

May 28, 2015

Senator David Woodsome, Chair  
Representative Mark Dion, Chair  
Committee on Energy, Utilities & Technology

Dear Senator Woodsome, Representative Dion, and members of the Committee:

Our communities, and others in Maine, are working to implement community or group solar projects that would benefit local people and businesses, as well as provide broader ratepayer, economic, and environmental benefits for Maine. **We are writing with an urgent request to raise or eliminate the 10-person cap on shared, community solar.** This regulatory barrier is arbitrary, unfair, and stifles innovative community-based solutions.

This limit takes away the rights of groups of individuals and businesses to pursue solar power for their own use. It arbitrarily treats a group of nine people differently from a group of 11, much less 20 or 30.

This limit makes solar projects more expensive than they need to be. There are important economies of scale with solar projects, and the limit makes larger, more cost-effective projects impossible.

This limit puts a barrier on local, home-grown solutions: community groups coming together to make investments in a clean, sustainable, local energy resource that is stable over the long-term. Developing a community solar project is already hard enough to organize and finance—we don't need artificial barriers, too.

This limit is contributing to Maine falling behind on solar. Many other states allow community solar—Maryland just passed legislation this month. Considering there are only 18 months left for a federal tax credit on solar, Maine cannot afford inaction.

We understand that the committee is engaged in larger discussions about a comprehensive solar policy for Maine. We support that effort and recognize how difficult and time-consuming a process that may be. We see no reason why this arbitrary limit on Maine people's ability to pursue solar cannot be lifted immediately, enabling us to go forward and do our part while you continue to pursue yours.

Sincerely,

Gary Friedmann  
**Bar Harbor**

Ron Desmarais  
**Milo**

Marty Fox  
**Wiscasset**

David Smith  
**Belfast**

Susan Gabrielson  
**Sanford**

Rozanna Patane  
**York**

Andy Jones  
**Falmouth**

Tex Haeuser  
**South Portland**

Sukie Rice  
**Freeport**

Peter Garrett  
**Winslow**