



Don't Weaken Maine's Renewable Energy Policy

Oppose: LD 1699

An Act To Revise the Renewable Portfolio Standard Laws To Allow Certain Hydropower Facilities To Qualify as New Renewable Capacity Resources

Sponsored by: Rep. Deane Rykerson

For more information, please contact
Dylan Voorhees, (207) 430-0112 or
dylan@nrcm.org



**Natural Resources
Council of Maine**

3 Wade Street
Augusta, ME 04330
(207) 622-3101
nrcm.org

Maine should consider ways to strengthen our renewable energy laws, not water them down. This bill weakens Maine's Renewable Portfolio Standard by decreasing the need for new renewable energy.

Renewable energy is good for Maine consumers, job creation, and our environment.

- Maine has abundant renewable energy resources and no fossil fuels, and our electricity mix is already dangerously overdependent on power plants that use imported natural gas.
- A diverse mix of sources of power lowers electricity costs, and wind and solar have become the cheapest forms of new electricity generation.¹
- Tapping new local renewable resources also creates jobs, increased tax revenue, and strengthens the overall Maine economy.
- Increasing renewable energy is essential for achieving Maine's established goals for reducing global warming pollution.

This bill weakens Maine's Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS).

- Maine's Renewable Portfolio Standard is a long-standing, market-based tool to diversify our energy mix and encourage investment in renewable resources. It requires 10 percent of our power to come from new renewables.
- By adding older, existing renewable resources to Maine's RPS², this bill reduces the need to build new renewable generation and would result in less renewable energy overall.
- Maine ratepayers should not be asked to pay more to the owners of older power plants. This bill puts dam owner profits ahead of consumers and sound energy policy.
- The bill does not require existing hydro dam owners to make any additional investments or environmental improvements in order to qualify for more generous support from ratepayers.

The Legislature should consider a comprehensive RPS reform next session.

- Maine's RPS target of 10 percent was achieved in 2017 and policymakers should consider next steps.
- Our RPS policy is already suffering from a major loophole that allowed old, existing biomass power plants to qualify as "new" generation.
- There are many piecemeal RPS bills at the Energy and Utilities Committee, but the Legislature should consider a comprehensive reform to the RPS, establishing new goals, improving its effectiveness, and deciding which resources should be eligible.
- All options can be on the table in a comprehensive reform, but this can only be accomplished in the longer 2019 legislative session.

For more information contact Dylan Voorhees, Climate & Clean Energy Project Director (207) 430-0112, dylan@nrcm.org, or visit www.nrcm.org/projects/climate/clean-energy/



Natural Resources Council of Maine

3 Wade Street • Augusta, Maine • 04330
(207) 622-3101 • nrcm@nrcm.org • www.nrcm.org

¹Lazard. "Levelized Cost of Energy Analysis 11.0". November, 2017.

² Maine's RPS already also has a minimum requirement for existing renewables like hydropower dams.