

Testimony of Coralie Giles, RN  
President, Maine State Nurses Association  
Vice-President, National Nurses United

**IN SUPPORT OF LD 1949**  
“An Act Regarding Energy Fairness”

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology  
Hearing: May 15, 2025 at 9:00 a.m.

Dear Chair Lawrence, Chair Sachs, and distinguished members of the Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology,

On behalf of more than 4,000 registered nurses and health care professionals providing patient care in our state, the **Maine State Nurses Association/National Nurses Organizing Committee/National Nurses United** urges the Committee to vote to advance LD 1949, “An Act Regarding Energy Fairness.” LD 1949 would, in part, limit disconnection of residential utilities for families that include seniors, incapacitated, disabled, or infants and who are seeking low-income assistance. LD 1949 would also require the Public Utilities Commission to consider environmental justice principles and establish a community engagement plan.

Nurses know that utility disconnections can be a life and death issue, especially for the seniors, people with medical conditions, and infants that this bill would protect. For example, some Mainers may depend on breathing machines or home dialysis. Diabetics and others may depend on medications that require refrigeration. Finally, others depend on wheelchairs and scooters to get around in their homes. Utilities must not be allowed to cavalierly cut off Mainers from the electricity for essential medical equipment they need to maintain their lives or health.

Our members support environmental justice principles because they see how exposure to pollutants has serious lasting health impacts, including higher rates of severe asthma, and the disproportionate impact this has on some communities.<sup>1</sup> All communities deserve access to a healthy environment. **We urge the Committee to support LD 1949.**

Sincerely,

*Coralie Giles RN*

Coralie (Cokie) Giles, RN  
President, Maine State Nurses Association  
Vice-President, National Nurses United

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<sup>1</sup> For example, see Byrwa-Hill BM, Morphew TL, Presto AA, Fabisiak JP, Wenzel SE. Living in environmental justice areas worsens asthma severity and control: Differential interactions with disease duration, age at onset, and pollution. J Allergy Clin Immunol. 2023 Nov;152(5):1321-1329.e5. doi: 10.1016/j.jaci.2023.04.015.