

Maine Climate Council

Energy Working Group Meeting

Co-Chairs:

Dan Burgess, Governor's Energy Office
Ken Colburn, Symbiotic Strategies, LLC



GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF
Policy Innovation
and the Future



MAINE DEPARTMENT OF
Environmental Protection



February 16, 2024

Meeting Agenda

1. Welcome, Meeting Objectives
2. Discussion: Addressing energy burden and issues of energy access as Maine advances beneficial electrification
3. Discussion: Building Recommendations from January Demand Management Workshop
4. Next Steps

Structuring a set of priority EWG conversations

1) Supporting demand management and related issues, including:

- Shaping load (i.e., managed vehicle charging, time of use rates)
- Facilitating flexible supply
- Enabling market access for all energy resources
- Grid enhancing technologies
- Applying analytics to grid management, etc.

As the EWG develops new/updated recommendations, how should we consider impacts on energy burden throughout those recommendations?

How can we ensure low-income Maine people and communities have access to programs that support renewable energy, beneficial electrification, and cost saving measures and the benefits of these technologies?

Is there a new recommendation that may add value to existing work in this space OR provide direction to state entities designing and implementing policy and programs?

2) Advancing policy to plan and build necessary clean energy infrastructure

- Clean energy resource procurement
- Permitting and siting
- Addressing interconnection processes
- Supporting implementation of Maine's Offshore Wind Roadmap
- Ensuring infrastructure is resilient to climate change
- Opportunities for community ownership and access to planning/decision making processes

3) Addressing energy burdens and energy access for vulnerable Mainers as Maine advances beneficial electrification

- Reducing energy burden
- Opportunities to build energy literacy
- Reducing barriers to state programs and incentives
- Role of fuels (and clean fuels) as Maine electrifies

4) Building a clean energy workforce

"Energy burden" is the percentage of household income devoted to energy expenditures.

Energy Burden for Low-Income Mainers by County
 as reported by the DOE Low-Income Energy Affordability Data (LEAD) Tool
 [All values are based on a Federal Poverty Level of 0-150%]

State	County	DOE LEAD 2018	DOE LEAD 2020
ME	Androscoggin	14%	11%
ME	Aroostook	18%	14%
ME	Cumberland	16%	13%
ME	Franklin	18%	12%
ME	Hancock	23%	14%
ME	Kennebec	19%	13%
ME	Knox	20%	14%
ME	Lincoln	21%	13%
ME	Oxford	21%	14%
ME	Penobscot	16%	13%
ME	Piscataquis	22%	13%
ME	Sagadahoc	22%	18%
ME	Somerset	20%	14%
ME	Waldo	19%	13%
ME	Washington	22%	15%
ME	York	18%	14%
ME	Total	18%	13%

Governor Mills Signs Emergency Winter Energy Relief Plan, Delivering Direct Heating Relief to Maine People

January 4, 2023

Measure provides \$450 checks and other supports to ensure Maine people can stay safe and warm this winter

Just hours after it earned strong, bipartisan support from the Maine Legislature, Governor Janet Mills today signed legislation enacting her Emergency Winter Energy Relief



January 2023 Winter Energy Relief Plan:

- Sent direct payments to eligible households
- Doubled HEAP budget
- Added \$10 million to emergency fuel assistance

February 16, 2024



State of Maine

Office of Governor Janet T. Mills

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[Home](#) → Governor Mills Announces Maine Jobs & Recovery Plan Initiatives to Cut Energy Costs for Maine Families, Reduce Carbon Emissions, and Strengthen Clean Energy Workforce

Governor Mills Announces Maine Jobs & Recovery Plan Initiatives to Cut Energy Costs for Maine Families, Reduce Carbon Emissions, and Strengthen Clean Energy Workforce

Saving Maine Families Money on Heating and Electricity Bills: With an influx of \$25 million from the Maine Jobs & Recovery Plan, Efficiency Maine Trust will have more robust financial resources to help more Maine people, including moderate to low-income homeowners and renters, weatherize their homes. Efficiency Maine Trust offers rebates that range from \$600 to \$9,600 for weatherization, which can be as simple as weatherstripping doors and windows or insulating attics and basements to prevent heat from escaping, all of which reduce the use of fossil fuels and save Maine people money. Further, with Efficiency Maine Trust providing rebates through local contractors, the Governor's Jobs Plan supports Maine small businesses and strengthens local economies. This support from the Jobs Plan is estimated to weatherize nearly 3,500 homes. For more information on weatherization, visit efficiencymaine.com.

More than \$25 million from Maine Jobs and Recovery Plan directed to Efficiency Maine to increase rebates, including for LMI homeowners and renters.

Maine Won't Wait established deployment targets for LMI households and is now tracking efforts.

