnership with state agencies in developing actionable opportunities to both promote state policy priorities and maintain local decision-making capacity. The Department of Energy Resources has taken an important first step by providing municipalities with a valuable tool regarding clean energy development, considerations for local policies, and model ordinances to aid in community discussions.

Considering all these points, the LPC urges the committee to vote ought not to pass on LD 2174.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you and share the municipal perspective on this important topic. Please feel free to contact me or any member of the MMA Advocacy team with questions related to municipal operations.