



**Testimony of the Efficiency Maine Trust
Michael D. Stoddard, Executive Director**

**NEITHER FOR NOR AGAINST
*LD 597 – An Act To Establish the Wood Energy Investment Program***

**Presented to the Joint Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology (EUT)
March 16, 2021**

Senator Lawrence, Representative Berry, and Members of the Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology, the Efficiency Maine Trust (the Trust or Efficiency Maine) appreciates the opportunity to testify today neither for nor against *LD 597 – An Act To Establish the Wood Energy Investment Program*.

As we have testified on prior bills proposing to establish and fund a program for wood heat (see, *LD 1745: An Act Regarding a Biomass-generated Energy Purchase and Sale Agreement and Payments to Contractors* [129th - First Regular Session] and *LD 912: An Act To Establish the Wood Energy Investment Program* [129th - Second Special Session]), the Trust possesses the capacity, experience, and expertise to run such a program. We have an excellent track record of accounting for funds, screening project proposals, and promoting programs through a variety of channels and strategies.

The Trust appreciates that the bill provides the Trust with flexibility and discretion in fashioning the program design to overcome the barriers that are specific to the wood energy marketplace. As the bill is worked, the Trust asks that there be some further clarification regarding the following implementation issues raised in Section 2 of the bill:

1. Clarifying involvement of FAME. There is some redundancy in the bill’s description of the role for FAME which causes some ambiguity. Because §10128 sub-§3 provides greater detail about the role envisioned for FAME, the Trust suggests that the more general reference to FAME’s role in sub-§ 1 (Establishment; Purpose) be deleted for clarity.
2. §10128 sub-§ 3 Program Details. The bill defines eligible projects as including “colocation development that increases the efficient use of wood for energy production.” This appears to allow the program to use funds to pay for “development” nearby a wood energy device. Are there any limitations on what kind of development would be eligible for funding? Is there a reason the bill uses the term “development” instead of referencing specific elements of a wood energy system?

The Trust looks forward to participating in further discussions around this bill.

Respectfully,

/s/MDS
Michael D. Stoddard
Executive Director