



Department of Energy Resources
22 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

September 11, 2026

Commissioner Cunningham and Deputy Commissioner Tremblay:

ReVision Energy (ReVision) offers these comments in response to the draft program proposal recently issued for the Department of Energy Resources' (the Department) development of a new distributed energy resources program (Program) in the state, pursuant to the passage of LD 1777 and its codification within 35-A MRS section 3209-I. We appreciate the Department's thoughtful and diligent work to evaluate a complex set of program design and implementation opportunities, and we appreciate the opportunity to provide our feedback as practitioners in the field.

ReVision is a clean energy construction company that installs both residential and commercial solar and storage technologies. For more than twenty years, we have worked to deploy distributed energy resources and decarbonize the electric grid in Maine. Our mission, to build our just and equitable electric future, means that we are deeply committed to continuing this work in Maine, and we care deeply that the new Program function effectively to support continued decarbonization in light of our changing climate and the state's codified emissions reduction and clean electricity goals.

I. Background & Overview

In 2025, the Maine Legislature passed LD 1777, which ended the majority of the state's Net Energy Billing (NEB) program. This legislation effectively ended most opportunities to build commercial and community solar and storage projects in the state. At a high level, this has left a gap in the deployment of clean energy technology—which is a gap in the ability to realize the very tangible benefits that clean energy provides, including reducing demand costs through peak shaving, increasing energy supply, improving grid resilience, deferral and avoidance of distribution upgrade costs, and the stabilization of electricity prices. As a clean energy company in the state, our sales pipeline essentially ended on December 31, 2025, and we have eagerly awaited a new program to continue our decarbonization work and engaged the Department throughout this time on potential solutions that meet statutory requirements.

We truly appreciate the considerable work and analysis conducted by the Department and its consultants, DNV Energy Services and Current Energy Group, including the review of different market approaches, programs in other jurisdictions, and methodologies for cost-benefit analyses. However, we respectfully believe the Program proposal must include additional detail regarding a concrete program design that can



be effectively implemented to deploy distributed energy resources in today's landscape. Specifically, it appears that Phase 2 of the Program, Distribution System Services, is not currently ready for market and will depend on critical utility data for deployment. As a result, the Program would appear to launch first with Phase 1, the Standard Offer Block, and as proposed, we are concerned that the compensation for that phase alone will not be sufficient to support the construction and deployment of new clean energy resources.

II. Standard Offer Block

While we appreciate the opportunity for long-term contracts within the Standard Offer Block phase of the Program, we are concerned that the current compensation structure would not be sufficient to support project finance for new distributed energy resources. Payment for energy supply paired with REC compensation, particularly where RECs must be retired in Maine, will not provide a workable revenue stream for many projects. This challenge is heightened by the fact that the July 4, 2026 deadline for safe harboring under the Federal Investment Tax Credit (ITC) has passed, and any projects that qualify for the ITC must be fully operational and placed into service by December 31, 2027. The Program appears to miss the opportunity to capitalize on such a financial scenario—when the Program begins, the ITC will be long gone. Even more, tariffs affecting material costs and the repeal of Maine's property tax exemption further add to project cost pressures. As currently structured, we are concerned that projects able to participate may be limited to those that could otherwise compete in existing standard offer solicitations.

To strengthen the Program design as proposed, we offer the following feedback on the questions listed in Section 6 of the straw proposal:

- **Cost Allocation:** We support the approach of collecting revenue from Standard Offer customers for the energy produced by projects within the Program. Building energy into the Standard Offer is a reasonable way to allocate costs and benefits because it can avoid additional administrative layers, costs, and complexities associated with selling energy into the wholesale market and then purchasing that energy back from the wholesale market. We also believe this approach aligns with other state efforts.
- **Capacity:** We believe compensation for capacity benefits should be included in the Standard Offer Block at a fixed, predictable rate to ensure a long-term, bankable value stream. This is essential for program design and potential feasibility because it is clear that many other value streams will not be included in the Block. Projects will need sufficient compensation to enable project finance, and capacity is an important component of that calculation.
- **Cost Recovery:** Because the Program is designed to be cost neutral or better, benefits should outweigh programmatic costs and help suppress Standard Offer

pricing. It is therefore logical to recover costs from all Standard Offer customers, particularly as the benefits flow to all Standard Offer customers.

