

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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ORDERS

(4-1) On motion of Representative BERRY of Bowdoinham, the following Joint Order:
(H.P. 1320)

ORDERED, the Senate concurring, that, notwithstanding Joint Rule 353, the Task Force To Study Rising Transmission and Distribution Costs is established as follows.

1. Task Force To Study the Rising Transmission and Distribution Costs established. The Task Force to Study Rising Transmission and Distribution Costs, referred to in this order as "the task force," is established.

2. Membership. The task force consists of 13 members appointed as follows:

A. Two members of the Senate appointed by the President of the Senate, including a member from each of the 2 parties holding the largest number of seats in the Legislature;

B. Two members of the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker of the House, including a member from each of the 2 parties holding the largest number of seats in the Legislature;

C. Five members appointed by the President of the Senate as follows:

(1) A representative from each of the 2 investor-owned transmission and distribution utilities in the State;

(2) A representative of a consumer-owned transmission and distribution utility;

(3) A representative of a small energy consumer; and

(4) A representative of an industrial energy consumer; and

D. Four members appointed by the Speaker of the House as follows:

(1) A representative of a conservation organization;

(2) A representative of an energy generator located in the State;

(3) A representative of an organization with expertise in elder and aging advocacy; and

(4) A representative of an economic development organization in the State.

3. Task force chairs. The first-named Senator is the Senate chair of the task force and the first-named member of the House of the Representatives is the House chair of the task force.

4. Appointments; convening of task force. All appointments must be made no later than 30 days following the effective date of this order. The appointing authorities shall notify the Executive Director of the Legislative Council once all appointments have been made. When the appointment of all members has been completed, the chairs of the task force shall call and convene the first meeting of the task force. If 30 days or more after the effective date of this order a majority of but not all appointments have been made, the chairs may request authority and the Legislative Council may grant authority for the task force to meet and conduct its business.

5. Duties. The task force shall:

A. Review of transmission and distribution costs for both residential and industrial consumers since 2000 for:

- (1) Consumer-owned transmission and distribution utilities;
- (2) Small investor-owned transmission and distribution utilities; and
- (3) Large investor-owned transmission and distribution utilities;

B. Compare the costs of transmission and distribution in the ISO-NE region, as defined in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 35-A, section 1902, subsection 3, to other regions in the United States in which the bulk power system is operated by a system operator;

C. Review and evaluate the cost differences between transmission and distribution;

D. Review and evaluate the legislative and regulatory policies affecting distribution costs;

E. Review and evaluate the cost containment provisions of law designed to prevent overbuilt transmission and distribution lines;

F. Review and evaluate different compensation models for transmission and distribution utilities in other regions in the United States in which the bulk power system is operated by a system operator;

G. Review current transmission and distribution rate structures in the State and evaluate the effectiveness of lower rates in promoting economic development;

H. Determine if the costs of advocacy before the Legislature and administrative bodies on behalf of transmission and distribution utilities are borne by ratepayers;

I. Develop recommendations for changing current regulatory policies and determine the costs of implementing those recommendations versus the cost of leaving current policies in place;

J. Review and evaluate wheeling charges;

K. Review and evaluate time-of-use billing; and

L. Examine any other issues to further the purposes of the task force.

In conducting the duties under this subsection, the task force shall seek public input and shall consult and collaborate with stakeholders and experts in the fields of energy policy and economic development.

6. Meetings. The task force shall hold at least 4 meetings.

7. Staff assistance. The Legislative Council shall provide staffing services to the task force, except that the Legislative Council staff support is not authorized when the Legislature is in regular or special session.

8. Report. No later than November 7, 2018, the task force shall submit a report that includes its findings and recommendations, including suggested legislation, to the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology.
