



**Written Testimony by William Norbert
Governmental Affairs and Communications Manager**

Neither For Nor Against L.D. 597

An Act to Establish the Wood Energy Investment Program

March 16, 2021

Joint Standing Committee on Energy and Utilities

Senator Lawrence, Representative Berry, and Distinguished Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy and Utilities:

My name is Bill Norbert. I am the Governmental Affairs and Communications Manager at the Finance Authority of Maine (FAME). I live in Brunswick and am submitting this written testimony Neither For Nor Against L.D. 597, *An Act to Establish the Wood Energy Investment Program*.

This bill would establish the Wood Energy Investment Fund and create the Wood Energy Investment Program within the Efficiency Maine Trust. Funds collected from alternative compliance payments made by competitive electricity providers to satisfy the portfolio requirements for thermal renewable energy credits must be used to fund the Wood Energy Investment Fund. It requires the trust to use money from the fund, if any, to provide incentives and low-interest or no-interest loans for new wood-derived thermal energy or cogeneration projects. It further requires that the trust consult with FAME, when appropriate, in the development of any Wood Energy Investment Program incentives and distribution of money from the Wood Energy Investment Fund.

Without taking a position on the basic concept behind the bill, if enacted and funded, FAME would be happy to serve as a resource for the trust regarding the development of the program's incentives, as well as for the distribution of money from the fund, if helpful. We likely could absorb the associated costs in staff time and labor for such undertakings.

Thank you for your consideration of my submitted testimony.