

Senator Lawrence, Representative Berry, members of the energy, utilities and technology committee,

My name is Charlene Cummings from Phippsburg, Maine. I write today in strong support of LD 1708 an act to create the Pine Tree Power Company. This bill would replace the investor owned utilities with a consumer owned utility. The IOU model has failed its captive customers in many ways clearly stated by others speaking today. But I wanted to put my two cents in the public record, a COU would generate lower costs by eliminating the 10 to 15 % added costs of the returns on investments currently enjoyed by the IOU. The new company would be focused on renewable, carbon neutral power, instead of the aforementioned profits, and the climate goals laid out in the states climate plans. There are incentives to improve the local grid, ie the last mile, instead of unwanted and unneeded profit driven infrastructure, like the so-called clean energy project known as the NECEC, or CMP corridor. This bill also results in no lost revenue for cities and towns thru the payments in lieu of taxes (pilot). One benefit that sticks out in my mind in the long process that this idea has taken to get before you all today is that the event of a weather disaster, such as the ice storm of 1998 is federal assistance thru FEMA to fix the grid rather than passing those costs on to rate payers. I was torn about testifying in person given the interest this bill has generated but in the words of The Lorax "Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, Nothing is going to get better. It's not." . Thanks for listening and strongly urge an ought to pass vote on LD 1708.