

Webisode 57DHYAFZXV February 1 2026 Wind and Solar in Maine Australia and Germany

In Webisode 57DHYAFZXV The United States California Illinois Maine Rhode Island Vermont Washington DC Wisconsin Australia Germany and Russia Some embracing Clean Energy and some Resisting [1A](#) United States Trump prefers Climate Change Critic to replace Jerome Powell at the Federal Reserve [1B](#) Kevin Warsh is against Greening the Financial System [1C](#) United States Some research has indicated that climate change is already curtailing economic growth [1D](#) United States Trump and Republican Governors 13 Eastern states and the District of Columbia Energy experts said that governors and legislatures have tools to keep electricity prices from rising further and might even be able to lower them [1E](#) United States Reduce or Reform Utility Profits [2](#) California Give Consumers Rebates [3A](#) Illinois Superfund Laws already passed in New York and Vermont Make Polluters Pay week of action across the country including in the states of [Connecticut Colorado California New Jersey and Maine](#) [3B](#) Illinois The Make Polluters Pay Movement [3C](#) Illinois Legal Challenges to the Make Polluters Pay Movement even outside Illinois [3D](#) Illinois Affordability crisis from costly climate change effects on utility consumers [4A](#) Maine Onshore Wind Power Onshore Windpower Power will be generated in Northern Maine but for use for which parts of Maine? [4B](#) Maine Northern Maine and its relationship with Nova Scotia Canada [4C](#) Maine A Potential Wind Powerhouse [4D](#) Maine Who Benefits? [4E](#) Maine Second [Vermont Rhode Island and Connecticut have joined Massachusetts and Maine](#) in expressing interest in buying a portion of the new power generated via this Maine project [4F](#) Maine Solar and Wind are the least expensive [4G](#) Maine Affordability in Northern Maine compared to the New Brunswick Province of Canada [4H](#) Maine On Wednesday January 28 2026 a superfund bill in [Maine](#) was voted out of committee and will proceed to a full vote in the state Senate [4i](#) Maine The Election Ahead [5](#) Rhode Island This month a climate superfund bill was introduced in [Rhode Island](#) [6](#) Vermont The Vermont Superfund Act [7](#) Washington DC On Monday a councilmember in [Washington DC](#) announced a bill to study the financial impacts of climate change on the city and potentially require compensation from fossil fuel companies [8](#) Wisconsin Geothermal Clean Energy Power The Promising Renewable Energy That Democrats and Republicans Actually Agree On [9](#) Australia The Offer of Free Electricity When There Is a Surplus [10](#) Germany Encourages Home Solar and Batteries [11](#) Russia Russian Oil Revenue the Lifeblood of Its War Machine Is Plummeting

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[1A](#) United States Trump prefers Climate Change Critic to replace Jerome Powell at the Federal Reserve [RAWSEP View](#) This Trump Pick would have to be approved by Congress [Back to the article headline](#) The Trump Pick to Lead the Federal Reserve Could Steer Bank Away From Climate Change Kevin Warsh has criticized central bank forays into climate change Some activists and Democrats say the Fed has not done enough [Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501C3 nonprofit organization](#) Inside Climate News January 30 2026 This Success of Proxy Season Companies Against Activist Investors Surged Major corporations like Bank of America successfully dismissed several proposals related to the disclosure of greenhouse gas emissions during this proxy season More Than 1 hundred Protesters Arrested in New York City While Calling on the Federal Reserve to End Fossil Fuel Financing Climate protesters block the doors to the Federal Reserve Bank of New York on Monday as an NYPD

police officer with the strategic Response Group which specializes in large demonstrations crowd control and major events center watches over the demonstrators and another officer arrests a protester  
Heading for a Second Term Fed Chair Jerome Powell Bucks a Global Trend on Climate Change The fight over control of the Federal Reserve has revolved around interest rates and inflation but the Trump choice to be the next chair of the central bank could sway how the agency assesses climate risks too In a speech last year to a group of financial leaders that was broadly critical of the Fed Kevin Warsh called climate change a politically charged issue that the bank would do better to avoid Warsh previously served on the Fed board

1B Kevin Warsh is against Greening the Financial System Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501C3 nonprofit organization Inside Climate News January 30 2026 An example of a politically charged issue Warsh gave was the Fed joining and later withdrawal from the Network of Central Banks and Supervisors for Greening the Financial System a group that aims to strengthen responses to climate change and includes most of the major central banks of the world The Fed joined the group ahead of the Biden inauguration five years ago and withdrew right before Trump took office last January There is broad agreement among economists that climate change is affecting the economy and poses risks to the financial system But there is debate about whether or how that might affect the work of central banks like the Fed Some economists within the Fed have argued that climate change poses broad risks to financial stability Banks could be exposed if storms or extreme weather cause bankruptcies for example Already insurance companies are withdrawing from some markets due to worsening wildfires and damage from coastal storms

