

Testimony for May 16, 2019 – Energy, Utilities and Technology Committee hearing - by Jill Linzee:  
Thank you to chairmen Senator Lawrence and Representative Berry and members of the committee.

My name is Jill Linzee, I live in the village of New Harbor, in the town of Bristol, Maine. I wish to express my wholehearted support for LD 1711. I am very proud that my own senator, Senator Dana Dow, is the lead sponsor for this bill. There has been strong support in Senator Dow's district for this solar bill for some time now, and a great many of his constituents are looking forward to the opportunities that this bill will provide to expand solar energy locally, as well as throughout our state.

In my own town of Bristol, we have a new solar energy system that was officially turned on last December and now generates about 75% of the electricity needed for all of our municipal buildings. There has been so much local interest in our town system, that Bristol is now exploring installing a solar cooperative farm at the Town's former landfill site, a farm that local residents can become involved in. LD 1711 would help this new project in several ways, including expanding the number of residents who can be involved, as well as making it possible for low and middle-income folks to join the Bristol solar farm. [*see attached page on Bristol Solar Power*]

There are other great community and town solar energy systems in our district already operating in towns such as Boothbay and Edgecomb, but many other Lincoln County organizations and businesses are in the planning stages for solar power projects of their own. I know, for example that the Coastal Rivers Conservation Trust in Damariscotta is in the planning stages for a large community solar energy project, and that the Central Lincoln County YMCA is also hoping to install a solar energy system in the near future. LD 1711 would make both of these projects much easier and more possible to accomplish.

It is SO important to expand solar energy in Maine, and to pass this bill now, and not delay it further. I serve as Co-Chair of the Climate Change group for the Maine Unitarian Universalist Statewide Advocacy Network, a large statewide group that has given LD 1711 its' highest level of endorsement. Unitarian Universalism is a faith tradition with a long history in Maine. In my own town of Bristol we have two Universalist churches that date back to the 1700s. As a member of that community, I believe that we humans have been given this amazing planet to live on, and its' many natural resources that help to sustain us. We've taken this incredible gift for granted for far too long. Our responsibility is to protect the planet that supports our lives and every other form of life. To do that we urgently need to reduce the carbon emissions that have led to us to climate change. And the best way to address climate change is to shift our energy reliance to clean, renewable energy – to solar energy. LD 1711 will go a long way toward helping us to do that.

Thanks for your time and attention.

[jlinzee@comcast.net](mailto:jlinzee@comcast.net)  
207-677-3703