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Hello,

My name is Zachary Bouchard. I am speaking to you today as a homeowner who installed solar panels on my home in 2013 and then again on a different when I moved in 2020. The bills LD 249, LD 583, and LD 634 are a slap in the face to common sense, the planet, and humanity. To roll back net metering provisions, cap the value of contracts, or repeal the changes made by Public Law 2019, Chapter 478, or in any way discourage solar panels on either the residential, commercial or utility wide level are beyond illogical. I am offended to even have to take time out of my busy day to point this out.

The arguments and lies put forward that the move towards renewable solar energy will somehow hurt jobs, or raise electricity rates for other homeowners, or that Maine's solar policies are too solar friendly, are poorly thought out arguments that entirely miss the bigger picture. We need to move forward as quickly and aggressively as possible to expand renewable solar energy. Period. We have a planet that cannot sustain the levels of CO2 and methane pollution being pumped into our atmosphere.

The arguments are also not made in good faith. Solar energy creates jobs. There are numerous studies that show that rates will actually go down as more solar is installed. If rates did go up to an unsustainable level (again, doubtful), we can come up with programs or ways to solve that. Keep in mind too, that Avingrid had net profits last year of \$581 million dollars, that's over half a trillion dollars, (this is even after huge executive bonuses and compensation packages), so I see a great opportunity to reduce rates by simply reducing some of those profits. To say that Maine's policies are too solar friendly is laughable. Maine is lagging behind not just our neighboring states, but nationwide and globally. All Maine has net metering and an insignificant property tax exemption for small scale projects. There are NO OTHER incentives to do solar here, and that is pathetic. Installing solar panels and battery backup systems in Massachusetts is almost twice as cheap as Maine due to the state incentives. The only reason there has been more large scale solar activity here is because it was essentially shut out during the LePage administration and because land is relatively cheap compared to other Northeast states. We should be introducing bills that further encourage solar energy so that we can catch up to the rest of the world and join the 21st century. These proposed bills go in the opposite direction. So rather than remain a state that is behind the times and struggling economically, we should be on the right side of history make the decisions that will move us forward. Think about what it will be like reading these proposed bills 15 or 20 years from now and how embarrassing it will be for the politicians proposing them. Burning fossil fuels to drive our cars and heat our homes is going to seem as absurd as smoking on airplanes.

Renewable solar energy and the electrification of our grid is going to happen fast, it's going to happen worldwide, and it's going to happen whether Maine politicians jump on board or not. This ship has sailed, and I would rather be on that ship than left behind on the shore while everyone else makes a mockery of us. We should be doing everything possible to encourage sustainable and renewable energy moving forward. My 9 year old daughter and seven year old son understand the reasons that we need to do this. Again, the fact that these bills are even being discussed and talked about right now is beyond absurd. Please stop making all of us waste our personal time by pointing out the obvious. I'm sick of this. It's disgusting. We shouldn't have to organize and fight to protect the same planet that we all live on. We all breath the same air and drink the same water, so let's start acting like it. Thank you for your time.