

LD 940 – An Act To Establish Appliance Energy and Water Standards

Jeff Marks, Maine Director & Senior Policy Advocate

Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, March 29, 2021

Honorable Committee Chairs Senator Brenner & Representative Tucker and Members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on *LD 940– An Act to Establish Appliance Energy and Water Standards*.

Acadia Center is a non-profit, research and advocacy organization incorporated in Maine and committed to advancing the clean energy future by offering real-world solutions to the climate crisis. Acadia Center tackles complex problems, identifies clear recommendations for reforms, and advocates to create significant change that supports a low-carbon economy across the Northeast which can then be a model for application elsewhere. Acadia Center identifies regional, state, and local improvements that will dramatically reduce carbon pollution and improve quality of life throughout the Northeastern United States.

Acadia Center supports LD 940.

Acadia Center supports the concept of implementing state-level appliance standards as part of a comprehensive energy efficiency portfolio. Energy efficiency is a cornerstone of effective state energy policy and Maine is a leader in providing cost-effective energy efficiency solutions across all fuel types and sectors. But we could always do more to achieve greater energy and cost savings. LD 940 provides another tool to reduce both energy costs and consumption in buildings while reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

In 2020, Acadia Center, in partnership with the American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy (ACEEE), released a comprehensive set of recommendations to capture additional energy efficiency opportunities for Maine homes and businesses. Along with updated and expanded building codes, wider access to efficiency improvements, and beneficial electrification strategies, ACEEE and Acadia Center recommended implementing state-level appliance standards:

Although the federal government plays a major role in developing standards for appliances and equipment, states have historically led the way and, when federal activity slows, surged ahead with more aggressive standards. According to the Appliance Standards Project, adopting a suite of state-level appliance standards in 2021 could save Maine consumers \$9 million in utility bill savings per year by 2025. These savings would grow to \$36 million annually by 2035. “By 2025, appliance standards would save 24 gigawatt hours of electricity (equivalent to the electricity consumption of 3,000 Maine homes) and 87 billion Btu (equivalent to the gas consumption of 15,000 Maine homes).”

Several states have adopted one or more appliance efficiency standards for products not covered by federal standards and these standards have been effective tools for improving energy efficiency. At the same time, the federal government has showed little interest in the past in setting minimum appliance standards for an array of residential and commercial appliances even though federal efficiency standards have been shown to reduce U.S. electricity use significantly. This may be changing, but Maine shouldn’t wait.

All eyes are on Maine right now, as we are surging ahead with ideas to reduce carbon emissions, energy costs and consumption, all while investing in our clean energy future. Efficiency Maine Trust is only 10-years-old and is already

a leader in helping homes and businesses achieve energy savings cost-effectively. More than ever before, Maine is a very visible and innovative laboratory for energy efficiency on the regional, national, and now, even the global stages. It's a good time for Maine to join other states in setting appliance standards in the face of federal inaction, not because other states are doing it, but because it works in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, improving electric system reliability, and saving consumers and businesses money over the life of the appliance equipment.

And states that adopt appliance standards are often the catalysts for national appliance standards that save energy and water, lower utility bills, and reduce air pollutants.

Acadia Center urges the Committee to support LD 940 and looks forward to working on Maine's energy efficiency policy strategies.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide testimony. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

For more information:

Jeff Marks, jmarks@acadiacenter.org, 207.236.6470 x304