

LD 1646 Testimony
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Maine Climate Action
Support for LD 1646

Senator Lawrence, Representative Berry and distinguished committee members:

I am here to lend support for LD 1646 on behalf of Maine Climate Action, a statewide coalition supporting bold action on climate and energy issues, including A Climate to Thrive, 350 Maine, Maine Youth for Climate Justice, Sierra Club-Maine Chapter, Center for an Ecology-Based Economy and Maine Youth Action Network. Today, I am representing A Climate to Thrive, 350 Maine and Maine Youth for Climate Justice for today's testimony.

Our coalition organized the April 23rd Day of Action here at the State House, which brought 400 young Mainers and allies to the Capitol to advocate for urgent climate action. The UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has explicitly given the world eleven years in which to make dramatic changes in order to ensure our survival or stem catastrophic climate change. Steps such as this bill are crucial to Mainers ability to take charge.

This bill which creates the Maine Power Delivery Authority as a consumer-owned utility for the State has the potential to change the framework for our energy future. Not only will this lead to lower electricity costs for consumers, a ratepayer-owned utility has greater potential to generate power from a smarter, greener grid. Maine residents -- not foreign investors -- will set the priorities. Greater investment in renewables and efficiency, a more rapid adoption of electrification of heating, cooling and transportation, and support for progressive policies on energy and climate issues would be possible.

Maine people need a utility we can afford, a utility we can depend on, a utility willing to work with distributed energy generators rather than trying to block them, and a utility that supports rather than opposes meaningful and bold climate policies.

Maine Climate Action supports this bill and believes that a consumer owned utility will serve as a foundation for a green energy future.