

**State JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, UTILITIES, AND
TECHNOLOGY**

Ruth Poland, Bar Harbor Resident & Environmental Science Teacher

May 24th, 2023

Testimony in Support

LD 1986: An Act Relating to Net Energy Billing and Distributed Solar and Energy Storage Systems.

Senator Lawrence, Representative Zeigler, and honorable members of the Energy, Utilities, and Technology Committee. My name is Ruth Poland, and I am a Bar Harbor resident and a public high school science teacher who is deeply concerned about climate change and the future we are creating for our young people. I am writing in support of **LD 1986 An Act Relating to Net Energy Billing and Distributed Solar and Energy Storage Systems.**

The Town of Bar Harbor has a Climate Action Plan that calls for reaching a net zero emissions community by 2030. Our plan has a strong focus on developing locally generated renewable energy. The school where I teach, Mount Desert Island High School, also has a written commitment, unanimously voted for by the school board, to reach net zero emissions by 2030. LD 1986 would support Bar Harbor and other local communities, in reaching our climate goals and accessing the benefits of locally generated solar projects.

LD 1986 will support local solar projects by fairly compensating net energy billing projects for the benefits they supply the grid. This legislation is consistent with the recommendations of the Distributed Generation Stakeholder Group and will resolve the existing issues with net energy billing, lowering long-term electricity rates, and ensuring that ratepayers accrue the benefits of net energy billing. In contrast, LD 1347, which will be discussed during the Committee's working session on Thursday, would remove components of net energy billing that make solar ownership more accessible to low and moderate-income Mainers. LD 1347 would be harmful to solar energy goals of Bar Harbor and other communities, preventing our low and moderate-income residents from accessing solar benefits.

In closing, I urge you to pass LD 1986, legislation which supports the solar efforts of Bar Harbor and communities throughout Maine. Thank you for your service to the people of Maine.

Sincerely,

Ruth Poland