

# DRIVING THE CLEAN ENERGY TRANSITION: BUILDING ON LAST YEAR'S SUCCESS

## NECEC'S 2020 MAINE CLEAN ENERGY POLICY PRIORITIES



NECEC is dedicated to growing the clean energy economy in Maine and across the region, in pursuit of our mission to create a world-class clean energy hub in the Northeast. With rapidly advancing clean energy technologies, 2020 is an important year for Maine. It is a chance to build upon a tremendously successful legislative session in 2019 by ensuring that the policies enacted last year are properly implemented and sustain the positive momentum for clean energy investment. In addition, Maine should seize upon the opportunity to advance policies on energy storage and clean transportation. NECEC remains committed to working with the Legislature and the Mills Administration to deliver on the vision of a cleaner, cheaper, and more resilient energy future for Maine. We are pleased to support the following policy priorities:

### Establish an Energy Storage Roadmap for Maine

Energy storage technology represents a significant opportunity to build a more resilient, dynamic, cost-effective electricity system. In addition, storage, when paired with renewable resources like solar and wind, can transform intermittent renewables into dispatchable power. We encourage the Legislature to build upon the work of the Maine Energy Storage Commission and its Model Draft Language for Legislation. Specifically, NECEC believes that codifying an energy storage target or mandate in statute combined with developing programs that allow customers to capture the full value of storage, including adders for storage assets paired with renewable resources, will allow a market to develop in Maine.

### Support Clean Transportation through the Regional Transportation Climate Initiative

As the Northeast and mid-Atlantic states continue to develop the Transportation Climate Initiative (TCI), Maine policymakers should embrace this opportunity to participate in a policy that can spur economic development, provide funding for transportation infrastructure, create new jobs, improve public health, and reduce carbon emissions. In order to meet the requirement that 2050 emissions be 80% lower than 1990 emissions, the transportation sector needs to be addressed. TCI leverages the successful design of similar cap-and-invest programs, such as RGGI (in the electric sector), to deliver much-needed and cost-effective emissions reductions while providing additional transportation investment dollars.

### Take Proactive Measures for Distributed Generation Interconnection

Ensuring that new clean energy resources can be easily connected to the grid is of paramount importance to a well-functioning and efficient system. Moreover, realizing Maine's ambitious renewable energy targets could be stymied if public officials and stakeholders aren't actively planning for a future with more distributed generation. We commend the Maine PUC for its active engagement in moving a process forward and encourage members of the legislature to stay apprised and implement legislation to ensure that the electric grid is able to accommodate the welcome increase in renewable energy.

## Strengthen Clean Energy Markets by Swift Implementation of Last Session's Legislation

Maine took significant steps towards a clean energy transition last session by passing important bills that would spur renewable energy deployment. As the PUC and other parties continue to implement these new laws, NECEC urges Maine to take a thoughtful and broad approach to solar procurement, opening opportunities for solar + storage and solar + agriculture as well as a broad range of solar applications (rooftop, solar canopies, etc.). All stakeholders - municipalities, clean energy companies and others - need greater clarity on local taxation for large projects and would also benefit from clear guidelines for project siting. In addition, changes to the Net Energy Billing (NEB) regime should be swiftly implemented to provide additional market opportunities for solar and other distributed resources.

## Explore Opportunities for Offshore Wind

With the PUC's approval of the contract for the 12-megawatt Aqua Ventus floating wind project, offshore wind is a reality in Maine. This is just the first step for the industry. Maine's abundant coastline offers great opportunity for offshore development, bringing both investment and large-scale renewable energy to Maine. NECEC encourages the Legislature to continue to pursue offshore wind opportunities going forward.

## Continue to Invest in Energy Efficiency as a Cornerstone of the Clean Energy Economy

Energy efficiency represents the most cost-effective clean energy strategy in Maine and across the region. As has been said before the cheapest (and cleanest) kilowatt-hour is the one a customer does not consume. Energy efficiency also drives local jobs in Maine: over 8,600 workers are employed in the efficiency sector statewide. By continuing to invest in Maine's energy efficiency programs, the state will reduce customers' energy bills.

Maine is a national leader in the deployment of heat pumps. The goal of 100,000 heat pumps by 2025 is ambitious but attainable. The Efficiency Maine Trust is well-equipped to meet the goal. Already Maine's heat pump efforts have demonstrated to other states and customers that heat pumps are able to perform in cold climates and accelerate the transition to heating electrification.

**For more information about NECEC's 2020 Maine Clean Energy Priorities, contact:**

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