

Maine Climate Action **NOW!**

To: Maine Legislature Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology

From: Amy Eshoo, Maine Climate Action Now

Date: May 11, 2021

Re: LD 1659: An Act To Create the Maine Clean Energy and Sustainability Accelerator OUGHT TO PASS

Senator Lawrence, Representative Berry, and members of the Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology, my name is Amy Eshoo. I am a resident of North Yarmouth and Program Manager for Maine Climate Action Now, a statewide coalition of grassroots organizations who support transformative action in response to the climate and ecological emergency. We hold social, racial, and economic justice as critical to the transition to zero carbon emissions by 2030 and demand the equitable implementation of clean renewable energy, ecological land-use practices, and bold community-led action for a more resilient Maine.

Many of the recommendations of Maine's Climate Action Plan, including renewable energy and climate resilience, require financing. We will not reach our goals of a safe and liveable future without investing significant resources into systemic changes across all sectors. It is crucial to outline financing mechanisms to achieve our goals and implement our Climate Action Plan.

This bill would create an Accelerator within Efficiency Maine, preparing the state to receive and maximize federal funds without committing state dollars. A key element of the federal legislation before the Senate now is that it will pass funds through to state-level green bank entities. Passing LD 1659 will give Maine a jump-start, helping to ensure that no time is lost and that we can increase funding for climate solutions as soon as possible.

Accelerators make it easier to finance clean energy and energy efficiency projects by standardizing the underwriting process and reducing risk for local lenders. This enables vulnerable communities to have access to financing that our wealthier communities already have.

Across Maine, low-income families spend a larger portion of their income on heating oil and propane and have the greatest need for efficiency improvements. LD 1659 specifically calls for 40% of funding to be directed to low-income communities and communities of color, to assist those who need it most. Financing is especially important for low-income households, which disproportionately bear the cost of fossil fuels and the impacts of climate change. This is climate justice. This is what is needed.

We offer our full support for this legislation to establish a Maine Clean Energy and Sustainability Accelerator.

Please vote LD 1659 OUGHT TO PASS for our futures. Thank you.

maineclimateaction.org

contact: maineclimateaction@gmail.com

Amy Eshoo
Maine Climate Action Now

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