

Mainers Will Benefit from Greater Energy Security

Heating costs are highly volatile, making Maine families and businesses especially vulnerable to financial calamity when prices next rise. Most Maine buildings are very energy inefficient, so weatherization and improving energy efficiency would help residents stay warm while saving money and energy. Maine now sends about \$2.5 billion dollars out of state annually to pay for heating fuels; reducing that bill will keep money flowing in the Maine economy, creating jobs—including jobs in an emerging clean energy sector.

Maine currently has programs to help electric and natural gas customers conserve energy and weatherize homes, but there are no such programs to help the 85% of Maine homes and businesses which use oil, kerosene, or propane. The lone exception is the tiny fraction of low-income households who are served by federal weatherization funds each year.

Compounding the problem, Maine's energy efficiency programs are scattered among multiple agencies resulting in duplication of efforts, lack of coordination, reduced energy and cost savings to consumers, missed opportunities, and citizen confusion.

Energy efficiency and weatherization programs that are well-planned, professionally delivered, and sufficiently funded can cut heating fuel consumption by 20-30% in an existing building, saving a proportionate amount of money for the consumer, and reduce global warming pollution in our environment.



LD 886: An Act to Secure Maine's Energy Future (Sponsored by Speaker Hannah Pingree)

- Broadens energy efficiency and weatherization programs to help reduce heating bills for any Maine home or business, no matter what their heating fuel or income level.
- Simplifies and consolidates state programs by establishing “one-stop-shopping” for energy efficiency incentives and assistance to reduce Mainers’ heating and electrical costs. Merging planning and delivery of Maine’s energy programs will make them better integrated and more customer-oriented, effective, and efficient.
- Streamlines and expands training, certification, and low-interest business loans for equipment for important energy jobs like auditors and installers, to help Maine’s clean energy sector learn and grow.
- Establishes sustainable dedicated revenue source to serve heating oil, kerosene, and propane efficiency efforts, and better position Maine to benefit from federal energy investments.

Boosts Jobs and Maine's Economy



- Reducing heating oil consumption by 25% will save the average Maine family \$600 per year (at \$3/gallon oil).
 - Mainers will save over \$1 billion from the first ten years of the program.
 - Every dollar saved by participating Maine consumers is a dollar that is not sent out of state to import heating fuel, so it can be used instead for purchases in the local economy.
- The financial incentives offered by the program stimulate new jobs and new businesses that deliver energy efficiency products and services in our local communities. At our projected funding levels, more than 1,000 new energy jobs could be added.
 - The measures delivered by a “Whole House” efficiency and weatherization program pay dividends for an average of 18 years (e.g., for high efficiency furnaces, insulation, air sealing).
 - The program also would offer new training and certifications, and assist new businesses in buying specialized equipment to offer energy services. Efficiency and weatherization upgrades will help put builders and contractors back to work.

Protects Our Health and Our Environment

- Energy efficiency can dramatically improve indoor air quality and comfort when installed by certified professionals.
- Low income residents are particularly at risk from accidental fires and carbon monoxide poisoning from improvised heating devices. The whole house energy program can help deliver proper ventilation.
- About 25% of Maine's global warming pollution comes from burning oil, kerosene and propane for heat.
Increasing the energy efficiency of Maine homes will reduce these emissions.



For more information, please contact:

Dylan Voorhees, NRCM, (207) 622-3101 ext 212, dylan@nrcm.org, cell phone (207) 462-3221
Micheal Stoddard, Environment Northeast, 761-4566, mstoddard@env-ne.org
Steve Hinchman, Conservation Law Foundation, 729-7733, shinchman@clf.org
Kurt West, Maine Center for Economic Policy, 622-7381, kwise@mecep.org