

Isabella Jackson
Bath

LD 1708

CONSUMER OWNED UTILITIES

My name is Isabella Jackson and I am testifying in favor of this bill on behalf of myself and private residences that have been negatively impacted by CMP. I work with homeless youth in the state as someone who was emancipated at 16, and experiencing homelessness in VT, GA, and NC. When I lived in GA and NC the electricity was provided by an American company. In fact, I lived so close to the power plant that produced my electricity that I could go into their offices and discuss my bill, which was never above \$150. Because of this, I never had an issue- I knew what I had to pay when. Why can't we offer Mainers that same security?

CMP is funding foreign countries and diminishing the power of consumers by the legislation limiting financial contributions to legislative candidates. The company has been owned by Centra since 2012. Centra is a UK power provider. Centra owns Canadian founded Direct Energy which owns AVANGRID, which has HQ in CT and OR. Central Maine Power is owned by AVANGRID, which we've established is owned by Direct Energy, a subsidiary of Centra. The UK and Canada are foreign countries and paying them limits our negotiating power on a world stage.

Bringing businesses into Maine is only going to boost our economy. Creating jobs will reduce the impact COVID has had on our workforce, giving families the income they may have lost when jobs began letting employees go. By creating this utility it gives workers power in creating a \$15/hr (or higher) starting wage. By creating this utility we can retain young people going into various STEM fields, and create internship programs that can retain student workers and improve the overall median age in our state.

In other discussions in the legislation regarding electric fleets in government vehicles the State needs to look at where these municipal funds are going. If CMP is in charge of these charging stations, state funding will be leaving the state at a rapid and dangerous rate. Municipal governments are at the forefront of this battle, and by allowing funds to leave our cities and towns will hurt already rural areas who struggle to retain services such as: transportation, General Assistance, sidewalks and lighting, and medical and dental services.

COU are our future, and there will be actual harm to low income individuals already struggling in this pandemic.