

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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STATE OF MAINE
130TH LEGISLATURE
SECOND REGULAR SESSION



Disposition of bills and summaries of all laws enacted or finally passed

**JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENERGY,
UTILITIES AND TECHNOLOGY**

July 2022

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JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, UTILITIES AND TECHNOLOGY

LD 1949 An Act To Amend the Caribou Utilities District Charter To Include Broadband Services

ENACTED LAW SUMMARY

Private and Special Law 2021, chapter 18 amends the charter of the Caribou Utilities District to permit the district to provide broadband services to residents, businesses, nonprofit organizations and government entities within the district. It expands the district's powers to include those related to the provision of broadband services. It also establishes a process for municipalities other than Caribou to apply for membership to receive broadband services through the district.

LD 1959 An Act Regarding Utility Accountability and Grid Planning for Maine's Clean Energy Future

ENACTED LAW SUMMARY

Public Law 2021, chapter 702:

1. Directs the Public Utilities Commission to adopt rules governing the evaluation of the utility service provided by transmission and distribution utilities with over 50,000 customers which must include metrics pertaining to utility operations and activities relating to: service quality, customer service, field services, and distributed energy resources interconnection;
2. Requires the commission to set reporting requirements for each metric, designate service standards based on thresholds of performance, and evaluate data provided by the utilities to determine if each utility has met the standards;
3. Requires the commission to impose administrative penalties for poor performance unless the utility demonstrates good cause for its failure to meet the standard;
4. Requires certain transmission and distribution utilities to submit a report to the commission that includes a comparison of the utility's actual with estimated costs used in its most recent rate case to set rates. If the commission finds a difference of more than 10% between the actual and estimated costs, the commission may require an audit of the utility or disallow cost recovery in the utility's future rate cases;
5. Directs the commission to initiate a proceeding to conduct a comparison of each investor-owned transmission and distribution utility's expenditures with comparable investor-owned transmission and distribution utilities in the United States. The results of that comparison may be used in a utility's future rate cases;
6. Establishes a process for divestiture of an investor-owned transmission and distribution utility that fails to meet the required service standards or is unable to fulfill its statutory duties due to financial impairment;

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7. Requires transmission and distribution utilities, no later than December 31, 2023 and every three years thereafter, to prepare and file plans with the commission for addressing the expected effect of climate change on the utility's assets needed to transmit and distribute electricity to its customers;
8. Requires the commission to initiate a proceeding to identify priorities regarding a grid plan that will assist in the cost-effective transition to a clean, affordable and reliable electric grid. The commission must hold technical conferences or stakeholder workshops to identify priorities, assumptions, goals, methods and tools that will assist utilities in developing a grid plan. The commission must direct each investor-owned transmission and distribution utility with over 50,000 customers to submit a filing to address the priorities identified by the commission as well as additional elements identified in the law; and
9. Adds protections for utility contractors and employees of public utilities, competitive electricity providers, affiliated interests or utility contractors who testify before or provide information to a legislative committee, the commission or the Public Advocate.

LD 1967 An Act To Amend the Charter of the Gray Water District

ENACTED LAW SUMMARY

Private and Special Law 2021, chapter 19 amends the charter of the Gray Water District to authorize the district to construct and maintain infrastructure in the Town of New Gloucester and to build a water main into and offer service in the Town of North Yarmouth along Gray Road. It also allows the district treasurer to deduct money from a trustee's total compensation for missed regular meetings.

LD 2016 Resolve, To Implement the Crisis Response Services Recommendations Identified Pursuant to Resolve 2021, Chapter 29

ENACTED LAW SUMMARY

Resolve 2021, chapter 162 requires the Public Utilities Commission, Emergency Services Communication Bureau to convene a working group to develop policies and procedures to address the screening and transferring of crisis response services calls. The working group is required to determine appropriate procedures for delivering crisis response services. The bureau, in consultation with the Department of Public Safety, must develop proposed legislation to implement the bureau's recommendations for the delivery of crisis response services. The bureau must allow the working group and affected persons and entities to provide comments on the proposal. The commission must submit a report no later than February 1, 2023, detailing the results of the working group's activities along with the proposed legislation, together with all comments received by the bureau, to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having