

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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124th MAINE LEGISLATURE

SECOND REGULAR SESSION-2010

Legislative Document

No. 1652

S.P. 617

In Senate, December 21, 2009

An Act To Provide More Information to the Public Advocate

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

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joy J. O'Brien".

JOY J. O'BRIEN
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator HOBBS of York.
Cosponsored by Representative BERRY of Bowdoinham and
Representatives: DOSTIE of Sabattus, FLAHERTY of Scarborough, HINCK of Portland.

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

2 Sec. 1. 35-A MRSA §1713 is enacted to read:

3 **§1713. Authority to request additional information**

4 In addition to the authority granted under section 1708, the Public Advocate may
5 request, in writing, that any utility subject to the jurisdiction of the commission respond
6 to information requests regarding any issue that is within the jurisdiction of the
7 commission, including any matter related to the rates, charges, tariffs, books or service
8 quality of the utility, and the utility shall answer these information requests fully and
9 completely in a reasonably prompt manner, not to exceed 30 calendar days from the date
10 of the request. Commission rules pertaining to the scope of questions and objections to
11 discovery apply to any request under this section, and the commission has jurisdiction to
12 rule on any objections or motions to compel. If the utility fails to answer the information
13 requests in a reasonably prompt manner, the Public Advocate may request enforcement of
14 this section from the commission. This section does not limit the right of the Public
15 Advocate to engage in discovery in the context of an adjudicatory proceeding at the
16 commission.

17 **SUMMARY**

18 This bill authorizes the Public Advocate to make written information requests of
19 utilities subject to the jurisdiction of the Public Utilities Commission on any matter
20 related to the rates, charges, tariffs, books or service quality of the utility. The utility has
21 a reasonable period of time, not to exceed 30 days, in which to respond to the inquiries. If
22 the utility refuses to respond, the Public Advocate may request enforcement by the Public
23 Utilities Commission.