

My name is Rev. Jill Saxby. I am a member of the Public Policy Committee of the Maine Council of Churches. The Council is a long-time member of the Environmental Priorities Coalition which supports LD 1730 as one of our priority bills for this legislative session. The Council represents seven mainline Protestant denominations in Maine: Episcopal, United Church of Christ, United Methodist, New England Society of Friends (Quaker), Presbyterian-USA and Evangelical Lutheran. The Council speaks out on issues in alignment with our common moral values, including a commitment to public policies that address climate change and its disproportionate effects on the most vulnerable individuals, communities and eco-systems in Maine.

We support LD 1730 because it expands the options available to all Mainers to save on sky-rocketing electricity bills and to convert at least some of our energy usage to non-fossil-fuel sources. LD 1730 would make small, plug-in solar devices more accessible and affordable than rooftop or ground-based solar projects that are often beyond the means of many Mainers, including renters. Requiring developers of new multi-unit housing to build for the future by including outlets that small solar devices can plug into only makes sense.

Easier access to these devices, which cost less to install and provide some energy savings, would help some of the most vulnerable Mainers: seniors on fixed incomes, renters, lower-income households, those living in Maine's mostly older housing stock with roofs that may not be suitable for solar panels, island and rural communities, those who cannot afford expensive diesel or propane-fueled generators to get us through power outages.

LD 1730 is one common-sense proposal in what needs to be a multi-pronged, "all of the above" approach to reaching Maine's climate change and fossil-fuel reduction goals. It makes sense for the grid, for consumers and for the situation we all need to face together as the effects of climate change increasingly impact Maine's people and environment in the years to come.

We urge you to vote yes on LD 1730. Thank you for considering our views.