

Lauren Loomis  
Kittery

Dear Senator Lawrence, Representative Berry, and members of the Joint Committee on Energy, Utilities, and Technology:

My name is Lauren Loomis, I reside in Kittery, Maine, and I am here to testify in support of An Act to Create the Pine Tree Power Company.

I believe it's in our best interest to have a consumer own utility that will put it's customers first and profits that will go into hardening of our grid and savings into our pockets instead of shareholders who don't even live in Maine.

I'm currently an Admin for a Facebook Group called CMP Ratepayers Unite and we currently have close to 10k members. I have seen erroneous bills, wrongful denial of service and wrongful threats of disconnections. The list can go on. I even worked on the metering and billing investigation and saw first hand how a big cooperation could easily install a new billing software that allows them to manipulate customers usage and be allowed to get away with overbilling customers for usage that they did not owe simply because the MPUC didn't understand how that new system worked. Even in my testimony I presented evidence of how this was occurring and how over 250k customers had manual meter readings entered at go live. Many of those entries were entered in erroneously and did not match their actual usage from their meters or past bills. Instead of looking into this more and find out why these types of manual entries were in fact changing the data saved on the metering system the MPUC did nothing and told these customers they owed their disputed bills. When the billing system finally does receive a meter reading from a smart meter the account is flagged and has to be entered manually which changes the data again causing the meters to never true up and forcing customers to never recoup their overcharges. This oversight has caused harm to many customers and its time for customers to have their own say and stop foreign investors who only care about their bottom line.