

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document

No. 20

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Office of the Clerk of the House

Filed December 2, 1974 under Joint Rule 6 by Senator Reeves of Kennebec.
To be printed and delivered to the Senate of the 107th Legislature.

E. LOUISE LINCOLN, Clerk

Presented by Senator Reeves of Kennebec.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED
SEVENTY-FIVE

AN ACT to Provide Lifeline Electrical Service for Older Citizens.

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

Sec. 1. 35 MRSA, c. 4, is enacted to read:

CHAPTER 4

OLDER CITIZENS LIFELINE ELECTRICAL SERVICE LAW

§ 81. Title

This chapter shall be known as the Older Citizens Lifeline Electrical Service Law.

§ 82. Policy

It is declared that it is a policy of the State of Maine to insure an adequate electrical utility service to older citizens at a price they can afford. Older citizens today face a special crisis in surviving under the constant increase in the cost of living and particularly in the cost of fuel and utility services. At the same time, most utility rates encourage waste and the more electricity that is used the lower the per unit cost of the electricity. It is the purpose of lifeline electrical service to alleviate the upward spiral in the cost of electrical service to older citizens and at the same time to encourage as well as reward the conservation of scarce energy supplies by adopting the approach of constant per unit cost for the use of electricity.

It is the policy of the State that residents be able to receive electrical service for basic necessities of modern life, such as lighting and refrigeration, at

a stable, fair and reasonable minimum cost and to encourage the reduction of electrical power consumption for all other uses beyond such basic necessities.

§ 83. Definitions

As used in this chapter, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following words shall have the following meanings:

1. Older citizen. "Older citizen" means a residential customer 62 years or older.
2. Residential customer. "Residential customer" means an individual who maintains a permanent place of abode within this State and is present in this State for more than an aggregate of 183 days each year.

§ 84. Lifeline rate

1. A residential customer who is an older citizen shall pay not more than 3¢ per kilowatt-hour for each of the first 500 kilowatt-hours of electricity utilized in any month at his principal dwelling.
2. The rate provided by this section shall not be supplemented by any minimum charges, service charge, connection charge or other periodic charge to an older citizen who is a residential customer in a principal dwelling.
3. Where any existing rate for a particular usage level is lower than the rate in this section, the lower rate shall prevail.

§ 85. Review

The Public Utilities Commission shall hold a public hearing or hearings to review the lifeline service rate to insure that it is adequate to effect the purposes of this chapter. It shall report its findings and any recommendations concerning the rate to the Legislature prior to the last day of 1976 and shall report periodically every 2 years thereafter.

§ 86. Rules and procedures

The Public Utilities Commission is empowered to establish the rules and procedures for claiming the lifeline rate.

Sec. 2. Transitional provisions

1. Each electric utility shall file with the Public Utilities Commission revised tariffs in conformance with this Act within 30 days of the date this Act becomes law. The revised tariffs shall be effective not later than 30 days from the date of filing by the utility under this Act.
2. In the event that implementation shall cause a loss of revenue to a utility, the additional revenue shall be obtained from all classes of energy use in a just and reasonable manner.

STATEMENT OF FACT

The reasons for this Act are clearly outlined in the statement of policy and purposes in the body of the Act.