- **Price Setting:** We recommend utilizing an avoided cost study in price setting as it seems such a study would be conducted regardless in the evaluation of whether the program is ratepayer beneficial. We also see benefit with a hybrid methodology including an information solicitation to ensure project revenue requirements are met, as is standard under the Massachusetts SMART program. It is also critical to note that administrative costs must be predetermined and transparent given the significant concerns and open dockets regarding this issue to date.

Finally, we would like to see additional specifics added to this first phase of the Program, including a standard contract length of twenty years and a capacity carveout for smaller projects, specifically projects less than 1 MW.

III. Distribution System Services

ReVision strongly supports the development of a program that compensates for distribution system services. Given our concerns regarding whether the Standard Offer Block alone will enable project finance, we appreciate the Program's second phase and its focus on compensation for the distribution system services a project provides, which could support project development. At the same time, we remain concerned that the availability of such a program would be considerably delayed, and we encourage the Department, using models from other states as well as the current Integrated Grid Planning process and plans, to evaluate whether any elements could be included in the final program design in the near term based on existing utility data. We understand the complexity and challenges inherent in this work, and we believe addressing these issues thoughtfully will be essential to an effective program launch.

Our major concern with the Distribution System Services Model is that it appears to rely significantly on utility transparency regarding locational values for future project development. We agree that the Program should consider and compensate the value of distribution deferral, but we believe this process will require careful oversight if it is managed by the utilities. The grid planning function should therefore include meaningful oversight by the Maine Public Utilities Commission, the Department, or another independent third-party expert to ensure that program design is not shaped by capital spending incentives. This concern is informed by Maine's experience with Non-Wires Alternatives proposals, which have sought to unlock similar opportunities over the past decade but have not produced advancement to date.

IV. Additional Considerations

ReVision recommends that the Department and its consultants evaluate a front-of-the-meter program design that more directly relies on competitive markets. Rather than



creating a regulated buyer for energy, RECs, and capacity, the Program could allow front-of-the-meter solar and storage projects to sell those attributes directly to customers, including through competitive electricity providers or other retail customers, and could require that generation is time-matched to load.

Under this model, the principal component would be setting a ‘wheeling charge’ for the utility to charge for moving power from the point of generation to the point of load. The Department could develop a methodology for a wheeling charge based on the location and timing of both generation and load, recognizing that the cost and value of using the distribution system varies materially depending on whether a project is serving load on the same circuit or elsewhere on the system.

For example, where a front-of-the-meter project is time-matched to load on the same utility circuit, the applicable distribution charge should be de minimis. Where generation is time-matched to load elsewhere on the distribution system, the wheeling charge may appropriately be higher to reflect the utility facilities used to deliver that power.

This approach would reduce the need to administratively establish prices for energy, RECs, and capacity, because competitive markets would determine the value of those attributes. We believe this alternative framework could reduce administrative complexity and better align compensation with the actual use of the distribution system while still enabling new distributed energy resources to be deployed in Maine.

V. Implementation Timeline:

The legislature required the Department to establish a new program for continued deployment of distributed energy resources in the state, asking the Department to propose a Program no later than September 30, 2026, and giving the Commission no longer than 120 days to approve of (or deny) the Program.

In conversations with decisionmakers, it was our understanding that lawmakers recognized the pause in the solar and storage pipeline following the closure of NEB programs and understood the potential impacts, while also expressing confidence that a new ratepayer-beneficial Program could be established in relatively short order. Such a Program would support Mainers interested in the benefits of solar and storage deployment, companies and employees in the state’s growing clean energy workforce, and the state’s clean energy goals and transition to a clean energy economy. We are concerned that the gap in our sales pipeline may now continue for the remainder of 2026 and for the duration of 2027, if not into 2028, which is materially longer than expected and difficult to reconcile with the urgency reflected in the legislative process. It is challenging for a clean energy company to operate in this kind of uncertainty as companies cannot reasonably forecast project compensation or set an effective sales strategy in an unknown market. As a result, the clean energy workforce will be forced to



contract beyond the setbacks already experienced following the passage of LD 1777 and previous reductions and constraints set on the NEB program.

We respectfully urge the Department to respond directly to industry concerns regarding whether the straw proposal, as currently structured, would enable project development, and to work swiftly toward a program proposal that can unlock DER deployment on a practicable timeline. While we recognize that this work cannot be completed overnight, we believe there is an opportunity to advance a program more quickly than the timeline contemplated in the straw proposal.

