

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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FIRST REGULAR SESSION

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ONE HUNDRED AND TENTH LEGISLATURE

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**Legislative Document**

**No. 606**

S. P. 219

In Senate, February 4, 1981

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

MAY M. ROSS, Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator Kerry of York.

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STATE OF MAINE

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IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-ONE

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**AN ACT to Protect Consumer Rights in the Acts and Practices of Public Utilities.**

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

**35 MRSA §§ 106 and 107 are enacted to read:**

**§ 106. Plain English notices**

**All notices, billings and other communications by public utilities to their customers shall be:**

**1. Plain English. Write in nontechnical language and in a clear and coherent manner, using words with common everyday meanings and scoring higher than 70 on the Flesch reading ease scale of readability; and**

**2. Clear presentation. Printed with spaces and margins, type size and face, ink and paper color and contrast which permit an individual with normal vision to read it under ordinary circumstances without usual aids or special assistance.**

**§ 107. Illegal disconnection of service**

**Any public utility that terminates or disconnects service to a customer in violation of state statutes or duly adopted regulations shall be required to reconnect service and to provide the equivalent of \$100 service at no charge to the customer.**

## STATEMENT OF FACT

The purposes of this bill are:

1. To require that public utility bills and notices be written in nontechnical language and presented in a clear fashion in order for customers of the utility to easily understand the bills and notices; and
2. To provide that utilities that illegally disconnect service must reconnect the service and must provide \$100 of free service to the customer.