1C United States Some research has indicated that climate change is already curtailing economic growth Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501C3 nonprofit organization Inside Climate News January 30 2026 The Fed Board of Governors has published research on these risks Its mandate is to maintain price stability and to maintain employment and climate change is clearly relevant to both of those things So the Fed would be in my view violating its mandate to not at least study those things Many activists and some Democrats have criticized the Fed for not doing more to address climate change The European Central Bank in particular has taken more steps to try to limit those risks of climate change In 2023 the Fed and two other agencies issued guidelines for financial institutions on assessing their own climate risks In October 2025 the agencies withdrew the guidelines saying they were not necessary because existing rules required banks to examine a range of risks including emerging risks Trump has sought to roll back climate related regulations in the financial sector more broadly The Securities and Exchange Commission is seeking to withdraw rules that would require greater climate disclosures from publicly traded companies and it has recently worked to make it harder for shareholders to press companies to take action on climate change and other issues Taken together the moves are making the financial system less transparent and less stable said the chief executive of As You Sow a shareholder advocacy group The regulations are to reduce risk Behar said

1D United States Trump and Republican Governors 13 Eastern states and the District of Columbia Three Hours of Free Power and Other Ideas to Lower Utility Bills Energy experts said that governors and legislatures have tools to keep electricity prices from rising further and might even be able to lower

them **RAWSEP View** This article does not enumerate the steps Republican Governor are thinking of taking They may only be issuing a press release saying they are somehow going to address affordability The steps taken by Democratic Governors and Democratic States include acting as state officials to administer the existing federal program that helps low income families pay heating and cooling bills **Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501C3 nonprofit organization** The New York Times January 31 2026 President Trump and Democratic and Republican governors this month announced a plan to build power plants to lower electricity bills in 13 Eastern states and the District of Columbia Energy experts said that even if the plan works the plants will take years to build But they added that governors state lawmakers and utility regulators could do a lot of things that could have a big impact on energy costs a lot sooner Electricity prices have soared recently because of fast rising demand for energy from residents businesses and data centers used for artificial intelligence The national average retail rate was 5 percent higher in November from a year ago nearly double the overall inflation rate The average household spent 1 hundred 78 dollars a month for 1 thousand kilowatt hours of electricity according to the Energy Information Administration Costs are expected to climb further because recent very cold weather and winter storms drove up the wholesale prices of electricity and natural gas costs that utilities will pass on to residents in the coming months About 17 percent of Americans are behind on their electric bills according to the **National Energy Assistance Directors Association** NEADA which represents state officials who administer the federal program that helps low income families pay heating and cooling bills The anger is growing said the executive director of the energy assistance directors NEADA organization You are seeing much higher rates and they are not coming down But the NEADA head and other energy experts said states can keep prices in check or even lower them

**1E** United States Reduce or Reform Utility Profits **RAWSEP View** The middle ground between helping utility executives or helping consumers would be to cap utility returns on costs for equipment and power lines paid by consumers to between 6 point 5 percent to 7 point 5 percent of monthly consumer utility bills **Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501C3 nonprofit organization** The New York Times January 31 2026 Most US electric utility companies are monopolies and state governments have a lot of control over how much profit they earn States typically allow utilities to return to investors about 10 to 12 percent of the money they invest in their electric systems Some energy experts believe this rate of return approach **is flawed because it encourages utilities to spend excessive amounts on equipment and power lines** Consumer groups add that **the rate of return should be lowered** Most shareholder owned utilities in this country earn profits for their shareholders based on how much infrastructure that they build and how expensive that infrastructure is said a managing director at **RMI** a nonprofit research organization **formerly known as the Rocky Mountain Institute** There is a natural **mismatch of incentives** **Consumer Watchdog** a nonprofit that works on state policies said utility returns have grown over the last 40 years to a level that is **more than twice the interest paid by the 10 year US Treasury note** which is around 4 percent now Lowering utility returns to between 6 point 5 percent and 7 point 5 percent **Consumer Watchdog** said would still grant utilities significant profits **while helping consumers**

