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NH Senate Democrats Unveil Energy Reform & Climate Action Package for 2020

CONCORD— Today, Senate Democrats unveiled their 2020 agenda to tackle energy costs, advance clean energy jobs in New Hampshire, and combat the climate crisis right here in New Hampshire, including:

- **Granite State Ratepayer Protection Act of 2020 – prime sponsor Senator Dan Feltes:** With the 3rd highest electric rates in the nation, the highest growing portion of electric bills is regional transmission costs allocated to New Hampshire. Unfortunately, Governor Sununu vetoed SB 167 last year, part of which would have ensured New Hampshire has the advocates, attorneys, and experts necessary to fight rate increases at the regional level that are allocated to New Hampshire families and businesses.
- **New Solar – prime sponsor Senator Martha Fuller Clark:** The highest growing portion of electric bills is regional transmission costs allocated to New Hampshire, and a key driver of those costs is New Hampshire's peak demand relative to other states in the region. Advancing new solar and raising the per project net metering cap will substantially reduce New Hampshire's peak demand. Unfortunately, Governor Sununu vetoed the effort to advance new solar last year, SB 168, calling it "crony capitalism". As a consequence, New Hampshire is being left behind surrounding states in advancing the jobs of tomorrows in solar and in reducing peak demand.
- **Net Metering - prime sponsor Senator Fuller Clark:** Unfortunately, Governor Sununu also vetoed net metering (HB 365), which would have unleashed the potential for local, distributed generation projects in both solar and hydro, in many cases reducing rates and also reducing property taxes. Sen. Fuller Clark's retained bill, SB 13, will be used as the vehicle for this year's effort.
- **Offshore Wind - prime sponsor Senator David Watters, cosponsors Senators Fuller Clark and Tom Sherman:** Offshore wind will be advanced through a real, meaningful commission and process. This presents an extraordinary opportunity for renewable energy that our neighboring states are already pursuing that will advance good jobs and help combat the climate crisis we are all facing.
- **Transportation Emissions – prime sponsor Senator David Watters:** Close half of all greenhouse gas emissions in New Hampshire come from the transportation sector. This effort will establish a committee to make a recommendation on New Hampshire's

implementation of the Transportation and Climate Initiative (TCI)—a regional collaboration of 13 Northeast and Mid-Atlantic jurisdictions working together since 2010 to improve transportation, development the clean energy economy, and reduce emissions from transportation.

Senate Majority Leader Dan Feltes (D-Concord) stated, “It’s incumbent upon every elected official to do all we can to address skyrocketing electric rates, New Hampshire’s loss of clean energy job opportunities, and the climate crisis facing all of us. We look forward to working with our Democratic and Republican colleagues to shepherd these critical bills through the Legislature.”

“Unfortunately, Governor Sununu’s vetoes of so many energy bills have blocked our efforts to protect ratepayers and support the jobs of tomorrow in clean energy, especially solar,” added **Senate Energy Committee Chair Martha Fuller Clark (D-Portsmouth)**. “We must continue to move forward with innovative initiatives to reduce electric rates and advance renewable energy and energy efficiency opportunities. The climate crisis is real and the people of New Hampshire are counting on legislators to act now.”

“We can no longer wait to take meaningful, proactive steps to combat the climate crisis, including on offshore wind and transportation emissions reductions. It is time for real leadership,” said **Senate Transportation Committee Chair David Watters (D-Dover)**.

Senate Health and Human Services Committee Chair Dr. Tom Sherman (D-Rye) concluded, “As a physician, I have seen first-hand the devastating impact the climate crisis poses to public health. As a Seacoast senator, I have seen first-hand the direct negative impact the climate crisis poses to the Seacoast environment, tourism industry, businesses, and communities. I look forward to working with advocates and my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to tackle electric rates, advance clean energy jobs, and combat the climate crisis.”

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