

ALIGN STATE AGENCIES WITH CLIMATE REQUIREMENTS

Empower state agencies to prioritize climate, equity, and transparency in their decisions.

State agencies need the tools to implement Maine's new Climate Action Plan.

- The Climate Action Plan (CAP) represents the state's most significant and comprehensive effort to reduce climate pollution and create new jobs as part of the transition to a clean energy economy. It sets out strategies based on scientific assessments of the reduction levels needed to help guard our economy, people, and environment from severe impacts of climate change.
- Regulatory bodies like the Maine Public Utilities Commission (PUC), the Department of Transportation (DOT), and the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) are critical to Maine's economic, energy, and environmental success.
- Agency decisions on key policies and investments have the potential to advance a low-carbon future, in line with the CAP and climate law, but state agencies are not empowered to keep climate or environmental justice in mind when making regulatory or programmatic decisions.
- For example, the PUC is limited by its mandate to reduce the cost of energy and cannot regulate utilities in alignment with state climate targets or make decisions that value reducing greenhouse gases.

Requiring agencies – especially the PUC – to consider climate impacts would empower them to make decisions that reflect our climate, health, and equity priorities.

- Current law requires the PUC to keep utility rates low, ensure reliable supply, and allow utilities the opportunity to earn a profit on their business. If the clean energy investments contemplated in the CAP would increase rates or cut profits, the PUC may be required to reject them – regardless of how many benefits it would deliver for Mainers.
- Reforming enabling statutes would allow regulators to consider the full costs and benefits of energy investments; appropriately value climate justice, public health, job creation, and enhanced resilience; and mandate minimizing climate impacts.
- This screen could minimize the long-term costs of climate and other impacts that now fall outside the scope of the PUC's primary responsibility to keep the cost of energy low.

This is the ACTION called for in Maine's Climate Action Plan.

- This bill would add a section to climate law empowering state agencies with a common goal: to consider climate change and environmental justice in policy, programmatic, and regulatory decisions.
- By specifically adding climate and climate justice to their responsibilities, the agencies would be empowered to consider emissions reductions and equity, as well as costs, in their decisions.



EMPOWER STATE AGENCIES TO ACT ON CLIMATE.

For more information, please contact Jeff Marks, Acadia Center at (207) 956-1970 or jmarks@acadiacenter.org.

Environmental Priorities Coalition



Maine's Environmental Priorities Coalition is a partnership of 32 environmental, conservation, and public health organizations representing over 100,000 members who want to protect the good health, good jobs, and quality of life that our environment provides.

We are counting on Maine policymakers to take the important steps needed to protect Maine's extraordinary environment so Maine people and Maine communities can thrive.