**2** California Give Consumers Rebates **RAWSEP View** To help consumers with their utility bills give them a bill credit In **California** since 2014 there has been a fee imposed on greenhouse gas

emissions of utility companies This has delivered 14 point 6 billion dollars in rebates to resident utility consumers since 2014 The former Democratic Governor of Michigan advises the newly elected Governor of Maryland to ask utilities to squeeze more efficiency out of the current system and then share the economic benefits with utility consumers by lowering their bills Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501C3 nonprofit organization The New York Times January 31 2026 Last year California issued refunds averaging 1 hundred 98 dollars to nearly 12 million residential utility customers Such credits are one of the fastest ways to help consumers if you want to go as quickly as possible said the representative of the group of energy assistance group directors Give them a bill credit You do not have to give them to everybody Since 2014 the California Cap and Invest Program which seeks to address climate change by imposing a fee on greenhouse gas emissions has delivered 14 point 6 billion dollars in rebates to residents This year California will provide 1 point 4 billion dollars for electricity customers 1 billion dollars for natural gas customers and 122 million dollars for small businesses The refunds range from 35 dollars to 2 hundred 59 dollars on electric bills California issued two last year in April and October There are easy fixes to save billions of dollars from utilities said the president of Consumer Watchdog which is based in Los Angeles But utility executives said that such proposals would undermine a business model the industry has relied on for decades to secure the investment to maintain the grid The winter storm is a timely reminder that the electric grid is the most important machine in America and we have to make sure it works reliably every day for families businesses and local communities said the president and chief executive of the Edison Electric Institute The predictability and stability of financing are vitally important in all state regulatory environments to attract the capital needed to strengthen the grid and responsibly meet the growing demand for electricity Some energy experts said states have another option change how utilities make money Governors and legislatures could direct regulators to encourage utilities to save money said Jennifer Granholm who was the energy secretary in the Biden administration States could for example allow utilities to earn a return on spending that helps them do more with what they have already built Squeeze more efficiency out of the existing system and share the benefits with the ratepayers said Ms Granholm a former Michigan governor who has advised Gov Mikie Sherrill of New Jersey

3A Illinois Superfund Laws already passed in New York and Vermont Make Polluters Pay is a week of action across the country including in the states of Connecticut Colorado California New Jersey and Maine Making Fossil Fuel Polluters Pay Amid National Call to Make Polluters Pay Illinois Lawmakers Are Prepping a Climate Change Superfund Bill As climate costs rise and the Federal US backslides on action pressure mounts on states to fill the gaps Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501C3 nonprofit organization The New York Times January 28 2026 Pro fossil fuel pollution Trump and Republicans Join the Big Oil All Out Push to Shut Down Climate Liability Efforts Illinois lawmakers plan to introduce a climate change superfund bill in the state legislature this session the latest in a growing number of states seeking to make fossil fuel companies pay up for the fast growing financial fallout of climate change As the costs of global warming rise in the form of home insurance premiums utility bills health expenses and record breaking damages from extreme weather local advocates are increasingly pushing states to require that fossil fuel companies contribute to climate superfunds that would support mitigation and adaptation Illinois state Rep Robyn Gabel who will introduce the bill in

the House said she is motivated by the growing threat of flooding and heat waves in the state. The costs with climate change are going to be extravagant and it is going to end up on the backs of the taxpayers and the oil companies continue to walk away with huge profits said Gabel an Evanston Democrat. Polluting companies should be responsible for the damage they cause.

**3B** Illinois The Make Polluters Pay Movement Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501C3 nonprofit organization

The New York Times January 28 2026 Advocates will rally on Thursday morning in Chicago to support what is known as the Make Polluters Pay effort as part of a national week of action with climate activists and disaster survivors holding events across the country including in Connecticut Colorado California New Jersey and Maine. Two states New York and Vermont have already passed climate superfund laws. Meanwhile the US has just officially exited the Paris Climate Agreement the latest in the continued backsliding on climate progress by the Trump federal government and ongoing cuts to the Federal Emergency Management Agency put increasing strain on states and cities. Advocates and some Democratic lawmakers are pushing states to fill the gap. It is time for us to step up said the director of Midwest environmental health at the Natural Resources Defense Council and a member of the coalition fighting for the Illinois bill. We are a blue state so we need to implement ways to improve infrastructure and health and combat climate change.

**3C** Illinois Legal Challenges to the Make Polluters Pay Movement even outside Illinois The New York and Vermont laws are both facing legal challenges from the fossil fuel industry and the US Department of Justice. The agency which called the measures burdensome and ideologically motivated has also sought to block Michigan and Hawaii from suing fossil fuel companies to pay for climate costs like adaptive infrastructure or public health interventions. The American Petroleum Institute included fighting superfund legislation in its list of 2026 priorities claiming the laws would bypass Congress and threaten affordability. The communications director for Fossil Free Media and the Make Polluters Pay campaign said that advocates are not deterred. We recognize that this is a David versus Goliath fight but we are not going to back down she said. It is what the majority of the population wants and it is something that is simple and fair and makes a lot of sense. The Rising Costs of Climate Change Last year the nonprofit Climate Central launched an online database to track the most costly weather and climate related disasters across the country. The effort was led by the same lead scientist who tracked those costs for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration until the Trump administration axed the project in May 2025. In 2025 the US experienced 23 such disasters with costs totaling at least 1 billion dollars for a total of 115 billion dollars. Climate Central concluded. From 1980 through 2025 the US has experienced 426 billion dollar weather and climate disasters for a total of more than 3 point 1 trillion dollars in damages.

