



**SUSTAINABILITY
OFFICE**

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Testimony in Support of LD 1682

"An Act To Require Consideration of Climate and Equity Impacts by the Public Utilities Commission"

HEARING DATE: May 12, 2021

Senator Lawrence, Representative Berry, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology:

I am the Sustainability Director for the City of South Portland, and I am here today to speak in support of LD 1682 *"An Act To Require Consideration of Climate and Equity Impacts by the Public Utilities Commission."*

As you may recall from my previous testimony, the residents and elected leadership of South Portland have a strong interest in mitigating the worst impacts of climate change and transitioning to clean, efficient, renewable energy. We have ambitious goals to move our community forward, including reducing greenhouse gas emissions 80% by 2050, in line with state targets. We firmly believe we can achieve these goals while minimizing long-term energy costs, ensuring equity, and remaining economically competitive if we have the right regulatory framework in place.

Both our *One Climate Future* plan and the state's *Maine Won't Wait* plan are centered on electrifying the economy and greening electric generation. We know that this transition will require significant investments in grid expansion, distributed energy resources (DER), and storage, *and* that these upgrades will need to be accompanied by significant regulatory reforms. That is why we participated in the Maine Utility/Regulatory Reform and Decarbonization Initiative (MURRDI).

The MURRDI Report includes nine consensus-based recommendations deemed crucial for planning, building, and operating the electric grid that is needed to meet Maine's climate and energy requirements. Recommendation #9 is "to expand the PUC's decision-making framework to consider Maine's climate requirements, equity implications, and impacts on environmental justice communities to enable consideration of the full costs and benefits of energy investments in all decisions."

Because the crux of our climate action plans are to drive the majority of our energy use toward beneficial electrification, we need to ensure the PUC's mission and authority are aligned with Maine's push for dramatic emission reductions.

LD1682 will revise the PUC's mandate, requiring it to consider greenhouse gas reductions and compliance with Maine's climate statute, alongside equity and environmental justice, in its decision-making. Therefore we are urging you to support this LD 1682.