

**KenCapron1**

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**From:** "KenCapron1" <kcapron1@maine.rr.com>  
**Date:** Thursday, May 13, 2021 1:05 PM  
**To:** <dan.burgess@maine.gov>  
**Subject:** Solar Waste Recycling

Hi Dan,

I am writing to address your concerns regarding LD 1595 on recycling solar waste. I was pleased that you recognize the need to be good stewards of our environment.

If you read various bits of testimony, you will recognize that some of your assumptions are wrong. Rather than adding a burden to the taxpayer, the bill simply moves those costs from the front of the supply stream to the final sale of the supply stream.

The \$25 fee is a pretty straight forward admin fee so we can track the panel Chemicals throughout their lifetime and keep them out of our waste stream. Otherwise, they become forever chemicals, like PFAS. I would expect the manufacturer to absorb that fee since it is reasonable. They know that the chemicals they are distributing are dangerous, and they should have anticipated and reserved some profit to cover end-of-life anticipation. They are not stupid.

The manufacturer, or the retailer, already pays shipping to return panels to the manufacturer, or its distributor. By recycling panels in state, we save the mfg. that money and thus it can be shifted to reducing the cost to the consumer.

The \$100 fee will change depending on the actual costs of physically recycling these panels – which cost is not available at this time. So I borrowed the number used by Washington State Governor Jay Inslee. Their 2017 legislation was the foundation for our LD 1595. As the recycling process matures, it may be more or less than the \$100 per panel, depending on whether or not we recover and reuse the Chemicals of High Concern. The glass, aluminum and copper are easy to recover – thus the proposition of doing this in-state. However, not one source globally has yet defined a process to make the 5% CHCs safe for our environment. Those chems are merely burned as of this point on time and that in fact puts carbon into our air along with other poisonous chemicals and particulates. We don't want to be held accountable 20 – 30 years down the road when remediation will be even less affordable.

But, since manufacturers "claim" to recycle, this bill will take that cost out of the front end and expect them to pass that savings on to the consumer. The accomplishes two thing. It produces no net change in the costs of panels to the consumer. And it provides Maine with the resources to track, recover and recycle these panels. We need to control that process since there are several companies that claim to "recycle" panels 100%. But in actuality, the CHC's are only burned. That is not a healthy outcome for our waste. And that is not what Maine is all about.

Now, as to impacts on sales, any good salesperson will recognize the opportunities this bill offers. Just as we use annual vehicle inspections to make sure our cars are safe to drive and environmentally sound, so too can we preserve the health of the panels. So a sales rep may visit a prior customer and identify damaged panels that need to be replaced. Or even better, they could offer their client an upgrade to an even more efficient panel array. Recently we are seeing trials of solar panels that are 50% efficient.

Depending on how smart our sales force is, I suspect this bill actually will increase sales opportunities. The supply chain is going to absorb these costs. Right now for example the Sierra Club is offering a \$1000 rebate for a purchaser and \$1000 to them selves when you buy an array. I am confident they can advertise “We pay all fees – and you get the rebates for yourselves”. I certainly wouldn’t want to be making a profit off of the waste stream and throwing Cadmium Telluride all over our beautiful State.

Maine is better than that. There are many more panels to come than the early adopters have installed. But we all pay more for the first model of a new thing.

Please don’t jump to false conclusions about this bill. We need it now and scare tactics will just make it more difficult in 5, 10 or however many years when the problems arise. Every single panel is a chemical time bomb. I deliberately designed this bill to provide a robust process with little or no burden on the consumer. It is working well in Washington State under Governor Inslee.

I encourage you to support this effort to make Maine “Solar Safe”.

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