

Audrey Hufnagel
Maine Youth for Climate Justice

To: Energy, Utilities and Technology
From: Audrey Hufnagel, Maine Youth for Climate Justice
Date: March 29, 2021
Re: Testimony in support of LD 815 An Act to Support School Decarbonization

Senator Lawrence, Representative Berry, and Members of the Joint Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology, my name is Audrey Hufnagel and I proudly write as a representative for Maine Youth for Climate Justice (MYCJ), a coalition of over 300 youth from across the state who are fighting for bold climate action and a just transition to a livable future in Maine. I am writing in support of LD 815 An Act to Support School Decarbonization.

Maine law already has a program to assist with energy savings in schools, but this program must be updated to make it possible for schools to become carbon neutral. Energy savings and decarbonization are not the same, and LD 815 makes this difference clear. To achieve the Maine Climate Council's goal of carbon neutrality by 2050, it is important that immediate action is taken to make facilities carbon neutral.

Schools are an important place to make this happen. Beyond being large energy-intensive facilities that would play an important role in getting the state to carbon neutrality, school plays a crucial role in the lives of students. Youth are concerned about climate change and the impacts it will have on their futures. Many students are already pushing their schools to become carbon neutral. This bill would make it easier for schools to comply with the demands of students.

If schools listen to students' demands and become carbon neutral, students will see what their voices can do. This is powerful, and may inspire them to continue to make change in their communities. This is an opportunity to educate students about the need to act, and seeing their school make positive change around the climate crisis gives students hope for their futures.

For the above reasons, our coalition, Maine Youth for Climate Justice, urges you to vote ought-to-pass on LD 815.

Thank you for your consideration.
Audrey Hufnagel, Maine Youth for Climate Justice.