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JANET MILLS
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DAN BURGESS
DIRECTOR OF GOVERNOR'S
ENERGY OFFICE

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

**An Act To Address Waste Associated with Solar Energy Equipment
L.D. 1595**

**GOVERNOR'S ENERGY OFFICE
May 7, 2021**

Senator Brenner, Representative Tucker, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources (ENR): My name is Dan Burgess and I am the Director of the Governor's Energy Office (GEO).

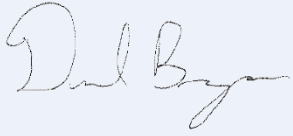
The GEO testifies in opposition to L.D. 1595.

The proposed legislation provides for state grant funding to develop a recycling program and facility for solar panels, using funds from the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), among other funding sources. It changes various statutory references from solar energy device to solar energy equipment and amends the Maine Solar Energy Act related to potential damage from solar panel deterioration and related insurance requirements. It also amends the Energy Conservation in Buildings Act provision regarding life-cycle costs to include the costs of recycling in determining the effect of insulation incorporated into the facility design.

The GEO agrees with the concerns expressed in testimony from the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) related to the development of this proposed recycling program. The GEO would recommend working through existing related DEP programs and local municipal ordinances related to solar decommissioning rather than establishing a complex and costly program. For example, the GEO is concerned that the proposed \$125 in purchase fees assessed per solar panel under this legislation could in some instances nearly double the cost of solar panels. While the GEO recognizes the importance of being good environmental stewards, we have a number of concerns regarding the proposed approach.

With regard to additional proposed statutory changes, the GEO urges this Committee to be cautious before making changes to definitions with MRSA 35-A to ensure that there is a clear understanding of the potential impacts of those changes. The GEO has also sought to maintain flexibility and not earmark funds for RGGI programming as is done with this legislation. Additionally, the GEO would want to hear from relevant stakeholders regarding what the exact implications and impacts of this legislation would be on developing clean energy projects that work to meet the State's clean energy and climate requirements.

Thank you for your consideration and the GEO can be made available for questions.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dan Burgess". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dan Burgess, Director
Governor's Energy Office