

Talia Mirel
Orr's Island

Senator Lawrence, Representative Berry, and members of the Joint Committee on Energy, Utilities, and Technology: my name is Talia Mirel, I'm a college student currently living on Orr's Island, Maine, and I write to testify in support of An Act to Create the Pine Tree Power Company. As a student taking classes online during the COVID-19 pandemic, I understand the importance of reliable electricity. I need to be able to charge my computer in order to participate in my classes, and power outages can prevent me from doing so. Establishing a consumer-owned utility would increase energy reliability in the state that could enable people studying and working remotely to continue to accomplish their goals. A consumer-owned utility would also lower costs and give Mainers more agency over their electricity distribution. The first six municipalities in the US to rely completely on renewable energy utilize consumer-owned utilities, so establishing the Pine Tree Power Company would help Maine transition to renewable energy and reduce its environmental impact. Pass LD 1708 to help Maine accomplish these goals.