VI. Customer-Owned Solar & Load Reducer Program

ReVision strongly supports the inclusion of a program or programs within the proposal that enable customer-owned solar. As drafted, the Program does not appear to provide any opportunity for participation by residential, commercial, or low-to-moderate-income customers. As customers continue to experience rising energy costs, Maine should work swiftly to ensure that ratepayers have an opportunity to address those costs through clean energy investment, and that this opportunity is not limited to customers who have a sunny roof or remain on a volumetric utility rate.

Customer-owned solar provides direct load reducing benefits, positively impacting all ratepayers through private investment. We strongly recommend the inclusion of such an opportunity in any program design to support both the very interested customers around the state, as well as the workforce that directly serves such customers.

As discussed, and shared in previous memos, LD 1777 unintentionally eliminated a principal path for many medium-sized commercial and institutional customers, including municipalities, schools, small businesses, and nonprofits, to install onsite solar. Under current rate structures, these customers may be moved from volumetric small commercial rates to demand-based medium commercial rates, where onsite solar can offset only energy charges and not demand charges. As a result, the same solar generation is worth materially less for medium commercial customers than for small commercial customers, making otherwise viable onsite projects uneconomic.

Fortunately, the Department has authority to act and establish such a program either as part of or alongside the Proposal. LD 1777 directs the Department, in designing successor distributed energy resource programs, to consider “opportunities for a load reducer program for commercial customers” as well as any necessary changes to utility rate structures, billing systems, data collection, or metering needed to implement such a program. Because a load reducer resource is inherently located behind the customer meter and reduces the customer’s electricity usage, this directive provides the opportunity to recommend a program that enables qualifying commercial and institutional customers to install onsite solar and storage while using an appropriate volumetric rate structure or equivalent DER rate design.

A load reducer program would advance ratepayer, grid, land use, and climate benefits without raising the same concerns associated with larger offsite programs. Even more, behind-the-meter generation has already been shown to produce net benefits for Maine ratepayers, and onsite projects can reduce grid consumption, lower peak daytime supply needs, avoid or defer transmission and distribution investments, reduce development pressure on farmland and greenfield sites, and help customers control long-term energy costs. DOER can also design reasonable guardrails—such as demand thresholds, minimum generation-to-load ratios, or storage and time-of-use rate requirements—to prevent gaming and increase system benefits. We strongly recommend the inclusion of a load reducer program in immediate successor program recommendations—especially as it is a program opportunity that is implementable today. At a minimum, we ask the Department to include in its proposal a timeline of when such a program—and other potential DER programs as the statute allows for multiple programs—will be considered.

VII. Building a DER Market to Serve All Maine Customers

Ideally, our vision is for a healthy distributed solar market that provides opportunities for direct participation and investment by all types of customers, including residential and commercial or institutional customers and those who can build generation either onsite or offsite. While we understand the limitations of the statute and recognize that LD 1777 may not enable all potential programs at this time, we urge the Department to consider whether additional pathways or programs can be advanced now. This is especially important because Maine’s current solar policy primarily serves only one of these four market segments, onsite residential customers, while the Program as proposed does not appear to enable meaningful opportunities for the remaining three segments.

Ultimately, a suite of programs is necessary to unlock a thriving distributed energy resources market. To that end, Maine should consider: 1) a program that allows residential electricity customers the reasonable opportunity to participate in customer-owned front of the meter DERs, 2) a load reducer program that enables onsite generation (and storage) for commercial customers, and 3) an opportunity for commercial and institutional entities to participate in offsite DERs in a manner previously discussed, such as allowing offsite projects participate in an onsite program less a utility wheeling cost. We believe LD 1777 enables the opportunity for at least some of these customers and arrangements, and we urge the Department to consider such pathways in its final proposal.

We thank the Department and its consultants for the opportunity to provide our feedback. Again, we appreciate the significant work over the past few months to analyze opportunities, engage with stakeholders, and consider programmatic frameworks under the requirements of the law. We recognize the complexity of this work and the limitations



inherent in designing a new program under an ambitious statutory timeline. We also recognize that the proposal cannot enable every market segment that may be desirable to developers. However, we remain concerned that the Program, as proposed, may not enable additive clean energy deployment, and we believe there are meaningful opportunity to build from the straw proposal toward a durable program that serves Maine customers, supports continued clean energy deployment, and strengthens Maine's clean energy economy. We appreciate the Department's forthcoming work to realize such a vision and look forward to continuing to support that effort constructively. Thank you again for your time, dedication, and commitment to deploying clean energy in our state.

Sincerely,

/s/ Lindsay Bourgoine

Lindsay Bourgoine
Director, Policy & Government Affairs
ReVision Energy