

Wendy Schlotterbeck  
Auburn

I am writing to urge your support to pass LD 1708, a plan for Maine people to create their own electrical utility, The Pine Tree Power Company.

This idea is not new- there are 900 working electrical cooperatives operating in 47 states. These consumer owned utilities provide electrical service to 56% of our nation's landmass!! And Maine has COU's in 97 towns.

#### Half the Power Outages

Many Maine people are fed up with long power outages that threaten their well being, especially senior citizens who rely on electricity for heat, internet and lifesaving devices. Consumer owned utilities average half the outages of corporate utilities.

#### Local Jobs

All current electrical workers would keep their jobs and retirement benefits. Working conditions would improve as additional staff are hired!

#### Climate

Maine people would have control of a smarter, greener grid that reflects our goal of transitioning to renewable power. Local decisions about renewables could happen more rapidly as they would not be subject to intense lobbying on behalf of investors from Spain, Qatar, Norway and Canada (who currently make a 10% PROFIT from our electric bill!!)

#### Keep money in Maine

And last, all local taxes currently being paid by CMP/ VERSANT would be matched as payment in lieu of taxes by PINE TREE Power. And instead of sending 10 cents of every dollar paid to a for profit company based overseas, electric rates will be lowered by as much as 13% AND more money can be invested in Maine communities!

Pine Tree Power is a win, win, win, win idea. For these reasons I urge passage of LD 1708!

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