



State of Maine
131st Maine Senate
Senate Republican Office

PRESS BRIEFING – ISSUES ENERGY & THE ECONOMY
APRIL 18, 2023 – AFTER SESSION (approximately 12:30 p.m.)
WELCOME CENTER/PRESS ROOM

What: Issues surrounding energy affordability and effect on the economy

Who: Senators Trey Stewart, Matt Harrington

Introduction & Background (Sen. Stewart)

“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.” ~ 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”

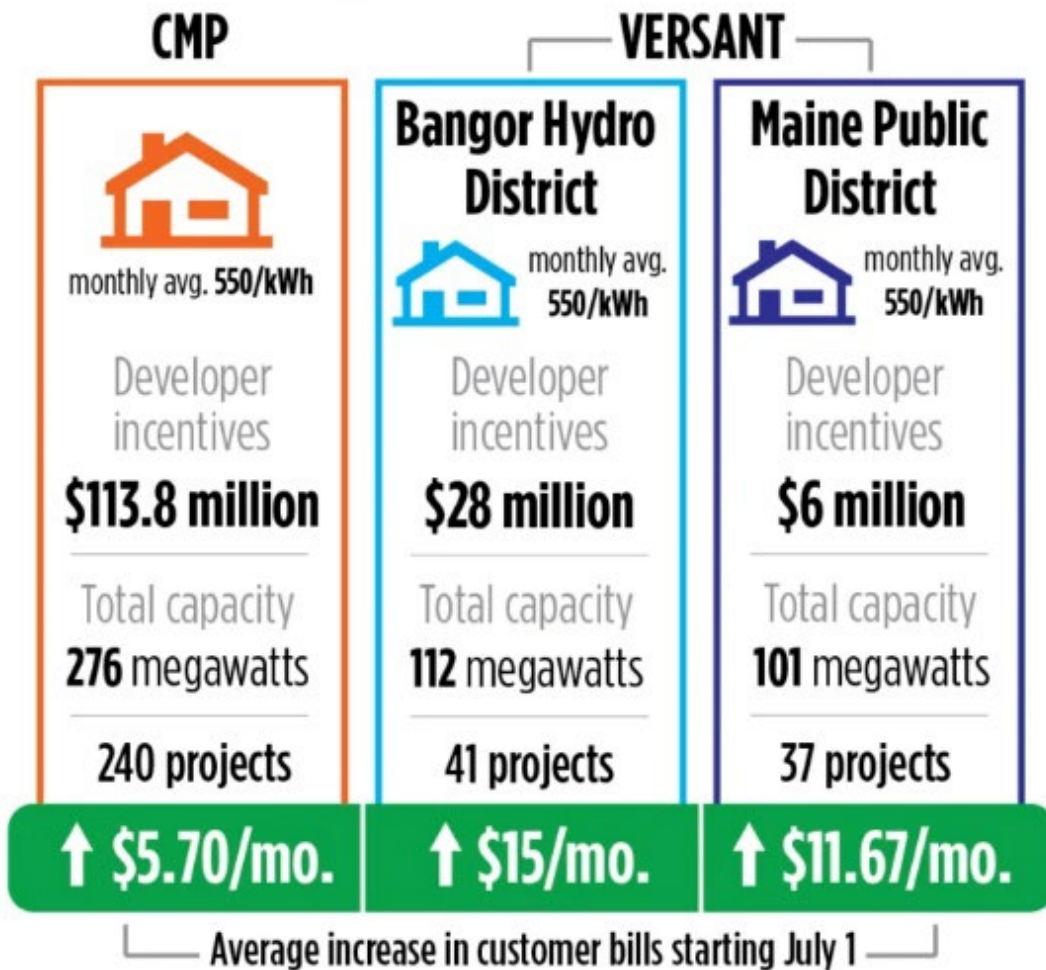
- Electricity rates have increased 165% under the Biden and Mills administrations.
- Ratepayers will see more increases as the Maine Public Utilities Commission (PUC) will implement preplanned increases come July to recover solar project cost recovery through stranded costs.
- According to Public Advocate William Harwood, who testified as a public hearing last week, the total cost of solar subsidies and net-energy billing stranded costs for ratepayers is about \$220 million.
- Costs will rise by \$9.07/month for CMP customers, \$30/month for Versant Bangor Hydro District customers and \$22.67/month for Versant Maine Public District ratepayers.
- OPA also cited other flaws in NEB including lack of site planning, ratepayers are technically not using renewable energy and grid connection problems.
- Democrats are in control and continue to introduce bills to accelerate electricity use, despite issues in projects being able to connect to the grid:
 - LD 256 An Act to Add Electric Bicycles to the Electric Vehicle Rebate Program
 - LD 519 Resolve to Conduct a Vehicle-to-grid Pilot Project Using Electric School Buses, among others

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