

Scott Vlaun
Otisfield

20 May 2021

To: The Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology

From: Scott Vlaun on behalf of the Center for an Ecology-Based Economy

Re: LD1708

Representative Berry, Senator Lawrence and Esteemed members of the Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology:

Thank you for your essential service to our state and for considering this critically important bill. My name is Scott Vlaun. I am the Executive Director of The Center for an Ecology-Based Economy in Norway. I speak today in support of LD1708. "An Act To Create the Pine Tree Power Company, a Nonprofit Utility, To Deliver Lower Rates, Reliability and Local Control for Maine Energy Independence."

This bill is crucial to Maine's quest for reliable, affordable 100% clean renewable energy. It would replace what is arguably the least reliable public utility in the United States, with a utility that is owned by Mainers and that will work for Mainers, and not to export millions in corporate profits abroad.

Central Maine Power has fought hard against the transition to renewable energy for years, and is now failing miserably to fulfill the will of the Maine's people to rapidly deploy solar power to the grid. For my organization this has meant our community solar project Norway's sealed landfill has been on hold for well over a year with no connection agreement in sight.

Instead of fighting the inevitable and essential renewable energy transition with lawyers, lobbyists and disinformation campaigns, all to maintain a 19th Century, top-down model of power generation and distribution that puts profits before people and planet, CMP should have been fighting the climate and ecological crisis by gearing up for the clean energy future that the science demands if we are to leave a livable planet to our children.

The transition to a 21st century smart grid of diverse and distributed renewable resources will require bold and decisive action. It will require innovation, a sense of urgency and the moral imperative to meet the needs of Maine people while reinventing the way we generate and distribute energy. If history is any indicator, this action will not come from the monopoly utilities that Maine is currently shackled with. It will come from a consumer-owned utility whose mission is to meet Maine's growing need for electricity and our ambitious emissions reduction targets.

Enough is enough. The time is now for the Pine Tree Power Company.

Please vote ought to pass on this critical legislation.

Thank you for your time,

Scott Vlaun
The Center for an Ecology-Based Economy
Norway Maine