



Summary of Energy Legislation Enacted in the Second Regular Session of the 132nd Maine Legislature

The 2nd Regular Session of the 132nd Maine Legislature convened January 7, 2026, and adjourned sine die on April 29, 2026. The effective date for nonemergency laws passed this session is Wednesday, July 29, 2026.

Supplemental Budget (L.D. 2212)

The Supplemental Budget included an **annual allocation of \$7.5 million from the General Fund for the Low-Income Assistance Program (LIAP)**. LIAP helps qualified low-income electricity customers pay for electricity costs. This is the first time in state history that the legislature has dedicated ongoing funding to support LIAP through the General Fund.

Renewing Maine's Commitment to RGGI (L.D. 2037)

The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) is a cooperative program among ten Northeastern states that caps and reduces power-sector carbon emissions through an allowance trading system. This legislation **reaffirms Maine's commitment to RGGI**. Since 2008, participating states have cut CO₂ emissions by more than 50%. In Maine, RGGI proceeds are reinvested through the Efficiency Maine Trust into energy efficiency programs, delivering about \$4 in benefits for every \$1 spent. Continued participation will allow Maine to keep reinvesting in programs that lower energy bills, improve public health, and support clean energy innovation.

Removing the Return on Equity "Bonus" from Electric Bills (L.D. 2038)

An outdated federal law rewards Maine utilities with millions each year for voluntarily joining New England's regional transmission organization—an incentive that's no longer necessary now that membership is required by state law. More than 30 state regulators, including Maine, have urged federal regulators to end or limit this bonus. **Eliminating this "bonus" incentive will save Maine several million each year by removing this charge from customer bills.**

Maine Home Energy Navigator and Coaching Resource Hub (L.D. 2220)

The **Maine Home Energy Navigator and Coaching Resource Hub**, created within the **Department of Energy Resources (DOER)** with \$100,000 in one-time funding, will launch a website and develop training and programming materials to help communities build effective energy coaching programs. These programs provide personalized support to help consumers overcome barriers to energy efficiency and clean energy participation, such as limited time, digital literacy challenges, and complex incentive structures.

Plug-in Solar (L.D. 1730)

This legislation **opens the door to “plug-in solar” and storage in Maine** by outlining clear definitions, capacity limits, and technical requirements to enable safe adoption while limiting barriers and costs by exempting eligible systems from interconnection processes. These systems allow those without traditional rooftop systems, such as renters and residents of multi-unit buildings, to access the benefits of solar. While not intended to power an entire home, plug-in solar can offset a portion of household electricity bills. Systems larger than 420W require electrician installation and utility notification.

Demand Response Programs (L.D. 2140)

The Efficiency Maine Trust (EMT) will establish a **voluntary demand response program**, along with an outreach and educational campaign, to encourage electricity customers to reduce usage during periods of peak demand. The goal is to help lower electric bills while improving overall grid reliability. These new initiatives will complement Efficiency Maine’s existing efficiency and weatherization rebates, as well as its existing demand response programs.

Enhanced Consumer Protections for Community Solar (L.D. 1964) **Emergency*

This legislation **strengthens transparency and consumer protections for residential customers considering community solar or solar leasing options** in Maine. It requires sales representatives to provide clear, accurate, and consistent information about their products so customers can make informed financing decisions and directs DOER to create standard written disclosure forms to guide industry implementation.

Community Choice Aggregation (L.D. 2112)

This bill **authorizes municipalities to establish community choice aggregation programs** through a Public Utilities Commission (PUC) approval process, which allows local governments to procure electricity on behalf of residents, businesses, and municipal accounts from alternative suppliers while maintaining transmission and distribution service from the existing utility.

Assessing Emerging Energy Technologies (L.D. 343)

This legislation adds a new requirement to the State Energy Plan—updated every two years by DOER—to **identify and assess emerging energy technologies** for application in the State consistent with state policy goals and prioritizing carbon-free and lowest-emission technologies.

Completing the transition to DOER (L.D. 2153)

L.D. 1270 established the Maine Department of Energy Resources (DOER), replacing the former Governor’s Energy Office (GEO). This bill **completes the transition** by updating state law to ensure an effective and orderly transfer **of responsibilities from GEO to DOER**, while also providing additional clarity regarding the department’s duties.

Interconnection Ombudsman Position at the PUC (L.D. 32)

The Interconnection Ombudsman, established at the PUC, assists customers seeking interconnection of renewable energy projects by facilitating the efficient and fair resolution of disputes between customers seeking to interconnect and investor-owned transmission and distribution utilities. This bill **simplifies the administrative process for filling the position**.

Updates to the Non-wires Alternative Process and Energy Contracting Language (L.D. 897)

This legislation clarifies how “negative pricing” is handled in competitive energy procurements initiated by the PUC, **aligning Maine’s approach with the other New England states**. This bill also makes recommended changes to the state’s non-wires alternative (NWA) process to increase transparency, clarify utility planning requirements, and provide rulemaking authority to the PUC.

Allocation of NEB Costs and Long-term Contract Costs and Benefits (L.D. 1936)

This removes the requirement that the PUC allocate the costs and benefits of net energy billing programs and long-term contracts to each investor-owned utility based on its pro rata share, and instead requires that, beginning July 1, 2028, these costs be allocated by grouping similar customer types across all investor-owned utilities. Rather than assigning costs within individual utility service territories, the PUC would evaluate customer classes on a statewide basis to **ensure costs and benefits are distributed more evenly and consistently**, helping reduce disparities in stranded cost charges that can vary depending on where a customer lives.

An Act Regarding Energy Fairness (L.D. 1949)

This bill requires the PUC to take several **new actions to improve rate transparency and affordability**. It directs the PUC to consider the impact of utility rates on residential customer affordability in all its decisions, publish data on utility credit and collection activities, and conduct a comprehensive review of the components that make up electric delivery rates. It also requires the development of an affordability metric to evaluate how electricity bills affect household energy burden.

Transparency of Utility Charges and Access to Cooperative Community Solar (L.D. 1966)

This bill requires large transmission and distribution utilities (over 50,000 customers) to itemize and clearly **disclose administrative charges** on customer bills; **prohibits the use of the term “public policy charges”** on customer bills and directs utilities to label any non-included recoverable costs in a clear, neutral way; directs the **PUC to set billing and disclosure standards for community solar customers**; establishes a **competitive procurement for up to 4 MW of consumer-owned distributed generation** resources for low- and moderate income ratepayers; and **updates net energy billing rules** to clarify an existing exemption consistent with prior legislation.