**3D** Illinois Affordability crisis from costly climate change effects on utility consumers Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501C3 nonprofit organization The New York Times January 28 2026

Meanwhile home insurance rates are rising and insurance companies are increasingly backing out of areas with high risks from hurricanes or wildfires. Researchers have also documented how climate change causes premature deaths and increasing health care costs as it fuels disease and other health problems. Illinois is struggling with worsening flooding heat waves and air pollution including from

**Canadian wildfires** All bring heavy costs State Sen Graciela Guzmán a Chicago Democrat who will introduce the superfund legislation in the **Illinois** state Senate said the bill is a practical step to bring funding to local schools families and governments already struggling with these consequences This bill is about setting **a fairer standard for who pays** when climate damage hits our towns and neighborhoods Guzmán wrote in an email The basement in her home on the Southeast Side of Chicago was flooded on and off with sewage water for a week last summer when her sewer line broke during a rainstorm that caused severe flash flooding throughout the city Her home insurance would not cover the thousands of dollars it took to repair it she said She sees it as **an example of what the effort to make polluters pay could address** This superfund climate bill would create revenue to fix the infrastructure People were looking at their insurance bills they were looking at their utility bills they were seeing the costs of climate damage and also everyday climate costs just really rising They wanted some accountability

**4A** Maine Onshore Wind Power Onshore Windpower Power will be generated in Northern Maine but for use for which parts of Maine? Maine Again Looks North for Onshore Wind but Full Grid Integration Will Have to Wait The Trump antipathy for wind power is only one obstacle the proposal must overcome Another involves who will benefit from the project in far northern Maine where the power will be generated but not used **Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501C3 nonprofit organization** Inside Climate New January 30 2026 New wind projects could be coming to Northern Maine just not new power The Maine Public Utilities Commission PUC has released a final Request for Proposals RFP for up to 12 hundred Megawatts MW of new onshore wind or other renewable generation enough to power nearly 450 thousand homes plus a new transmission line to carry that power to southern Maine and New England Maine has been trying for years to build new renewable generation in its most remote northern counties Aroostook and Washington an area with enormous potential wind and biomass resources but one that due to a historic quirk of grid architecture is electrically disconnected from the rest of New England With the effort facing headwinds ranging from a hostile presidential administration to local opposition to transmission the destination for the power could become the thorniest issue of all The current RFP is the second time the PUC has put this proposal out to bid since Maine passed a law directing it to do so in 2021 Although the PUC selected winning bidders in early 2023 that effort fell apart amid disagreements with the transmission developer over the cost and route of the proposed transmission line

**4B** Maine Northern Maine and its relationship with Nova Scotia Canada Former Maine Senate President **Troy Jackson** who represented the northern half of Aroostook County until 2024 and is now **running in the Democratic primary to be the next governor of Maine** was a key sponsor of the 2021 legislation **Jackson chose not to require that his district share in the power** because he did not want to include anything that becomes a **poison pill** in an effort that was already likely to be controversial **Aroostook County and much of Washington County** which for simplicity could be called Northern Maine are unique among New England regions in **not being part of the New England transmission grid** They have no current direct physical connection to it and are not within the jurisdiction of the **regional transmission operator ISO New England** Instead the **Northern Maine Independent System Administrator NMISA** oversees local transmission and coordinates with the **New Brunswick Power grid** operator **in Canada** to balance load in the region Generators in Northern Maine can send power to New England

through **New Brunswick in Canada** and vice versa a practice known as wheeling—but the additional transmission costs tend to be prohibitive. **The proposed transmission line would bring the region one step closer to joining New England electrically.** **But because that line will only carry power in one direction it will not on its own** lead to full integration or provide new power to Northern Maine. Jackson and other backers have focused on the **economic benefits the project would bring to an area with unemployment rates among the highest in Maine and average household income among the lowest.** Those benefits they say include jobs funding for government services and perhaps even property tax relief. **Yet electricity prices are for many an even hotter topic than jobs or taxes.** Average household electricity bills in much of the region have increased by at least 67 percent in the last 5 years and after coming down some the last couple years **spiked again this month.** **Rates paid by manufacturing plants** and other larger power consumers have **also soared.** **A proposed data center** in the region could further exacerbate these issues. In recent years **Northern Maine has obtained most of its electricity from New Brunswick Energy Marketing** a private energy broker arm of the New Brunswick Power Corporation **NBP** a **utility owned by the Canadian province of New Brunswick.** A recent surge in distributed solar generation means **Northern Maine can now produce enough power to exceed demand on the sunniest of days** leading the country in the ability to supply peak demand with distributed solar power according to **Versant the local utility.** But at other times the region gets most of its power from **New Brunswick.** That fact ruffles some local feathers. **I do not particularly like getting our power from Canada** Aroostook County Administrator Ryan Pelletier said. **Because you are beholden to another entity that you have absolutely no political influence or negotiation power with.** As tensions between the US and Canada have grown over the past year due to the Trump tariffs and talk of making the entirety of Canada a 51st state **public speculation about New Brunswick cutting off that power as a bargaining chip in a potential trade war has only heightened those concerns.**