Energy Working Group Meeting



March 2023

[\[link\]](#)

State of Maine
Electric Ratepayer Advisory Council



Second Annual Report
December 1, 2023

[\[link\]](#)

Maine Low-Income
Home Energy Burden Study

Final report

Prepared for Maine Office of the Public Advocate
June 3, 2019

AUTHORS
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[\[link\]](#)

Comprehensive Energy Burden in Maine

Maine Low-Income Home Energy Burden Study

Final report

Prepared for Maine Office of the Public Advocate
June 3, 2019

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The MCC Equity Subcommittee Final Report proposed as a next step on this topic to:

- **Conduct a comprehensive assessment of energy burden in Maine** to assess energy burden for low-income households, rural and disadvantaged communities, and for occupants of affordable housing. The study should identify communities and individuals experiencing the highest energy burden, and interventions to reduce that burden, including the role of distributed generation.

Energy Literacy & Community Energy Access

- How can we build understanding of energy choices, new technologies, and how to use each most effectively?
- How can we build understanding of how to access incentive programs, tax credits, assistance programs? How can limit barriers/complexity of access?
- How do we build understanding of different rate options or supply choices?
- How can we work with energy vulnerable/disadvantaged communities to share information/improve access to energy solutions that may provide community-level benefits?
 - Opportunities for community-led solutions
 - Cooperative ownership
 - Innovative financing options

The MCC Equity Subcommittee Final Report proposed as a next step on this topic to:

- **Increase LMI household enrollment in affordable community solar⁹² projects.** Require or incentivize community solar developers to enroll and serve LMI and other disadvantaged households, such as renters. This could include a minimum requirement for LMI household enrollment or service, an incentive to serve greater shares of LMI households, or automatic enrollment (“opt-out”) in lower cost subscription-based renewable energy projects.
- **Develop a clean energy outreach and navigator program for households, businesses, and communities.** Provide technical assistance to small and disadvantaged communities, especially those with little/no clean or renewable energy assets, as well as LMI, renter, linguistically isolated, or other priority populations. Improve and coordinate outreach, education and enrollment processes in community and distributed energy, including solar, wind or battery storage.

DISTRIBUTED ENERGY RESOURCES - COMMUNITY-DRIVEN SOLUTIONS

- The recent demand management workshop encouraged us to look to localized, community-based systems as an important resource and part of the renewable energy puzzle.
- We also need to flip the narrative that focuses on renewable energy solutions as coming at the expense of vulnerable populations.
- The specifics involved in these solutions matter: community-driven, locally owned distributed energy resources (DERs) can be an opportunity to address issues of energy burden and vulnerability, and we need a mixture of these DERs alongside large-scale generation and transmission.



POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF COMMUNITY-DRIVEN DISTRIBUTED ENERGY RESOURCES

- Increased local energy resilience, particularly in face of climate-related impacts.
- Community involvement and leadership can be a significant pathway towards socially-viable projects.
- Demand-management and distributed energy resources as beneficial to all ratepayers.
- Opportunity exists to alleviate energy burden via ownership of renewable energy generation and demand management resources.



CURRENT BARRIERS

- Interconnection costs and unpredictable timelines
- Energy literacy
- Utility transparency
- Insufficient financing for low-income community members

POTENTIAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

- Performance Based Regulation
- Interconnection fast track
- Energy literacy support
- Sufficient financing for low-income community members



Funding, Financing, Rates

- How can we ensure energy assistance programs are adequately funded to serve eligible households?
- Are there new ways to think about financing or cost allocation in an evolving energy landscape?
 - Tariffed on-bill financing
 - Rate reforms
 - Other?

The MCC Equity Subcommittee Final Report proposed as a next step on this topic to:

- **Expand financing options for clean energy and energy efficiency projects serving low-income households and affordable rental properties, climate or economically vulnerable natural resource industries and small businesses.** This could include expanding outreach about, or access to, PACE, tariffed on-bill financing, or energy-as-a-service opportunities, where the customer pays for energy efficiency using utility bill savings, as well as developing new financing opportunities through Efficiency Maine Trust and other “green bank” financing entities.

Applications for heating aid are up this winter

Maine Public | By Robbie Feinberg
Published January 24, 2024 at 5:36 PM EST



Robert F. Bukaty / AP File

In this photo made Wednesday, Jan. 14, 2014, Paul Dorion, a driver for the Downeast Energy, delivers heating oil to home Portland, Maine.

Community action agencies in Maine are reporting more applicants for heating aid this winter — and many are struggling to keep up with the increased need.

State officials say that agencies have already received 8% more applications for aid, compared to the same time last year.

Volunteers to continue work on this topic and report back at future meeting?

