

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document

No. 1633

H. P. 1175

House of Representatives, March 17, 1971

Referred to Committee on Public Utilities. Sent up for concurrence and ordered printed.

BERTHA W. JOHNSON, Clerk

Presented by Mr. Kelley of Caribou.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED
SEVENTY-ONE

AN ACT Relating to Complaints Against Public Utilities.

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

R. S., T. 35, § 291, amended. Section 291 of Title 35 of the Revised Statutes is amended by adding a new paragraph at the end to read as follows:

Upon written or telephoned complaint made against any public utility to the Public Utilities Commission by a customer regarding cessation of service, failure to initiate available service or failure to obtain adequate service, the commission will hold a hearing regarding the complaint with all deliberate speed to make a determination of the facts of the case and issue an order binding on both the utility and the customer. From the moment of the complaint, the commission shall notify the particular utility which shall restore, initiate or improve service immediately to the customer until such time as an order regarding the complaint is issued by the commission.

STATEMENT OF FACT

There is currently no protection for the individual customer of a public utility from arbitrary action on the part of a giant corporate entity that declines to provide service, provides inadequate service or fails to initiate service for any reason. With certain services, particularly electricity and water, critical to the safety and welfare of customers with even short breaks in service irreparably harmful—some effective and proper remedy for the customer should at all times be available.