

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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127th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2015

Legislative Document

No. 237

H.P. 169

House of Representatives, February 3, 2015

**An Act To Address Recommendations from the Report by the Office
of Program Evaluation and Government Accountability Regarding
the Public Utilities Commission**

Submitted by the Office of the Public Advocate pursuant to Joint Rule 204.
Reference to the Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology suggested and ordered
printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "R B. Hunt".

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative DUNPHY of Embden.
Cosponsored by Senator WOODSOME of York and
Representatives: BEAVERS of South Berwick, DION of Portland, FREDETTE of Newport,
HIGGINS of Dover-Foxcroft, O'CONNOR of Berwick, RYKERSON of Kittery, STETKIS of
Canaan, WADSWORTH of Hiram.

1 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

2 **Sec. 1. 35-A MRSA §1701, sub-§2**, as enacted by PL 1987, c. 141, Pt. A, §6, is
3 amended to read:

4 **2. Staff of the Public Advocate.** The staff of the Public Advocate ~~shall consist~~
5 consists of such other personnel, including staff attorneys, as the Public Advocate
6 determines necessary to represent and advise the using and consuming public, as required
7 by ~~subsection~~ section 1702. All such personnel ~~shall be~~ are appointed, supervised and
8 directed by the Public Advocate. The Public Advocate is not subject to the supervision,
9 direction or control of the ~~chairman~~ chair or members of the commission.

10 **Sec. 2. 35-A MRSA §1701, sub-§3, ¶¶E and F**, as enacted by PL 1999, c. 259,
11 §4, are amended to read:

12 E. Business Services Manager, salary range 26; ~~and~~

13 F. Special Assistant to the Public Advocate, salary range 20-; and

14 **Sec. 3. 35-A MRSA §1701, sub-§3, ¶G** is enacted to read:

15 G. Consumer Advisor, salary range 25.

16 **Sec. 4. 35-A MRSA §1702, sub-§11** is enacted to read:

17 **11. Advice to using and consuming public.** The Public Advocate may advise a
18 member of the using and consuming public regarding participation in proceedings before
19 the commission.

20 **SUMMARY**

21 This bill establishes a consumer advisor position in the Office of the Public Advocate
22 to advise citizens participating in proceedings before the Public Utilities Commission.
23 The position is established to address a recommendation in the Office of Program
24 Evaluation and Government Accountability's 2013 report on the Public Utilities
25 Commission that the Public Utilities Commission and the Public Advocate explore ways
26 to facilitate consumers' ability to effectively represent themselves in adjudicatory
27 proceedings before the Public Utilities Commission.