

Senator Lawrence, Representative Berry, and members of the Joint Committee on Energy, Utilities, and Technology: My name is Katie Draeger, I reside in Brunswick, Maine, and I am testifying in support of An Act to Create the Pine Tree Power Company. I am a Bowdoin College student, and a citizen concerned about the cost and value of the electricity that I pay for with my tuition each year. Considering that Maine's for-profit, investor-owned utilities charge residential customers on average 58% more than Maine's nine consumer-owned utilities, per kWh, for delivery, I believe that transitioning Maine to a consumer-owned utility will benefit college students in terms of lowering how much of our tuition is being allocated to electricity costs. This would save us money and assure that our tuition is allocated more to our own education. I also support this bill as a proponent of renewable energy and a livable future: All six US communities to have reached 100% renewables already are powered by consumer-owned utilities. With 100% renewable energy as the ultimate goal for the state of Maine- both for mitigating climate change and for the simple fact that putting less pollution into the atmosphere makes our air better- it is clear that consumer-owned utilities are the path to achieve our goals. Where CMP and Versant have actively worked to inhibit progress to a renewable energy future, the Pine Tree Power Company will accelerate Maine's use of clean and green energy. Whether it is to save Mainer's dollars or to make the wish of a livable future come true, I am asking each of you to help get this bill passed. Thank you so much for your time and for hearing the hope and determination in our voices.