



# Maine Conservation Voters

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## **Testimony in Support of LD241, An Act to Authorize the Public Utilities Commission to Approve Rate Adjustments for Low-income Water Utility Ratepayers**

Senator Lawrence, Representative Sachs, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology, my name is Lucy Hochschartner, Climate and Clean Energy Director at Maine Conservation Voters (MCV). MCV is building a just, thriving future for all by acting on the climate crisis, protecting the environment, and safeguarding our democracy. I am here today to testify in support of LD241, An Act to Authorize the Public Utilities Commission to Approve Rate Adjustments for Low-income Water Utility Ratepayers.

MCV is committed to making sure all Maine people have access to a healthy environment, a strong democracy, and a sustainable economy. Often this means that we show up for bills that will ensure Maine's waters remain clean and fresh. Critically, though, we know we must also ensure that all people have access to this fundamental need. That is why we are testifying in support of LD 241 today.

Low-income assistance programs are a critical tool to move toward universal access to our basic needs. For instance, they have long been a practice for electric utilities in Maine. Central Maine Power's Electricity Lifeline Program is perhaps the best known and is able to provide qualified customers up to \$1200 in assistance annually. Allowing the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) to consider and approve similar, cost-effective programs at water utilities is a common sense solution.