

**To:** Energy, Utilities and Technology Committee

**From:** Linda Woods, Waterville

**Date:** May 19, 2021

**Re:** Support for L.D. 1708, An Act To Create the Pine Tree Power Company, a Nonprofit Utility, To Deliver Lower Rates, Reliability and Local Control for Maine Energy Independence

Unlike many who are submitting testimony in support of L.D. 1708, "An Act to Create the Pine Tree Power Company," I have no "bad CMP" stories to report. From what I have read in *The Central Maine Morning Sentinel*, I understand that CMP is rated the worst power company in the nation for customer service as well as being ranked the worst in the nation for length and frequency of outages. Except for during major outages, the times I have had to call CMP to report an outage have all led to successful, timely restoration.

My primary reason for supporting LD 1708 is out of concerns about foreign ownership of such a essential component of my life. As you know, CMP is owned by Spanish energy conglomerate Iberdrola. Leaving an essential service in the hands of foreign government owners is careless, even more so when those owners prioritize profits over the quality of service that they deliver to Maine people. As a supporter of local control, I much prefer that my electricity comes from a Maine-owned entity. Local ownership shifts control of our power back to Mainers. Just as I prefer to see local school boards abandon the Maine Learning Results and Annual Yearly Progress as indicators of students' knowledge, I would like to see Maine residents own and control our power. No other essential service is owned by a foreign company: our electricity should not be either.

From what I have learned by attending multiple meetings hosted by Our Power, the Pine Tree Power Company will be run by a seven-member, elected board of directors who will represent Maine's diverse geography. To add to their expertise, these members will choose four expert advisory members. I trust these local individuals to make the proper decisions to provide electricity at an affordable rate. The group behind this plan has studied how to make Pine Tree Power be a financially solvent entity. According to their calculations, the Pine Tree Power Company will save us \$9 billion over its first 30 years, with net savings starting on year one. They pledge not to cost tax dollars or use state bonds.

As a strong advocate for local control, I support LD 1708 because we Maine residents will be able to attend all board meetings, providing unprecedented transparency. We will even have a say in the decision-making that will guide our energy future. Local ownership shifts control of our power back to Mainers where it belongs.

I urge you to vote YES to support **L.D. 1708**, An Act To Create the Pine Tree Power Company, a Nonprofit Utility, To Deliver Lower Rates, Reliability and Local Control for Maine Energy Independence.

Linda Woods  
Waterville

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