



TO: The Committee on Energy Utilities and Technology  
FROM: The Northeast Clean Energy Council  
DATE: May 8, 2023

**RE: Testimony regarding LD 1830, “An Act to Advance Maine's Clean Energy Goals”**

Dear Chairs Lawrence, Zeigler and Committee Members,

On behalf of the Northeast Clean Energy Council (“NECEC” or “The Council”), we want to thank you for your continued leadership on clean energy and climate change policy. You have been critical to putting Maine on a path to grow our region’s clean energy economy, meet our climate commitments and deliver for our most vulnerable communities.

The Council leads the just, equitable, and rapid transition to a clean energy future and a diverse climate economy. NECEC is the only organization in the Northeast that covers all of the clean energy market segments, representing the business perspectives of investors and clean energy companies across every stage of development. NECEC members span the broad spectrum of the clean energy industry, including clean transportation, energy efficiency, wind, solar, energy storage, microgrids, fuel cells, and advanced and “smart” technologies.

The Council is dedicated to growing the clean energy economy in Maine and across the region, in pursuit of our mission to create a world-class and equitable clean energy hub in the Northeast. The Council’s 250+ members include companies based in Maine and those from elsewhere who do business in Maine or hope to make future investments in the state.

LD 1830 is an important step to introducing more “homegrown” renewable energy and helping Maine meet its energy and climate goals. The Council writes generally in favor of LD 1830, with some small suggestions that we believe would strengthen the bill’s impact as intended.

- 1) Clarify that the use of contaminated lands is encouraged but not required. The Council strongly supports putting contaminated lands into productive use. Subjection 2(C)3 creates a market-based incentive that will accomplish this goal, by providing financial support to overcome the additional legal and financial hurdles that impede siting projects on contaminated lands. We note that the bill summary creates some confusion in this area.
- 2) The Council shares the goal of the Legislature, the Public Advocate, the Governor’s Energy Office and of other policymakers to minimize any ratepayer impact of renewable energy development, and, to the greatest extent possible, reap the benefits of such development in lowering costs, providing local grid benefits and boosting overall system

reliability. With that in mind, we recommend enumerating “benefits to ratepayers” in Subsection 2(C)3 to include these and other benefits, such as reduction of winter peak use of natural gas and generation profiles that accommodate the expected growth in beneficial electrification and electric vehicle penetration.

- 3) Expand the project viability requirement in Subsection 2(C)1 to include the bidder’s submission to ISO-NE of a System Impact Study or a Large Generator Interconnection Request, both of which require proving site control.
- 4) Finally, the Council is mindful that LD 1830’s scoring criteria would likely advantage one technology type above others, even if those other technologies could also help address reliability and fuel diversity, reduce the state’s winter dependence on costly natural gas during the winter or provide opportunities to advance regional cooperation. We note that in Maine’s 2020 renewables procurement,<sup>1</sup> solar bidders won 14 out of 15 awards for new facilities, and the one wind project that was selected was already under contract for energy with another party, and so the Maine Public Utilities Commission procured only the wind project’s RECs. As an industry organization representing a wide range of technologies, the Council recommends the Legislature consider more nuanced non-price factors such as fuel diversity, reliability, winter peak-shaving benefits, the likelihood of displacing natural gas generation, and the ability to demonstrate regional cooperation in tackling transmission challenges as prioritized by Governor Mills.

Again, the Council thanks the Committee and is ready and available to answer any questions you may have about us. We appreciate your consideration.

Sincerely,



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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.maine.gov/mpuc/regulated-utilities/electricity/rfp-awarded-contracts/class1a2020>

Natalie Treat  
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LD 1830

I regret that I am not able to attend the hearing on LD 1830. Thank you for sharing my comments with the Chairs and the Committee Members.

-Natalie Treat  
Northeast Clean Energy Council