

Testimony by William Lord  
Before the Committee on Utilities and Energy  
May 5, 2005

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee:

I thank you for the opportunity to make a short statement regarding LD 1586, the Governor's Solar Initiative.

My wife and I have lived in a solar house in Cape Porpoise since 1995. We harvest the Sun's energy to create electricity to power the house and heat water for domestic and heating needs. We are hooked up to the grid, so that as I'm testifying today any power generated in excess of the house's needs, is exported to Central Maine Power Company and resold to their customers. It is clean power...generated by a nuclear power plant some 93 millions miles away...the Sun.



LD 1586 is an important step forward in the Governor Baldacci's efforts to reduce Maine's dependence on non-renewable fossil fuels. To quote from a recent interview, the governor said, "I am committed to the goal of an energy-independent Maine, to a state that relies more on energy conservation, energy efficiency and renewable energy sources like the sun, wind, water and wood, and less on foreign oil and gas. Solar power is one of many sustainable energy options for Maine that I support and believe in."

I agree with the governor and would add this to his statement: Ignoring a free source of energy – the Sun – is not the Maine way of doing things. We pride ourselves in spending our money wisely. Embracing a technology that utilizes free energy, delivered to the home or business each day at no cost is not only Yankee-smart but is increasingly acknowledged by oil corporations, particularly British Petroleum, to be a necessary part of the future energy mix of our nation .

This bill will 'jump-start' solar technology in Maine. We will join California, New York, New Jersey and other states in implementing an energy policy which the federal government has yet to embrace. What Washington, D.C. hasn't done, Augusta, Maine can do.

The technology is in use every day throughout the state...solar-powered temporary signs along the Turnpike, navigational buoys along the coast and on a growing number of homes throughout the state. It's dependable, it's benign, it doesn't pollute and it let's citizens participate in reducing our dependence of foreign oil. Solar power is good for the economy, it enhances our national security and it helps protect the environment.

The state motto, Dirigo, means "I lead." The Governor's proposal does just that. I support LD 1586 as an important piece of leadership legislation. Thank you.

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