

Wesley Pelletier
Portland

Senator Lawrence, Representative Berry and distinguished members of the Energy, Utilities, and Technology Committee, thank you for allowing me to speak in support of LD #1708, An Act to Create the PineTree Power Company.

My name is Wes Pelletier and I live in Portland, Maine.

I currently live on a hospital grid, so my power woes are now minimal, but I grew up in Richmond, where our winters were filled with power outages as the infrastructure was poorly maintained and our small community was at the end of the list for repairs. We listened to the Storm Center theme over the radio more often than the tv.

Most people in Maine live in spread out communities like Richmond, where the infrastructure reliability has, if we're being generous, stayed the same over the years. One fact that stuck out to me while researching this proposal was that Central Maine Power is owned by a Spanish corporation, and Versant by a Canadian company. It doesn't strike me that sending our money to absentee corporations that don't reside in our country, let alone state, is going to result in the improvement of our infrastructure in either the near or long term. The average Mainers' lived experience shows exactly what entrusting our electricity production to foreign, corporate entities yields, and it is not worth the cost. We need the money to stay in the state, and to be managed by people who know what living in Maine is like and that are directly accountable to us.

This legislation would do just that, with Mainers' money going directly to run, maintain, and improve our grid's infrastructure, rather than going to some foreign billionaire's hedge fund. I urge you to give the power back to Mainers and pass this legislation. Thank you.