



Kathleen Newman – Director, Government Affairs, Central Maine Power Company

LD 251 – An Act Regarding Public Utility Assessments, Fees and Penalties

February 23, 2021

Testifying: Neither for Nor Against

Senator Lawrence, Representative Berry, Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology, my name is Kathleen Newman, Director of Government Affairs for Central Maine Power Company, submitting testimony neither for nor against LD 251 – An Act Regarding Public Utility Assessments, Fees and Penalties Comments.

This bill will require the Maine Public Utilities Commission (MPUC) and the Office of the Public Advocate (OPA) to separately account for all time and expenses between regulation of investor owned utilities and consumer owned utilities. This will impose an administrative burden on those two offices. We do not believe this accounting will result in a significantly different allocation of costs, since the IOUs already get the vast majority of assessments because our gross revenues - upon which the assessments are based - dwarf those of the COUs.

With regard to filing fees, most of these are already expressed as a percentage of a monetary amount, not a fixed fee. For example, filing fees for CPCNs are capped at a percentage of project costs. Any increase in CPCN filing fees would increase project costs ultimately paid by customers for the majority of projects designed to increase service reliability.

We have not heard the MPUC express concern that the filing fee for acquisitions currently set forth in statute is insufficient or unreasonable. For an acquisition of Central Maine Power Company, or its parent company, the proposed fee would be far more than the Commission could ever expect to expend to process a case. Though any surplus is refunded to the applicant, we do not see a legitimate purpose for this change.

Thank you for your consideration.