



February 14, 2011
Joint Select Committee on Regulatory Fairness and Reform
Maine 125th Legislature
Augusta, ME 04333

Testimony on LD 1

Good day, Senator Courtney, Representative McKane, and members of the Joint Select Committee on Regulatory Fairness and Reform:

I am Anne D. Burt, Co-chair of Maine Partners for Cool Communities, speaking on behalf of this collaboration of three Maine nonprofit organizations representing the environment, public health, and faith communities — Maine Council of Churches and the Maine Chapters of Physicians for Social Responsibility and the Sierra Club. Maine Partners has been working together for more than five years with our constituents and community leaders in more than 50 towns and cities across the state to implement smart energy solutions at the municipal, neighborhood and personal levels. Our goals are to reduce harmful emissions and their impacts on the environment and public health, improve air quality, and help to create fair-wage, green jobs that support and grow local sustainable economies.

As you proceed with reform that may create more efficiencies in our state's regulatory processes, Maine Partners urges you to keep in mind the hundreds of stories of successful Maine collaborations between the public and private sectors/for-profit and nonprofit businesses and public entities in existence today that promote and preserve the quality of life in Maine that we cherish while building Main Street jobs, the heartbeat of Maine's overall economy. Sound science and sensible judgment on the part of Maine legislators regardless of party affiliation have formed the foundation of a regulatory system that has resulted in the pristine environment that brings tourists to our state and entrepreneurial businesses to our communities.

Maine Partners' story mirrors many others around the state. Over the past year through our Green Sneakers Project we have mobilized 125 local volunteers in 14 Maine communities and neighborhoods who have talked with at least 1500 of their neighbors about whole house weatherization opportunities and energy efficiency technologies that will reduce Maine homeowners' energy consumption, allowing them to spend less on oil imported from away and more on supporting their local economy. **We have worked with local contractors, such as Evergreen Home Performance in Rockland who helped us design the basics of weatherization training for these volunteers. Not only do we know that homeowners our volunteers canvassed in the spring and fall have employed local energy professionals to weatherize their homes, but many of the volunteers also followed suit. We have watched these energy businesses grow dramatically, employing local people for good wages and benefits. And now, with a grant awarded to us because of our past successes, we will continue this work and add a youth component that will educate high school students about basic building science, train them to do simple weatherization improvements while educating their own families about the health, comfort and energy savings benefits of whole house weatherization, and expose them to green career choices that may keep them in Maine. A win-win-win all around.**

We appreciate the challenge of the task that lies ahead of you to discern where some reform is needed to support business development while continuing to maintain the heart of the regulatory system that makes Maine the place we have all chosen to call home.

Respectfully submitted,