(EWG members: please use “Raise Hand” function to volunteer)



Implementation Next Steps - What types of next steps would be required to implement the strategy?

- Legislation, rules/regulation, internal program guidance changes
- Establishment of a new program or a fund,
- Conduct additional research
- Provide education or training
- Coordinate with other parties/agencies/states
- Other (please describe)

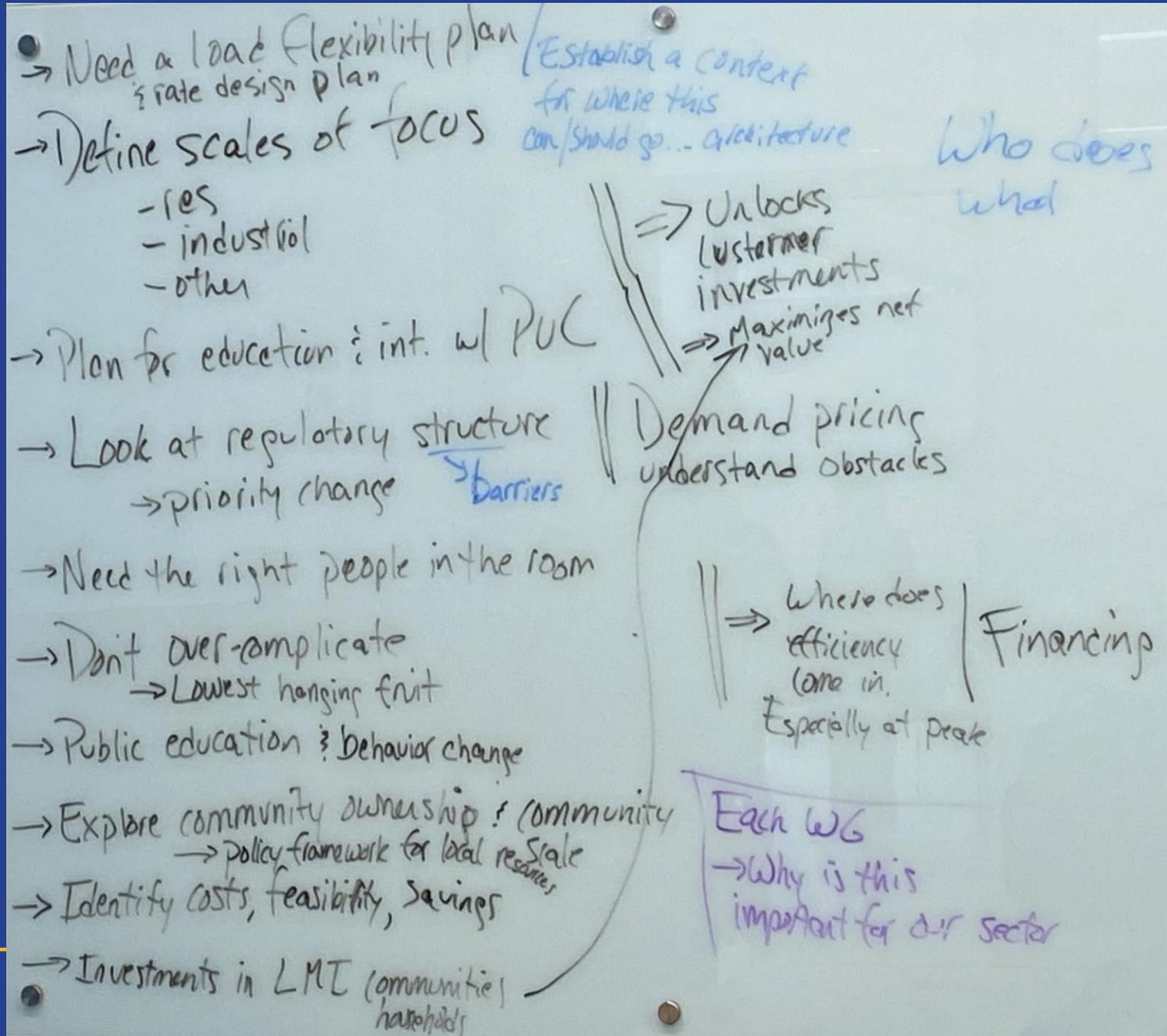
Measuring Outcomes - How will you know the recommended strategy is effective? *Are outcomes measurable using current monitoring/data collection? Are there benchmarks or short-term indicators of success?*

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- 4) **Building a clean energy workforce**

Demand Management Workshop

- What most stood out from perspective of EWG?
- What do you think about draft recommendations?
- What kinds of metrics & measures should be tracked?



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(EWG members: please use “Raise Hand” function to volunteer)



Next Meeting:

March 1, 11:00 AM-2:00 PM

