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Testimony in Support of LD 2206-An Act Regarding Incentives for Heat Pumps and Other Weatherization Products and Services

**J. Andrew Cashman on behalf of the Maine Association of REALTORS®
February 22, 2024**

Senator Lawrence, Representative Zeigler and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology, my name is Andy Cashman. I am the Founder of Resolve Government Relations. We represent the Maine Association of REALTORS®, a professional trade association established in 1936 with over 6,500 members statewide. REALTORS® grow Maine's economy, build Maine communities, and advocate for the protection of private property rights. Our members represent buyers and sellers involved in both residential and commercial real estate transactions. Our membership also includes industry affiliates, such as lenders, closing agents, title agents, appraisers, building inspectors, surveyors, etc. The Maine Association is chartered by the National Association of REALTORS® (NAR), the largest trade association in the country.

The Maine Association of REALTORS® supports LD 2206 as it would protect customers who choose to participate in Efficiency Maine's incentives program from being required disconnect or disable their existing primary heating equipment powered by heating fuel. This protection ensures that customers have continued access to resources that allow them to utilize the most cost-effective means of heating their homes. MAR supports incentives and financing for costs incurred to voluntarily reduce energy consumption. We also understand that heating and weatherization upgrades can often be cost prohibitive in the short term as the energy upgrades pay for themselves over the long term. Efficiency Maine's programming is a great way to increase the number of properties who choose to make needed energy upgrades. Consumers should have the choice to make the energy upgrades that work for their home and their budgets, with the opportunities to experience the benefits of financial incentives for alternate energy sources.

This bill would make an improvement to state programming and protect consumer choice. Alternative energy sources to reduce dependence on non-renewable forms of energy should be supported and LD 2206 encourages this. It strikes the right balance between providing incentives for Mainers, while acknowledging that for some, upgrades become more feasible and cost-effective in today's economy if they can continue to utilize the best option for heating their home while making improvements for the future. For these reasons, MAR encourages the committee to vote "Ought to Pass" on LD 2206.



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