



Maine 2018 Solar Bill

Support: LD 1444 *An Act to Prohibit Gross Metering*

(Originally titled, "An Act Regarding Large Scale Community Solar Procurement")

Sponsored by: Sen. David Woodsome

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This bill will increase accessibility to solar power for Mainers by allowing more people to join community solar projects and by stopping a rollback that endangers jobs and the right of Mainers to produce their own power.

The Legislature must ACT NOW to stop a new tax on solar power generated and used at Maine homes and businesses. The PUC is poised to impose this radical and unfair new fee. LD 1444 will prevent this fee and protect Mainers from millions of dollars in unnecessary increases in electricity bills.

Key points related to this bill include:

- If the Legislature doesn't act, the PUC's anti-solar rule will take effect, and utilities like Central Maine Power (CMP) will start charging customers a tax on power they create and use on site – electricity that never touches the electrical grid.
- Solar reduces power bills for all Mainers whether they have solar or not, but CMP won't tell you that because it is a monopoly utility beholden to overseas shareholders who pocket a guaranteed 12 percent rate of return when the company builds power lines and poles. CMP has a vested interest in keeping Maine homes and businesses buying its product.
- CMP will have to raise electricity rates for all Mainers by millions of dollars to install the new systems and equipment required for the new, unfair tax.
- The PUC has put utility earnings ahead of consumers, has failed to consider these costs, and is stepping on the rights of Mainers to generate their own power.
- This bill will allow as many as 50 people to participate in a community solar project by lifting the current nine-person limit.

This bill will prevent a tax on “self-generated” solar energy and reduce arbitrary barriers for community solar.

- LD 1444 makes very narrow changes, primarily by preventing the fee on power generated and used at Maine homes and businesses. The bill does not prevent the PUC from gradually scaling back net metering.
- Right now there is an arbitrary limit on the number of participants in a community solar array. The bill raises the cap from 9 to 50.



CMP will oppose this bill because of its financial interests: The company supports this tax on solar that would allow it to profit and pass along the costs to all electricity customers in Maine. CMP also supports the tax because it makes it harder for customers to compete with the utility by producing their own power.

To stop the new solar tax, support LD 1444. This bill will:

- Prevent higher power bills for all Mainers, which would be needed to pay for the new systems and equipment to tax solar power.
- Stop the new solar tax, which is akin to charging Mainers for tomatoes they grow in their own backyard.
- Lift the current arbitrary limit of nine people joining together in a community solar project, allowing up to 50 people.

For more information contact Sophie Janeway, Climate & Clean Energy Outreach Coordinator (207) 430-0142, sophie@nrcm.org, or visit www.nrcm.org/projects/climate/clean-energy/solar-power-in-maine/



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