

Buildings, Infrastructure & Housing (BIH) Working Group Meeting

Maine Climate Council

Friday, April 12, 2024, 11 am - 12pm

Virtual via Zoom

Meeting Purpose:

Consider policy recommendations for an updated Climate Action Plan, based on the stock-taking of existing programs at this working group's March 20 meeting. Consider policies for:

- Continue the progress of weatherization and heating systems, including:
 - Maintain and extend funding and financing
 - Expand education, outreach, and technical support
 - Increase access for renters, low-income, and rural residents
- Support measures that both reduce carbon and improve resilience, including:
 - Solar
 - Storage, including electric vehicle batteries
 - Other demand management measures

In attendance:

Working Group Members: Michael Stoddard, Kathleen Meil, Representative Christopher Kessler, Don McGilvery, Naomi Beal, Rozanna Patane, Jesse Thompson, Tom Twist, Pat Stanton, Matt Pitzer, Todd Rothstein, Ania Wright, Naomi Beal, Dale Basher

Staff: David Plumb, Molly Siegel

Welcome & Introduction

- Kathleen discussed the progress in March and how we still have a bit of work to do in terms of recommendations
- David went over the [proposed recommendations and actions document](#) and briefly described each recommendation and the framework
- Molly pointed out that we need to refine the language of the recommendations to be in line with how the MCC would like to receive it

Policy discussion

The group discussed the proposed recommendation and actions for continuing the progress of weatherization and heating systems.

Comments from the group about the recommendation:

- Include a call-out for more equity for low-income and rural residents
- Consider the potential for a role for other solutions such as biofuel blending or system controls and technology, and continue to stress the importance of efficiency regardless of what fuel is being used

- We continue to need better education and outreach: homeowners need good information to make educated decisions.
- Maintenance/durability and quality of energy upgrades is important. Consider including language promoting contractor licensing and quality control (reference LD 1929, contractor licensing)
- Zero-emission standards for HVAC? Could be an opportunity to have a policy that enables a gradual transition to non-zero emissions for HVACs and water heaters. This is happening in other states as well.
 - Link to ME Equipment Standards Factsheet
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1BxzJP5fovcDtS-FC6jO2poCljyqlvBuKP6ocN3ZdEZE/edit>
- Include language that encourages longevity and stability of funding sources over a longer time period (decadal)
- Think about storm recovery and the opportunity to align emergency assistance with energy efficiency upgrades
- Include stronger language about stretch codes (this relates to the recommendation about codes and standards)