



MUUSAN

**Maine Unitarian Universalist
State Advocacy Network**

Testimony before the Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology regarding LD 1634: *An Act to Create the Maine Generation Authority*

May 5, 2021

Senator Lawrence, Representative Berry, and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in favor of LD 1634.

My name is David Bilski, and I am a resident of New Harbor in Lincoln County. I submit this testimony on behalf of the Maine Unitarian Universalist State Advocacy Network (MUUSAN). I am proud to add the voice of Maine's 25 UU congregations in support of this legislation, which would speed the transformation of our fossil-fuel based energy sector by financing the creation and development of clean electricity generation and storage capacity throughout the state.

Our support for this bill derives from two of our faith's principles, one of which is the "respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part." The practical manifestations of this respect are, of course, many and varied. The thrust of what this particular bill is meant to deal with are the threats that climate change pose to our state's citizens and environment. Statements ranging from the Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change (IPCC) to Maine's Climate Action Plan all point to the need to act quickly and boldly to address the various dangers of climate change which are already showing up in Maine, including, among other things, drought, storm intensity, sea-level rise, and ocean warming and acidification. Respect for the environment, whether it's the atmosphere, the land, or the oceans and all the wildlife that they support, translates directly into respect for our fellow citizens, such as our wood-products workers, or farmers, or fishermen. Drought and climate warming are threats to our forests and farmlands, which increase the risks to our forest products industry and our food production. Increasing storm intensity and sea-level rise threaten to overwhelm our coastal infrastructure. And we're already seeing the effects of ocean warming and acidification on our fishing and aquaculture industries, with clear impacts on lobstering and shellfish growth and development.

A swift transition from a fossil fuel-based economy that generates gigatons of greenhouse gases to an economy that meets the goals of the IPCC and Maine's Climate Action Plan requires the generation of *significant new amounts* of clean electricity. And it needs to do so equitably. Our support for this bill

derives also from another of our faith's principles, namely striving toward "justice, equity and compassion in human relations." Not only would the Maine Generation Authority have the financial capability to expedite the creation and development this greater electrical capacity, it would also be able to do so equitably through the sale of revenue bonds that, with their much more favorable borrowing terms, would avoid rate hikes for the state's ratepayers. Creating the Maine Generation Authority would both put our state on a path toward greater respect for the web of interdependencies and manifest equity in the process. We urge you to support it. Thank you very much.

Respectfully submitted,

David Bilski,

Maine Unitarian Universalist State Advocacy Network (MUUSAN)