



## Maine Needs a Clear Solar Policy to Carry Us Forward

### **Support:**

# *An Act to Protect and Expand Access to Solar Power In Maine*

**Sponsored by:** Rep. Seth Berry

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This bill will increase Maine's energy independence and create hundreds of new jobs.

*Maine families, businesses, and communities should have every opportunity to generate their own power and increase their energy security with solar.*

**Years of uncertainty and inaction are keeping Maine in last place for solar.**

- Solar power is undergoing an astonishing revolution around the country as prices drop and the amount of solar being built increases.
- Maine is the only state in New England without a comprehensive solar policy. As a result, we lag far behind in the amount of solar installed and the number of solar jobs created.
- Maine's effective solar rebate program lapsed several years ago and solar companies have been kept guessing about the future of solar policy ever since.
- Now the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) has proposed gutting net metering, which is the only thing sustaining Maine's meager solar industry and making it possible for thousands of Maine homeowners and businesses to own and produce their own solar power.

## This bill will create jobs by providing stability and predictability in the solar market.

- Maine has been on a “solar-coaster” of unpredictability for years, which has suppressed investment and growth.
- Net metering is the foundation for a stable solar market. A recent poll shows that more than 60% of Maine people oppose the PUC’s proposal to roll back net metering.
- Re-establishing Maine’s solar rebate program with additional features, including targeting small businesses and low and moderate income Mainers, will increase access to solar by reducing upfront costs. Over six years, the solar rebate could benefit more than 300 small businesses and 3,000 homes.
- Stabilizing net metering and reducing up-front costs to install solar will protect existing jobs and create new opportunities for Maine’s solar workforce.
- Distributed rooftop solar power reduces costs for our electric grid and lowers energy bills for everyone in Maine.



***We are counting on Maine policymakers to pass solar legislation so Maine can finally get out of last place in solar power in the region. Solar offers tremendous opportunity to benefit consumers and create good jobs.***

## Maine needs legislative action on solar. This bill will:

- Eliminate the barriers to community solar projects in Maine, allowing hundreds of people to participate in and benefit from a single community solar project.
- Establish net metering in statute, which is fundamental for a predictable solar market.
- Authorize third-party ownership of solar projects, which is available in other states, so that Mainers can access easier financing.
- Create hundreds of new solar jobs, lower energy costs, and provide clean, local energy for Maine people.



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