

PLEASE NOTE: Legislative Information **cannot** perform research, provide legal advice, or interpret Maine law. For legal assistance, please contact a qualified attorney.

## **An Act To Expand Access to Efficiency Maine Rebate Programs**

**Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

**Sec. 1. 35-A MRSA §3211-C, sub-§1, ¶D** is enacted to read:

D. "State median household income" means the median household income for the State computed from the most current United States census information available, as provided by the Executive Department, State Planning Office.

**Sec. 2. 35-A MRSA §3211-C, sub-§3**, as amended by PL 2007, c. 661, Pt. D, §1, is further amended to read:

**3. Funding level; fund.** The commission shall assess transmission and distribution utilities to collect funds for the solar and wind energy rebate program in accordance with this subsection. The amount of all assessments by the commission under this subsection must result in total program expenditures by each transmission and distribution utility that do not exceed 0.005 cent per kilowatt-hour. To the extent practicable, the commission shall establish and collect the assessment in a manner that is consistent with the assessment made under section 3211-A. The commission shall establish a solar and wind energy rebate program fund to be used solely for the purposes of this section. All assessments made under this subsection are deposited in the fund. Any interest on funds in the fund must be credited to the fund. Funds not spent in any fiscal year remain in the fund to be used for the purposes of this section. The commission shall determine the allotment of the fund in each fiscal year between solar photovoltaic system rebates, solar thermal system rebates and qualified wind energy system rebates, with a minimum of 20% of the fund provided to each of the 3 types of rebates. For the first 6 months of each fiscal year, the commission shall divide the available funds for each of the 3 types of rebates.

A. Fifty percent of the available funds must be allotted for rebates for owners or tenants of residential property whose household income is at or below the state median household income.

B. Fifty percent of the available funds must be allotted for rebates for owners or tenants of residential property whose household income is above the state median household income and for owners or tenants of commercial property.

For the remaining 6 months of each fiscal year, the commission may distribute the remaining funds available for each of the 3 types of rebates without reference to the restrictions in paragraphs A and B.

### **SUMMARY**

This bill amends the solar and wind energy rebate program administered by the Public Utilities Commission to set aside 50% of the funds available for rebates to owners or tenants of residential or commercial property during the first 6 months of each fiscal year specifically for rebates to residential applicants whose household income is at or below the state median household income. During the

remainder of the year, the bill authorizes the commission to distribute the remaining funds available for rebates without reference to the applicant's income level or property type.