**4C** Maine A Potential Wind Powerhouse **Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501C3 nonprofit organization**  
Inside Climate New January 30 2026 **Northern Maine has the consistent winds wood waste from timber and paper operations and open space to sustainably meet more of its power needs.** **But with low levels of local demand and without additional transmission capacity to export power to New England further development of those abundant resources has been stymied.** In 2023 the PUC selected a single massive wind farm on about 1 hundred 75 thousand acres of timber land west of Houlton as the winning generation bid though that selection was canceled along with the transmission line. Representatives for **Long road Energy** the developer of that King Pine project were reviewing the latest RFP and expect to prepare a new bid. Wind turbines are a familiar sight to locals there are already several large installations in the southern part of the region with a collective nameplate capacity of roughly 5 hundred Megawatts MW. All but the Mars Hill project which sells its power to New Brunswick Power in Canada **NBP** provide energy to the New England grid feeding power into a transmission line running south from Canada. However generation is often curtailed at these plants meaning they produce less power than they otherwise would due to bottlenecks in the transmission system said Francis Pullaro president of **RENEW Northeast** a nonprofit alliance of renewable energy companies and environmental nonprofits. Over the years developers have signed preliminary land leases mostly with **timber companies** to build several other large wind farms including the aforementioned King Pine. But none of those projects got off the

ground hampered by the same transmission constraints as existing projects That led to the current combined generation and transmission procurement

4D Maine Who Benefits? Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501C3 nonprofit organization Inside Climate New January 30 2026 Although environmental advocates tout the climate benefits of wind power they have largely focused their arguments in support of this effort on energy affordability We have always seen Maine wind as being the least cost source of new generation of any type in New England Heather Sanborn in her role as the state of Maine public advocate is charged with representing the interests of ratepayers in PUC proceedings and said that energy affordability is a more salient concern these days than ever before Although the transmission and generation developers selected through this process will rely on private financing for construction ratepayers will eventually repay those costs via their utility bills The question that Sanborn and ultimately the PUC will consider is whether the projects will unlock enough savings for example by generating cheaper power than existing sources and eliminating transmission bottlenecks to outweigh those costs as well as who bears risk or potential rewards Sanborn said she is encouraged by the fact that compared to the prior bidding round much more of what needs to be built in Maine will be regionalized in terms of the cost and shared amongst more of the New England states That is due to two factors First those states have pooled their resources to build transmission upgrades from Pittsfield Maine to southern New England in a parallel procurement led by ISO NE cutting off a chunk of the transmission line from what will be built via the PUC procurement

4E Maine Second Vermont Rhode Island and Connecticut have joined Massachusetts and Maine in expressing interest in buying a portion of the new power generated via this Maine project Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501C3 nonprofit organization Inside Climate New January 30 2026 If they do they will share in the transmission costs north of Pittsfield Maine as well That greater regional interest does mean that less power could ultimately be available for Maine utilities to purchase via long term contracts also known as power purchase agreements PPAs While no distribution of power purchase rights has been agreed to yet PUC chair Phil Bartlett said that there is no minimum amount of power Maine would need to reserve in order for the PUC to approve a project The directive is clear to get this line built That is what the legislature wants to see And we feel like we have flexibility in how to do that to maximize the benefit for Maine consumers Bartlett said That is a problem for Jackson the former Maine Senate president who said that in light of the Trump multiple attempts to stymy offshore wind he thinks Maine should try to hold onto all of the power from the project If our goal is to get to 1 hundred percent renewable energy then I think we need to take all of this power because it is going to be the cheapest power Yet renewable energy and affordability experts alike said that who takes the power via long term contracts matters less than the overall downward pressure large wind projects generate on wholesale electricity prices It is not really true that there would be less benefit for Mainers if Massachusetts is on the hook for some of the PPAs The price suppressive effects are operating separate from that at the wholesale level Sanborn said Jack Shapiro of the Natural Resources Council of Maine explained those effects

4F Maine Solar and Wind are the least expensive Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501C3 nonprofit

organization      Inside Climate New      January 30 2026      To balance supply and demand in real time

