



129th MAINE LEGISLATURE

LD 1181

LR 16(02)

An Act To Reduce Electricity Costs through Nonwires Alternatives

Fiscal Note for Bill as Amended by Committee Amendment " "

Committee: Energy, Utilities and Technology

Fiscal Note Required: Yes

Fiscal Note

	FY 2019-20	FY 2020-21	Projections FY 2021-22	Projections FY 2022-23
Appropriations/Allocations				
Other Special Revenue Funds	\$803,039	\$804,052	\$804,165	\$804,281
Revenue				
Other Special Revenue Funds	\$803,039	\$804,052	\$804,165	\$804,281

Fiscal Detail and Notes

This bill authorizes the Office of the Public Advocate (OPA) to contract with a person or entity to serve as a nonwires alternative coordinator (NAC) and to collect an additional special assessment on the intrastate gross operating revenues of investor-owned transmission and distribution utilities to fund the costs associated with the NAC contract. The bill also defines the duties and scope of work for the NAC and includes nonwires alternatives consideration requirements in the rules regarding proposed transmission and distribution projects under the authority of the Public Utilities Commission. The bill also increases the salary of the Special Assistant to the Public Advocate position from salary range 20 to salary range 25. Based on previous costs for contacted services from consultants, the OPA estimates that the contract for a NAC will require additional allocations of \$800,000 annually beginning in fiscal year 2019-20. This bill also includes allocations of \$3,039 in fiscal year 2019-20 and \$4,052 in fiscal year 2020-21 for the salary range increase of the Special Assistant to the Public Advocate position.

Because the OPA is funded by an assessment set to produce sufficient revenue for the expenditures allocated by the Legislature for operating the OPA, any increased costs require a corresponding increase in revenue from the assessment on the intrastate gross operating revenues of utility and qualified telecommunications providers. Because this bill also allows an additional special assessment on investor-owned transmission and distribution utilities to fund the NAC, some investor-owned transmission and distribution utilities may incur additional costs as a result. These costs may be passed on to electric utility customers through scheduled rate cases. The amount of these costs cannot be determined at this time.