

Testimony in Support of LD 1659: The Clean Energy and Sustainability Accelerator

350 Downeast and EcoSattvas Downeast, environmental activist organizations located in Washington County and dedicated to working for a sustainable future for all, appreciate the opportunity to offer testimony on behalf of our members in support of LD 1659, Maine's Clean Energy and Sustainability Accelerator.

Many of the recommendations of Maine's Climate Action Plan—including renewable energy and climate resilience—require financing. Even when capital is available, it may not be practically accessible. Financing is essential to making climate solutions available equitably, especially to rural and traditionally underfunded areas like Washington County.

Each year, Mainers collectively spend more than \$4 billion importing fossil fuels from outside the state yet families in Washington County are unable to afford the upfront cost of efficiency and clean energy projects. The Clean Energy and Sustainability Accelerator will help every family in Washington County to participate in the clean energy transition.

Drawing from the successful "Green Bank" model, the Clean Energy and Sustainability Accelerator will direct 40% of funds to low-income and other vulnerable communities like those in need in Washington County!

It will also help generate investments in projects critical to the survival of Washington County, including regenerative agriculture, sustainable forestry, clean transportation and climate-resilient infrastructure, creating jobs so important to the health and sustainability of our rural communities.

We urge your support of this essential legislation. Let's prepare Maine to receive and maximize its share of the \$35 billion in Federal funds that will become available to us under the national Clean Energy & Sustainability Accelerator, without committing state dollars. LD 1659 is a win-win for Washington County and for all of Maine.

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