



Maine Municipal  
Association

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Testimony of the Maine Municipal Association

Neither For Nor Against

*LD 1367 – An Act To Create a Grant Program To Promote Innovation in Municipal Carbon  
Reduction Initiatives*

April 26, 2021

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Senator Brenner, Representative Tucker and members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee, my name is Neal Goldberg, and I am providing testimony neither for nor against LD 1367 on behalf of MMA's Legislative Policy Committee.

The Association supports the goals of Maine's climate action plan and its members are constantly planning new ways to reduce municipal carbon emissions. This bill accurately recognizes that technology and innovation projects to facilitate carbon reduction are costly and municipalities need financial aid to accelerate the reduction effort. Members approve of a municipal grant program as described in LD 1367 but have concerns about its funding and competitiveness.

Until a long-term funding source is identified municipal officials can only worry where the money will come from. In order for this grant program to create a lasting benefit to municipalities, the funding should come from sources not currently ear-marked for municipal use. Otherwise these grants will only hamper municipal activity elsewhere.

The issue of funding also bleeds into the matter of competitiveness. Unless this program is well-funded the grants will be too competitive for most municipalities to benefit. As is the norm, competitive grant processes favor larger municipalities with more staff capacity to chase grant money. Since all municipalities have progress to be made on carbon reduction, some municipal officials would prefer to just have the funding equitably disbursed for local climate action initiatives that conform to the state's climate action plan, instead of investing time in grant applications that might be denied.

Thank you for your time and consideration on this important matter.