ISO NE brings plants online in order from least to most expensive      With next to no marginal costs  
renewables like solar and wind are typically the first to be brought online when the sun is shining and  
wind is blowing so a large amount of new wind power can bump a costlier coal or gas plant out of this  
stack at many times throughout the year      This is especially valuable in winter when natural gas and wind  
speeds prices both tend to be higher than normal      Crucially the price paid to the last plant brought  
online is the price to paid to all and so these cost savings to all utilities in the region can be significant  
Long term contracts do matter to a degree because as Jackson pointed out they can lock utilities who  
sign them into a price below or above this wholesale market price with ratepayers realizing the savings or  
additional costs      Grid Ties Will Have to Wait      Whatever this impact of the project on electricity prices in  
southern Maine and the rest of New England it will likely not be felt by those living next to the new  
generation in Northern Maine      Barry Hobbins the Maine public advocate at the time the 2021 law was  
proposed urged the legislature to keep some of the power local      There must be interconnection off ramps  
to allow for the use of power generated in Aroostook County be accessible and utilized by the people of  
Aroostook County Hobbins testified      And the Jackson senate colleague Trey Stewart who represents the  
Southern half of Aroostook County and is the current Senate minority leader said I was really hoping  
when we do a big infrastructure build like this that there would be an interconnection for the Northern  
Maine Independent System Administrator and yet that is not what we have in front of us      Bartlett and  
Jackson both said that whether fully integrating NMISA into ISO NE would ultimately benefit local  
ratepayers was an open question in their minds and in any case not what the legislature directed via this  
procurement      It may be possible to build the sort of off ramps suggested by Hobbins or otherwise isolate  
a portion of the power of a local generator to supply Northern Maine without fully integrating into the New  
England grid      NMISA CEO Dwayne Conley said he thought it was theoretically possible but would need  
to be studied by engineers      But the RFP makes it extremely unlikely that anything of the sort happens  
with this project A footnote clarifies that no interconnection to Northern Maine is expected      The Power  
Squeeze      Stewart minority leader of the Maine Senate is among those who sees an urgency in greater  
integration or at least competition      The Canadians have been absolutely screwing us on power he said  
They generate hydro and coal across the border for the absolute share of lions of what they have      And yet  
when the natural gas market in New England started to spike they stuck it to my constituents      Our costs  
are tied to electricity supply costs in the Northeast      New Brunswick Energy Marketing NBEM Executive  
Director Rob Gillies said adding we always try to find the cheapest cost for our customers      Gillies said  
the electricity NBEM supplies to Northern Maine is a mix of surplus energy from New Brunswick Power  
and power purchased on the wholesale markets in the Eastern United States and Canada      A stakeholder  
group of Northern Maine utility businesses and government leaders convened by the Energy Office of the  
Governor in 2022 overwhelmingly identified too much market power given to New Brunswick and Quebec  
which causes economic and technical risks to the NMISA territory as a top concern and additional in  
region generation as one potential solution      Available data partially support these assertions      While  
overall household electric bills in much of Northern Maine increased by at least 67 percent from 2020 to  
2025 the bulk of that increase was due to increased distribution and transmission charges      The price for  
electricity supply alone known as the standard offer rate increased by about 35 percent in this time which  
is roughly equivalent to the overall increases in power prices in New Brunswick over the same period      Yet  
it is true that precisely in the years that gas and oil prices spiked from 2022 to 2023 a much larger share of

the power NBP supplied to Northern Maine came from gas and oil plants according to public disclosures by the Maine PUC

4G Maine Affordability in Northern Maine compared to the New Brunswick Province of Canada Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501C3 nonprofit organization Inside Climate New January 30 2026 Northern Maine standard offer ratepayers saw larger electricity supply cost increases in these years than New Brunswick ratepayers We would never serve an export customer if it would negatively impact reliability or rates for New Brunswick customers Gillies said but said he could not comment on the specific generation mix reported by the PUC Local Perceptions Prices and turbines going up at the same time does not sit well with residents of Aroostook County People are seeing their electricity bills go up and up and up and meanwhile there are all these projects getting built and they are not seeing any benefit from it Josh Davis a resident of Monticello and substitute teacher said Davis added that he supports wind power but felt that the state was going about it the wrong way Similarly LaNiece Sirois executive director of the Central Aroostook Chamber of Commerce which convened a series of local discussions on energy in 2023 said she hears the question Why is it built here if the power is going to be shipped somewhere else? all the time from community members That skepticism is not universal Pelletier said he hopes Northern Maine one day gets a share of any new power but acknowledged that was not guaranteed or even likely with this project Yet he said he supports the project anyway based on the jobs local tax revenues and community benefits package mandated at 4 thousand dollars per wind turbine per year under state law it would bring Luke Nadeau is from the Town of Oakfield home to the Oakfield wind farm and still lives in Northern Maine he said that the 23 hundred dollar annual deduction in property taxes year round Oakfield residents receive under an economic benefits agreement with the developer of the project was of huge help to his extended family and that he supports further wind development

