

Joe Wishcamper
Freeport
LD 1026

My name is Joe Wishcamper. I live in Freeport and my office is in Portland. My company does solar development as well as affordable housing. My concern is with the escalator contained in the proposed bill, and my request is that the committee change the fixed 2.5% escalator to an inflation-indexed escalator. The reason is that we may well have entered a sustained period of 5%+ inflation. Since solar projects have lead times of 2-3 years from inception to groundbreaking, developers like my company will take seriously the risk of investing significant time and money beginning this year where the revenue in 2024 will not cover costs that may be significantly greater than today. The 2020 base rate as escalated at 2.5% cuts back the financial cushion in projects even in the current market, and the fixed escalator could render future projects infeasible with a complete loss of the sunk resources. My company had over \$1 million invested in each of our two most recent projects by the time we reached a construction start. My understanding is that the administration's goal with this bill was to regulate without shutting down small scale commercial solar production. The proposed rate will unfortunately go too far toward the former at the detriment of the latter. Most developers of this size range of projects are homegrown Maine companies like mine that do good work and employ local employees and contractors. Thanks for considering my request. Joe Wishcamper