

PLEASE NOTE: Legislative Information **cannot** perform research, provide legal advice, or interpret Maine law. For legal assistance, please contact a qualified attorney.

## **An Act Regarding the Duties of the Public Advocate**

**Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

**Sec. 1. 35-A MRSA §1702, sub-§5**, as amended by PL 1999, c. 398, Pt. A, §26 and affected by §§104 and 105, is further amended to read:

**5. Intervention on behalf of public.** The Public Advocate may, on behalf of the using and consuming public, or any particular group of consumers, petition to initiate, or intervene and appear in, any proceedings before the commission, appeals from orders of the commission, or proceedings before state and federal agencies and courts in which the subject matter of the action affects the customers of any utility or competitive service provider doing business in this State, ~~except that the Public Advocate may not intervene in any proceeding in which the commission staff is representing a position substantially similar to that of the Public Advocate, as determined by the Public Advocate.~~

### **SUMMARY**

This bill removes an exception to the Public Advocate's ability to petition to initiate, or intervene and appear in, any proceedings before the Public Utilities Commission, appeals from orders of the commission or proceedings before state and federal agencies and courts in which the subject matter of the action affects the customers of any utility or competitive service provider doing business in the State. The exception the bill removes is the prohibition against the Public Advocate's intervening in any proceedings in which commission staff is representing a position substantially similar to that of the Public Advocate.