

To whom it may concern

I am writing in support of creating a new, consumer owned utility in Maine, currently referred to as Pine Tree Power company. Maine's utilities have too long enjoyed monopoly status at the public expense rather than in our interest. What is there to like about the current regime? Mainers have expensive power and the worst power reliability in the country. CMP's blind drive to carve out the NECEC corridor to capture a market in Massachusetts despite overwhelming statewide and local opposition is further evidence of their corporate arrogance and indifference to Mainers' interests.

Richard Silman's analysis has shown that a consumer owned utility would save Mainer's a bundle, \$9 billion over 30 years. As a public utility Pine Tree Power's Borrowing for maintenance and improvements would be much cheaper, low-interest loans, and there would not be no stockholders to satisfy and pay.

Central Maine Power and Versant have enjoyed their monopoly status in exchanged for their service of the public good, but they have failed this standard. Instead, they enjoy it both ways, by pursuing their corporate goals at the public's expense. LD 1708 is a bipartisan proposal that shows a way to get the job done better.