4H Maine On Wednesday January 28 2026 a superfund bill in Maine was voted out of committee and will proceed to a full vote in the state Senate Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501C3 nonprofit organization The New York Times January 28 2026 It only makes sense as our bills get higher and we pay the price for climate change that polluters the oil and gas industry pay their fair share as well Ramirez said Climate superfund bills are based on the premise that the companies most heavily contributing to the climate crisis should be on the hook to pay for its growing costs The strategy pulls from the 1980 Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act known as Superfund which forces companies responsible for toxic contamination to pay for cleanup The idea is broadly popular among the public according to polling by Data for Progress and Fossil Free Media They found that 71 percent of a national sample of likely voters were in favor of oil and gas companies paying a share of climate related damages But the bills have faced pushback from the Trump administration

4i Maine The Election Ahead Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501C3 nonprofit organization Inside Climate New January 30 2026 The conversation about energy is about to get louder 2026 is a significant election year in Maine with races for governor the US Senate and US House all predicted to be hotly contested The PUC bidding process for this project will unfold right in the middle of those

campaigns Bids are due in late February and the PUC aims to select projects by the end of May Northern Maine makes up a small share of the electorate but it is disproportionately represented in these elections US Senator Susan Collins is from Aroostook County and has supported local wind power in the past though she has not weighed in on this current effort and her office did not respond to a request for comment Her potential opponents vying for the Democratic nomination include current governor Janet Mills who has supported the Northern Maine energy effort And longtime project champion **Troy Jackson** is running in a crowded Democratic primary to replace Mills Recent state elections have proven the **political salience of high energy costs** with **Democrats able to successfully capitalize** on the issue in 2025 after Republicans did so in 2024 In Maine where the two parties have different prescriptions for getting power prices under control who gets the power? could be a question that helps swing an election

**5** Rhode Island This month a climate superfund bill was introduced in **Rhode Island**

**6** Vermont The Vermont Superfund Act **Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501C3 nonprofit organization** Inside Climate New January 30 2026 Trump Joins the Opposition to the **Vermont** Climate Superfund Act Calling it Burdensome and Ideologically Motivated Despite Limited Interest in Drilling on Federal Land Forest Service Streamlines Oil and Gas Leasing Rules **Vermont** is against fossil fuel pollution and along with **New York** passed climate superfund laws last year and similar legislation is pending in a handful of other states

**7** Washington DC On Monday a councilmember in **Washington DC** announced a bill to study the financial impacts of climate change on the city and potentially require compensation from fossil fuel companies

**8** Wisconsin Geothermal Clean Energy Power **Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501C3 nonprofit organization** Inside Climate News January 31 2026 The Promising Renewable Energy That Democrats and Republicans Actually Agree On The Epic corporate headquarters in Verona Wisconsin features a geothermal heating and cooling network buried beneath the buildings

**9** Australia The Offer of Free Electricity When There Is a Surplus **Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501C3 nonprofit organization** The New York Times January 31 2026 Some customers in Australia will begin **getting free electricity for three hours a day** beginning in July Much of Australia produces so much electricity primarily from solar panels during the day that the country plans to just give it away to residents Beginning in July electricity customers in the states of New South Wales and South Australia and the region of South East Queensland will receive free power for three hours during the day The government hopes to offer the same break to the rest of the country by 2027 The government and its supporters contend that this approach can help residents and the electricity system People can shift energy intensive tasks like laundry or charging home batteries and electric cars to the designated three hours And by giving away the electricity power producers can avoid shutting down solar and wind farms or selling energy at a loss That can be a way for people who are cost conscious to save a little money said Leah Stokes an associate professor of political science at the University of California Santa Barbara who specializes in energy and environmental policy Solar and wind producers in some parts of the

United States also struggle with too much renewable energy during parts of the day. Some estimates indicate that about 10 percent of the solar energy produced across the country is not used. Ms. Stokes said, "Some utility industry groups have objected to the plan of Australia," saying it could reduce industry profits and the incentive to invest in new electricity generation power lines and other equipment. They have also said "the plan would mainly help affluent residents who own home batteries and electric vehicles."

**10** Germany Encourages Home Solar and Batteries Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501C3 nonprofit organization The New York Times January 31 2026 Taking a cue from Germany lawmakers in roughly half of US states have introduced legislation to make it legal for Americans to use plug in solar also known as balcony solar. These solar panels can be plugged into a normal wall socket and installed without an electrician or permission from local utilities. The systems are typically a lot cheaper than installing panels on rooftops though they also generate less energy. It does not matter if it is portable and hanging off your balcony or bolted to your roof said Bernadette Del Chiaro a senior vice president at the Environmental Working Group. It is generating electricity and cutting your utility bills. Solar panels batteries and electric vehicles also can form what are known as virtual power plants small systems linked together with software that can mimic large power plants. Broader use of such systems can avoid the need for new power plants and lines while making the grid more resilient. Small systems also can be built a lot faster than natural gas and nuclear power plants. States can encourage more solar and battery systems at homes and businesses by making it much easier for property owners and installers to obtain building permits and permission to connect to the grid energy experts said. However the Trump administration has sought to stall renewable energy projects and increase the use of coal natural gas and oil. Some Republicans like Neil Chatterjee who led the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission during part of the Trump first term say government officials ought to embrace an "all of the above approach" to energy. As electricity prices continue to rise solar is just going to be a cheaper alternative for residents than the bills they are paying for their utilities he said. We cannot possibly do this with fossil fuels alone.

