



**State of Maine**  
**131st Maine Senate**  
**Senate Republican Office**  
**House Republican Office**

**PRESS BRIEFING – NET ENERGY BILLING**  
**MAY 30, 2023 – AFTER SESSION (approximately 12:30 p.m.)**  
**WELCOME CENTER/PRESS ROOM**

**What:** Issues surrounding the looming Net Energy Billing crisis

**Who:** Senators Trey Stewart and Matt Harrington

Rep. Steven Foster

**Introduction & Background (Sens. Stewart & Harrington)**

*“If nothing is done, the OPA estimates that in two years, the cost of [Net Energy Billing] will grow to approximately \$220M/year or approximately \$275/year for each ratepayer. And this increase will continue for the next 20 years.” ~ Maine Public Advocate William Harwood in testimony to EUT*

*“Funding public policy through electricity rates is a regressive way to do it. The issue is that the magnitude of the cost that we’re seeing over a very short period of time is going to lead to significant increases in the costs of electricity bills.” ~ Maine Public Utilities Chairman Philip Bartlett/Bangor Daily News, “Community solar program will cost Mainers \$220M a year by 2025”*

- Electricity rates have increased 165% the past two years. OPA stated the Net Energy Billing program is an unsustainable, unaffordable and unnecessary subsidy for solar developers.
- Under NEB, ratepayers pay approximately 20 cents/kWh for solar energy that costs the developer less than 10 cents/kWh to generate.
- Ratepayers will see higher rates in July as the Maine Public Utilities Commission (PUC) implements stranded cost increases to recover solar project subsidies.
- According to Public Advocate William Harwood, who testified at a public hearing in April, the total cost of solar subsidies and net-energy billing stranded costs for ratepayers is estimated to be about \$220 million per year for the next 20 years.
- OPA also cited other flaws in NEB including lack of site planning, ratepayers are technically not using renewable energy and grid connection problems.

**Proposed Amendment to LD 1347 (Rep. Foster)**

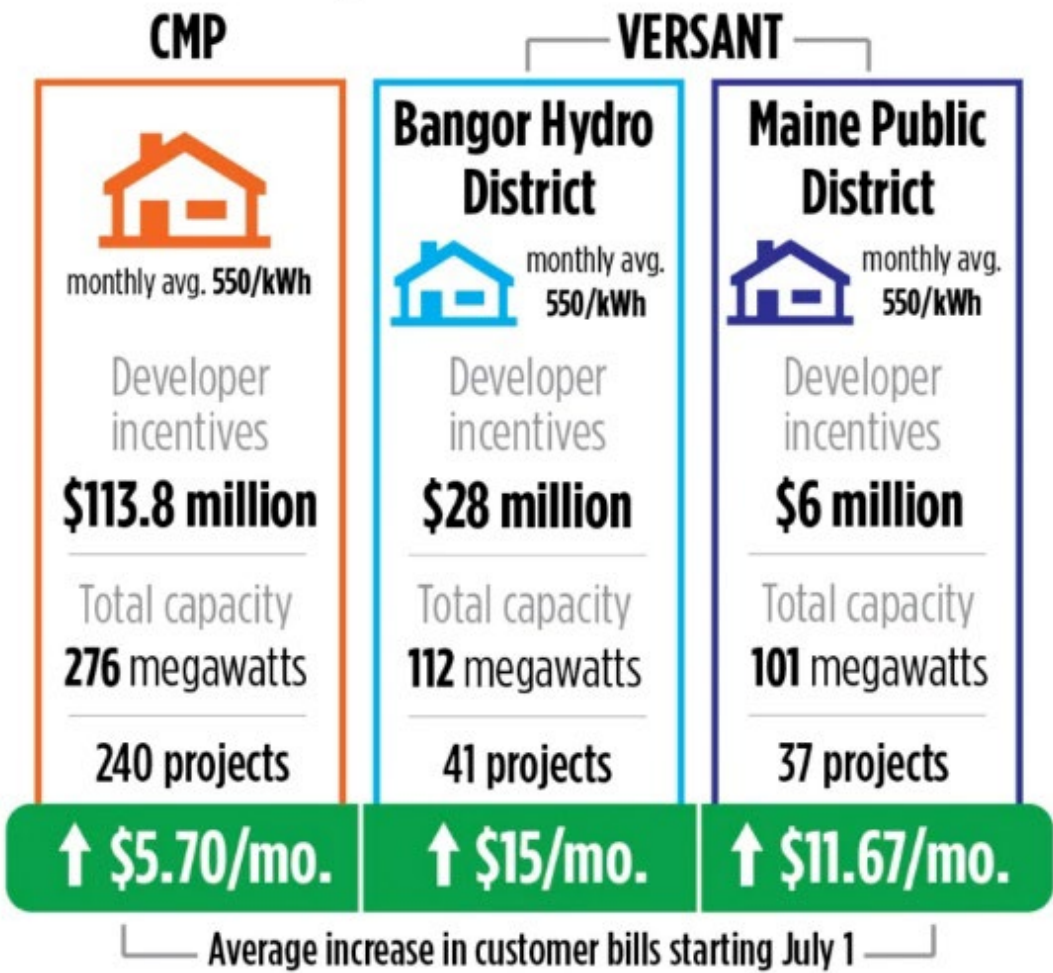
- Limits number of Community Solar subscribers to 10 starting September 2023
- Reduces qualifying nameplate project capacity from 5 megawatts to 660 kilowatts
- Allows PUC to periodically review and adjust the subscriber compensation
- Requires the distributed generation resource to be on the same side of the meter
- Directs PUC to conduct a competitive solicitation for distributed generation contracts
- Selected distributed generation resources may not continue to participate in NEB
- Direct PUC to adopt rules and develop policies to govern development of solar energy projects less than 5 megawatts

**Closing remarks, Q/A**

*“Before we close the door on this session, we owe it to the ratepayers to explore ways to reduce the ongoing subsidy paid to all NEB projects.” ~ Public Advocate William Harwood in testimony to EUT*

Graphic courtesy of the Portland Press Herald

# Solar incentives, customer costs



SOURCE: Central Maine Power, Versant Power

STAFF GRAPHIC | JAKE LAWS