

Late-Breaking EPC Priority

CUT COSTS, HONOR CONTRACTS, AND PROTECT COMMUNITY SOLAR

LD 1986 will establish cost-effective solar policies to maximize ratepayer savings, leverage federal investment, and maintain clean energy momentum.

Maine solar policy can and must continue to evolve.

- Through bipartisan 2019 legislation, Maine expanded Net Energy Billing (NEB) to create incentives for shared models of small and medium sized solar projects. While flawed, the program has been successful in jump-starting Maine's solar industry. Now it's time to phase it out and transition to the next generation of solar policies.
- The program has been amended by the legislature twice already, and a broad stakeholder effort convened by the Governor's Energy Office (GEO) engaged rigorous analysis and deliberation over 18 months to develop a cost-effective successor program that maximizes savings to ratepayers.
- With billions of dollars newly available from the federal government to support state programs for community solar, now is the time to definitively phase out the existing program and phase in the successor to ensure that we maintain momentum in the clean energy transition and channel the benefits of these kinds of solar projects to ratepayers.

LD 1986 is a solutions-oriented bill that makes important reforms without jeopardizing existing solar projects or the towns, schools, businesses, and others that depend on them.

- LD 1986 will cut costs by aggressively winding down the current NEB program and providing multiple opportunities to reduce costs for programs already in the program, while honoring contracts for existing projects and creating off-ramps for projects in development.
- It directs GEO to establish a new solar program that will leverage federal funds, reduce costs for all ratepayers, and enable greater access to affordable clean energy.
- LD 1986 requires the Public Utilities Commission to generate a full accounting of NEB costs *and benefits* to ratepayers so we can make smart policy decisions rather than relying on assumptions and utility math.



LD 1986 is our best chance for meaningful NEB reform.

- An alternative proposal – LD 1347 – would effectively eliminate community solar; retroactively penalize solar customers with no workable carve-outs or exemptions for rooftop, municipal, school, community-owned, or other categories; and severely constrain Maine's ability to access significant new federal funding. **LD 1347 does not protect rooftop and onsite solar.** While it allows people who own their own solar panels to continue participating in the program, it allows retroactive rate changes to the compensation they receive at any time.
- There are no net energy billing cost control mechanisms in LD 1347 that are not also in LD 1986.
- LD 1986 presents multiple thoughtful, effective cost control measures that will meaningfully address concerns with the current program while ensuring Maine is well-positioned to continue deploying cost-effective and beneficial solar particularly for low-income and disadvantaged communities.

Support LD 1986. Protect community solar and climate leadership.

For more information, please contact
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Environmental Priorities Coalition

Maine's **Environmental Priorities Coalition** is a partnership of 37 environmental, conservation, and public health organizations representing over 120,000 members who want to protect the good health, good jobs, and quality of life that our environment provides.

We are counting on Maine policymakers to take the important steps needed to protect Maine's extraordinary environment so all Maine people and Maine communities can thrive.

