

Testimony of William H. Dunn, Jr. in Support of
LD 633: An Act Concerning the Restoration of Electricity During Emergencies for Certain Medically Vulnerable Individuals Who Rely on Electronic Medical Apparatuses
March 18, 2025

Senator Lawrence, Representative Sachs, and honorable members of the Energy, Utilities, and Technology Committee. My name is Bill Dunn. I have worked on the Our Power efforts since January 2020 and I retired a few years ago after over 50 years of working in the electric utility industry, the last 30⁺ years consulting throughout the US and in over 25 countries. Thank you for providing me with this opportunity to present testimony in support of **LD 633: An Act Concerning the Restoration of Electricity During Emergencies for Certain Medically Vulnerable Individuals Who Rely on Electronic Medical Apparatuses**.

In my testimony I hope to enhance the testimony of Representative Gary Friedmann about the sad state of the reliability of the electric systems of Maine's two Investor-Owned Utilities ("IOUs"), Central Maine Power Company ("CMP") and Versant Power ("Versant"). In his testimony Representative Friedmann includes several spreadsheets demonstrating Maine's worst in the nation reliability in 2023. The purpose of my testimony is to make sure the committee understands that this performance is not out of the ordinary for CMP and Versant.

Below is a chart I constructed to show Maine's reliability ranking for the years 2016 to 2023. These rankings were created using data prepared by the US Energy Information Administration, ("EIA") as consolidated by the American Public Power Association ("APPA"). The EIA issues data for each calendar year around October of the following year, and APPA has the consolidated data available a few months after that, so the 2024 data won't be available until later this year. Also, the data for restoration time only became available starting in 2018.

In this chart, Outage Minutes refers to the average number of minutes the average customer is without service. The Number of Outages refers to the average number of outages the average customer experiences. The Restoration Time refers to the amount of time a customer who experiences an outage is without service. Within those three categories the data is further segmented by whether or not the data includes Major Event Days ("MEDs"), essentially outages that exceed 24 hours. Of course, these MED outages are the kinds of outages that most threaten the health of vulnerable Mainers

To be perfectly clear, a ranking of #1 in this chart is bad and means that the State has the worst reliability in the nation. In other words, if a state is #1, that means its customers are experiencing the most minutes of outages or the most outages or the slowest restoration time (or maybe all three)!

Worst in the Nation Reliability						
Ranking of Maine IOUs versus all State IOUs						
#1 Means Worst IOU State Reliability in the Nation						
	Outage Minutes		Number of Outages		Restoration Time	
Year	with MEDS	without MEDS	with MEDS	without MEDS	with MEDS	without MEDS
2023	1	2	1	1	1	20
2022	2	6	2	3	4	23
2021	17	6	5	3	34	29
2020	3	3	1	1	8	18
2019	1	8	2	4	1	11
2018	8	3	1	3	17	8
2017	1	3	1	2	N/A	N/A
2016	3	2	1	1	N/A	N/A

As you can see, Maine has essentially led the country in poor reliability for all eight years. Why, one might ask, is this the case. Maybe it is because the Maine IOUs do not suffer any real consequences for providing such poor service that they can't simply brush off as a cost of doing business. As you all know, Maine does not generally suffer from hurricanes, tornados, earthquakes, fires and other natural disasters that impact other parts of the country. Maine does occasionally have ice storms, but they can be designed and maintained for, but maybe the IOUs put their money elsewhere. I've heard utility representatives say that Maine has the highest tree coverage in the country at 89%. While that is true, most of those trees are not where the people are and Cumberland County has only 62% tree coverage.

Please support the passage of LD 633. I am happy to answer any questions.