

## OFFICE OF POLICY AND LEGAL ANALYSIS

Date: March 15, 2022  
 To: Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology  
 From: Lindsay J. Laxon, Legislative Analyst  
 Re: **LD 697 An Act To Enhance the Energy Security of Maine Residents**

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Sponsor amendment: March 4, 2022

Public Hearing: March 8, 2022

## Summary

This bill requires the Public Utilities Commission to consider, before issuing an order of authorization, the risks to national security and the potential economic losses in the State associated with ownership, in whole or in part, of a transmission and distribution utility located in the State by a foreign government, foreign corporation or subsidiary of a foreign corporation.

**List of People that Submitted Written Testimony and/or Spoke at the Hearing and Overview of Testimony**

**Proponents:** Representative Berry (sponsor)\*, Senator Bennett (Oxford), Representative Poirier (Skowhegan), Becky Bartovics (Sierra Club Maine)\*, Gary Friedmann (Bar Harbor), Wayne Jortner (Freeport), Jill Linzee (Maine Unitarian Universalist State Advocacy Network)\*, Steven Weems (Solar Energy Association of Maine)\*, Daniel Emerson (South Berwick)\*, Elizabeth Huntley (Portland), Marylyn Wentworth (Arundel)\*

**Opponents:** Ben Lucas (Maine State Chamber of Commerce)\*

**NFNA:** William Harwood (Public Advocate)\*, Deirdre Schneider (PUC)\*, Dr. Gordon Weil (Harpwell)\*

**Technical Notes/Comments from the Public Hearing**

- “Foreign corporation” or its subsidiaries may need further specificity as well as language in C(3).
- Amendment suggestion: Add to subsection 708(2)(A) the following:  
 (10) That the commission's examination under subsection 2, paragraph C (3) identifies net benefits for the utility's ratepayers.

**Information Requests**

- Rep. Grohoski asked if the Sierra Club of Maine has suggestions for what additional protections could be provided to ensure benefits to Maine ratepayers based on their involvement in the PUC process.
- Rep. Foster asked the PUC if the language in the amendment under Paragraph C(3) raises any issues with respect to discrimination against foreign companies.

**Fiscal Impact**

- Not yet provided

\* Testimony specified that it was in reference to the sponsor's amendment.