

Elizabeth Olivolo
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LD 241

Testimony of Elizabeth Olivolo in Support of:

LD 241 - An Act to Authorize the Public Utilities Commission to Approve Rate Adjustments for Low-income Water Utility Ratepayers.

Senator Lawrence, Representative Sachs, and honorable members of the Energy, Utilities, and Technology Committee. I am Elizabeth Olivolo, a resident of Kittery. Thank you for providing me with this opportunity to support LD 241 - An Act to Authorize the Public Utilities Commission to Approve Rate Adjustments for Low-income Water Utility Ratepayers.

I support Maine LD 241 because it aims to provide much-needed relief to low-income residents by giving the Public Utilities Commission the authority to approve rate adjustments that would lower water bills for qualifying households, ensuring access to a basic necessity without placing an undue financial burden on them; essentially helping low-income families afford their water usage without facing potential service disruptions due to high costs.

Key reasons I support LD 241:

- Alleviates financial stress:

By allowing for reduced water rates for low-income individuals, this bill helps lessen the financial strain of essential utility bills, allowing them to allocate more resources to other necessities like food and healthcare.

- Improves access to clean water:

Ensuring affordable water access is crucial for public health and well-being, especially for vulnerable populations who might otherwise be forced to limit water usage due to cost concerns.

- Targeted assistance:

The bill empowers the Public Utilities Commission to design a program that specifically targets low-income households, ensuring the aid reaches those who need it most.

- Fairness and equity:

By providing a mechanism for adjusting rates based on income, this legislation promotes equity in the water utility system, helping to level the playing field for low-income residents.