

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 Filing Fees in Transmission Line Proceedings

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

Sec. 1. 35-A MRSA §3132, sub-§10-A, as enacted by PL 2009, c. 26, §1, is amended to read:

10-A. Filing fee to Office of the Public Advocate. When a person pays a filing fee to the commission pursuant to subsection 9, the person shall, at the same time, pay to the Office of the Public Advocate an amount equal to ~~1/100~~2/100 of 1% of the estimated cost to erect, rebuild or relocate the transmission line. If the Office of the Public Advocate's expenses in the transmission line proceeding exceed the amount of the original filing fee, the Office of the Public Advocate may bill the person monthly for additional incurred expenses. The person may, at the time of the filing of the petition under this section, request the Office of the Public Advocate to waive all or a portion of the filing fee. The Office of the Public Advocate shall decide on the waiver request within 30 days.

Filing fees paid as required under this subsection must be segregated, apportioned and expended by the Office of the Public Advocate for the purposes of representing the interests of consumers in the proceeding before the commission or conducting public outreach to inform consumers about the proceeding. The Office of the Public Advocate shall return any portion of the filing fee that is not expended for these purposes to the person who paid the fee.

SUMMARY

Current law requires that, when a person files with the Public Utilities Commission a petition of approval for the construction, rebuilding or relocation of a transmission line, that person must pay, in addition to the filing fee paid to the commission, an additional filing fee to the Office of the Public Advocate equal to 1/100 of 1% of the estimated cost to erect, rebuild or relocate the transmission line. This bill increases the amount of the additional filing fee to 2/100 of 1% of the estimated cost to erect, rebuild or relocate the transmission line. It also allows the Office of the Public Advocate to recover expenses in the transmission line proceeding that exceed the amount of the original filing fee from the person.