

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# 127th MAINE LEGISLATURE

## SECOND REGULAR SESSION-2016

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Legislative Document

No. 1558

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H.P. 1061

House of Representatives, January 14, 2016

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**An Act To Make Efficient Electric Heat Pumps Available to Utility Customers, Including Low-income Customers**

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Approved for introduction by a majority of the Legislative Council pursuant to Joint Rule 203.

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

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "R B. Hunt".

ROBERT B. HUNT  
Clerk

Presented by Representative GROHMAN of Biddeford.  
Cosponsored by Senator WOODSOME of York and  
Representatives: BROOKS of Lewiston, CHAPMAN of Brooksville, DeCHANT of Bath,  
DEVIN of Newcastle, DUNPHY of Embden, EVANGELOS of Friendship, FREDETTE of  
Newport, SAUCIER of Presque Isle.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 35-A MRSA §3105** is enacted to read:

3 **§3105. Heat pump program**

4 Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a transmission and distribution utility  
5 may develop and implement, upon approval of the commission, a program within its  
6 service territory to assist low-income customers and other customers who need assistance  
7 in obtaining the benefits of efficient electric heat pumps as set forth in this section and  
8 may advertise the availability of its program to its customers.

9 **1. Approval; activities of the utility.** A transmission and distribution utility must  
10 submit a proposed program to the commission for approval. The commission shall  
11 examine the proposed program and, if it finds the proposed program is reasonably  
12 designed and consistent with the provisions and program elements of this section, shall  
13 approve the program. All activities of a transmission and distribution utility under an  
14 approved program must be considered regulated activities of the utility subject to  
15 commission regulation as a utility service, notwithstanding any provision of law  
16 otherwise limiting the amount of investment or revenue a utility may make or receive in a  
17 business venture separate from the delivery of electricity. Recovery of all reasonable and  
18 prudent costs associated with the program must be through customers participating in the  
19 program and may not be passed through to customers not participating in the program.

20 **2. Program elements.** A program under this section must include the following  
21 program elements:

22 A. A transmission and distribution utility may, through a qualified heat pump  
23 installer selected by a customer participating in the program, provide an efficient  
24 electric heat pump to a customer within its service territory who, for purposes of this  
25 paragraph, is unable to purchase and install a heat pump due to income or other  
26 reasons. The utility may own the heat pump provided to a customer participating in  
27 the program and may charge the customer for the costs associated with providing the  
28 heat pump and the customer must be provided an option to later buy the heat pump  
29 provided on reasonable terms approved by the commission. If the customer is  
30 delinquent in payments under the program, the utility may undertake reasonable debt  
31 collection activities as approved by the commission and otherwise consistent with  
32 applicable law, but in no event may the customer's electric service be disconnected as  
33 a result of the customer's delinquency under the program;

34 B. The overall energy costs to customers under the program must decrease as a result  
35 of participation in the program, as measured by the overall energy costs of customers  
36 over the lifespan of the heat pumps, regardless of the source of energy, and the costs  
37 associated with participation in the program; and

38 C. A transmission and distribution utility may offer incentives to customers  
39 participating in the program to acquire efficient electric heat pumps to be used to  
40 reduce the total installation cost of such heat pumps.

