

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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119th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-1999

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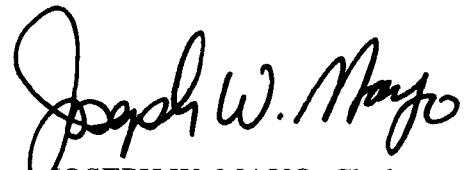
H.P. 1019

House of Representatives, February 23, 1999

**An Act to Ensure the Protection of Ratepayers' Interests in the New
England Power Pool.**

(EMERGENCY)

Reference to the Committee on Utilities and Energy suggested and ordered printed.


JOSEPH W. MAYO, Clerk

Presented by Representative USHER of Westbrook.
Cosponsored by Representatives: LaVERDIERE of Wilton, O'NEAL of Limestone, SIROIS
of Caribou, TRIPP of Topsham, WHEELER of Eliot.

2 **Emergency preamble.** Whereas, Acts of the Legislature do not
become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted
as emergencies; and

4
6 **Whereas,** the New England power pool is undergoing a
comprehensive restructuring, which will have a significant and
lasting impact upon competition in electricity markets and upon
8 the costs faced by consumers of electricity in Maine; and

10 **Whereas,** important decisions regarding the New England power
pool are already being made in the context of substantive
12 litigation and negotiations; and

14 **Whereas,** the active and vigorous participation of the Public
Utilities Commission in these proceedings is vital to protect the
16 interests of Maine's electric consumers; and

18 **Whereas,** the current staffing and workload priorities of the
commission have permitted only very limited resources to be
20 allocated to the important task of monitoring and participating
in the New England power pool agreement process; and

22 **Whereas,** in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts
24 create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of
Maine and require the following legislation as immediately
26 necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and
safety; now, therefore,

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

30 **Sec. 1. 35-A MRSA §107-A is enacted to read:**

32 **§107-A. New England power pool monitoring staff**

34 1. Appointment. The commission shall employ 2 full-time
36 staff members whose exclusive duties are to monitor and protect
the interests of the ratepayers in this State in the New England
38 power pool committee process, proceedings before the Federal
Energy Regulatory Commission and other New England power pool
40 proceedings.

42 2. Applicable provisions; salary. The provisions of
section 107 apply to the staff members employed pursuant to
44 subsection 1. The salaries of these staff members are subject to
the Civil Service Law.

46 **Sec. 2. 35-A MRSA §116, sub-§4, as amended by PL 1997, c. 586,**
48 **§4, is further amended to read:**

50 **4. Use of funds.** The Public Utilities Commission may use
the revenues provided in accordance with this section to fund 65

2 67 employees and to defray the costs incurred by the commission
4 pursuant to this Title, including administrative expenses,
6 general regulatory expenses, consulting fees and all other
8 reasonable costs incurred to administer this Title.

6 **Emergency clause.** In view of the emergency cited in the
8 preamble, this Act takes effect when approved.

10 SUMMARY

12 This bill creates 2 full-time positions at the Public
14 Utilities Commission for the purpose of monitoring and
16 participating in the New England power pool committee process and
18 in proceedings before the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to
20 protect the interests of ratepayers in the State in the
restructuring of the New England power pool. The 2 positions are
assigned exclusively to these tasks to ensure adequate, timely
and informed state participation in the New England power pool
and Federal Energy Regulatory Commission process.