

April, 2013

Senator John Cleveland, Chair
Representative Barry Hobbins, Chair
Joint Committee on Energy, Utilities & Technology

Re: Energy Efficiency - the lowest cost energy resource is good for our economy

Dear Chairmen Cleveland and Hobbins,

The undersigned ### Maine businesses urge you to adopt policies this session to increase Maine's use of cost-effective energy efficiency in order to lower energy costs, protect and create jobs, and improve Maine's economy by keeping more of our energy dollars in our pockets and in our state.

We often hear that Maine has some of the highest energy costs in the nation, and that these high energy costs affect our competitiveness. **Each of our companies has first-hand knowledge of reducing energy costs substantially through public-private investments in energy efficiency.** Energy efficiency improves economic competitiveness.

We know it works, and we know more can still be done.

Cost-effective energy efficiency is the cheapest energy "resource" available in Maine. It is literally, measurably true that the cheapest kilowatt-hour is the kilowatt-hour we don't have to buy. Of course few things are *free* and energy efficiency savings is not one of them—efficiency savings come from *investments*. Our businesses are making investments in energy efficiency, in partnership with programs like those at Efficiency Maine.

From a ratepayer perspective, it makes so much sense to ensure that we are capturing all of the achievable, cost-effective efficiency savings that cost less than supply. **Saving electricity through efficiency costs less than half of buying that power. Energy efficiency helps keep electricity prices a little bit lower for everyone by reducing the amount of the most expensive power we would otherwise need to buy.**

Many of our businesses provide efficiency services to cut commercial electricity bills or to help homeowners cut heating fuel bills through weatherization.

In all of these cases, energy efficiency investments are especially important because they keep money flowing within the Maine economy, not out of it.

However, as Maine businesses, we know that energy efficiency savings are not always easy to capture in the real world. Most Maine businesses and homeowners rarely have the time or expertise to determine which energy investments make sense, which products and services can be trusted, or how to make it happen. Whether we are a local small business or a part of an international corporation, our time and our capital have to compete for other priorities.

We ask you to accomplish the following things this session:

1. Treat energy efficiency like a resource and make it Maine's policy to seek out all achievable, cost-effective energy efficiency. Reduce the influence of politics in determining how much energy efficiency is cost-effective.
2. Cut electricity bills further by endorsing the unanimous recommendation by the Maine Public Utilities Commission regarding additional cost-effective efficiency available to ratepayers.
3. Let Efficiency Maine continue to develop effective programs that reach *more* business customers, from small businesses to large industrials, and help them save more money.
4. Ensure that we balance natural gas infrastructure expansion with cost-effective energy efficiency. Help all Maine businesses and homeowners that begin using natural gas to use it as efficiently as possible.

Thank you,