**11** Russia Russian Oil Revenue the Lifeblood of Its War Machine Is Plummeting The new reality has forced the Kremlin to raise taxes and increase debt and hovers over peace talks with Ukraine. The steep drop in oil revenue has sent Russia into a new era of sustained budget deficits higher taxes and stubborn inflation. Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501C3 nonprofit organization The New York Times January 31 2026 As Russia holds direct peace talks with Ukraine for the first time in months "the most potent fuel for the Kremlin for the war oil revenue is under mounting strain." The price of Russian oil the Russian primary export has declined under the weight of surging global supplies and Western sanctions related to the war. "Last year Russian oil and gas revenue fell by almost a quarter" according to the Finance Ministry. The Kremlin is resorting to tax increases and deficit spending to bridge the gap. So far there is "little sign that the economic strains and any discontent they generate among business leaders and the public will be enough to change Putin calculations on the war." Trilateral negotiations involving Russia Ukraine and the United States are set to continue on Sunday in Abu Dhabi the capital of the United Arab Emirates. But with the economy stagnating and the Kremlin reaching the limit of what it can squeeze from it the Russian people will have to bear more of the burden of a war whose costs exceed

about 1 hundred 70 billion dollars a year This situation is manageable said Yevgeny Nadorshin an economist in Moscow who advises companies and banks But no one is comfortable with that Throughout his decades long rule Putin has taken pride in the stability he has brought to a Russian economy that was in free fall after the demise of the Soviet Union slashing debt streamlining taxes and taming inflation A strong oil economy allowed the Russian state to deliver an improved standard of living That the Kremlin hoped would keep the public content even as the government eroded personal freedoms Now the carefully cultivated economic stability is fracturing The steep drop in oil revenue has sent Russia into a new era defined by sustained budget deficits higher taxes and stubborn inflation Russian oil trade has been battered by two forces Oil prices have declined since April after the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries OPEC decided to gradually increase production after years of cuts The Russian oil industry has also been hit in recent months by new Western sanctions and the heavier enforcement of existing ones In October President Trump imposed sanctions on the two largest oil companies in Russia Rosneft which is state owned and Lukoil which is private Those penalties significantly undercut the ability of companies to sell crude Since then Russia has also faced stepped up enforcement of restrictions against the illicit shadow fleet of tankers it uses to ship oil This month the US military seized a Russian flagged vessel in the North Atlantic that had been used to carry Venezuelan oil Because of the current global oversupply buyers now have more alternatives to Russian crude This allows them to either walk away entirely or demand significantly higher discounts to compensate for the risk of handling goods hit with sanctions said Sergey Vakulenko an energy expert at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace Had it not been for this noticeable decrease in oil prices he said all these measures would have been far less effective Discounts on Russian oil have grown drastically The economy ministry said this month that the average price of Russian oil was 39 dollars per barrel in December down from more than 57 dollars in August Adding to the problems of Moscow now Ukraine has been using drones since November to strike Russia linked tankers in the Black Sea and the Mediterranean The Ukrainian military has also been attacking Russian refineries That has contributed to fuel crises in several regions forcing the government to temporarily ban the export of oil products The only factor that can change the situation is economic pressure on Russia President Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine said on Friday Russia must run out of money for the war to start coming to an end This is not the first time that Putin has dealt with a drop in oil prices But in previous years the Russian state had more options It could cut expenditures or allow the currency to weaken to replenish the budget But the costs of the war which amount to about 30 percent of the Russian 580 billion dollar annual budget make it hard to reduce expenses And the currency the ruble has remained strong Propped up by restrictions on imports and high interest rates the ruble surged by about 45 percent against the US dollar in 2025 A strong ruble means that the government receives less money for each barrel of crude that is sold With options dwindling the Kremlin had little choice but to increase state debt as well as personal and corporate taxes The Russian government also increased taxes on smaller enterprises like bakeries and shops causing a rare uproar among owners The Russian budget deficit reached 72 billion dollars in 2025 nominally the highest since 2009 Mister Nadorshin the economist said he expected it to increase further this year The situation is becoming more complicated he said and it is clear that the pace of this complication is naturally worrying