



State of Maine

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Heather Sanborn
PUBLIC ADVOCATE

Electric Ratepayer Advisory Council

Meeting: November 17, 2025 at 2:00 PM at MaineHousing (Teams option)

Council Members: Jessica Fay, Victoria Forkus, Andrea Steward, Lisa Henaghen, Amy Turner, Sharon Klein, Eloise Vitelli, David Zachow, John Bliss, Linda Ball. Absent: Katy Childs, Nakia Dana, Shawn Lovley.

Ex-Officio: Heather Sanborn, Kiera Reardon (for Dan Burgess), Phil Bartlett, Ian Burnes, Erik Jorgensen.

Other Attendees: Derek Davidson (PUC), Deirdre Schneider (PUC), Kathy Largay (Versant), Elizabeth Deprey (OPA), Kathleen Bowman (CMP), Peter Fitzgerald, Tim Howington, Alf Anderson (AARP) Sylvia Most (OPA)

Introduction

Heather Sanborn welcomed everyone and asked everyone (in person) to introduce themselves.

Competitive Electricity Supply Report

Heather summarized the project so far, including notice to CEPs and progress on receiving responses. The following CEPs received an invitation to comment on the report and answer questions designed to elicit additional information on their products: C.N. Brown Company, NRG, Inc., Constellation Energy, Electricity Maine, and Clearview. NextEra was sent the report as a representative Standard Offer Supplier. Discussion ensued:

- David offered that this is a program that is not functioning, and we need to find a solution.
 - o Discussion ensued on how to approach making changes to the CEP marketplace based on the apparent issues, for example that teaser rate lures people in
- Deirdre gave a brief review of consumer protections related to CEPs. There was a recommendation that there be a document or section of the report that explains existing regulations/protections.
- Andrea noted that there is a PUC complaint process, but it is unclear the extent to which people know they can complain. It was commented that there are instructions on electric bills, but that the bills are long and complex.
- Victoria noted that any new protections should apply to everyone, as this is not just an issue for those with lower incomes. Older adults in rural communities are falling victim to predatory practices.
- Ian asked how many CEP customers are on auto-pay. There is a concern that the "out of sight, out of mind" aspect of auto-pay causes people to delay action until bill issues become extreme. He wondered if there was an education component to the solution.
- Lisa estimated that 35% of customers overall are on auto-pay.
- Note: most customers are billed by the utility for CEP supply. CEP bills are not "disconnectable," receivables go back to the supplier to collect. Also, in order for a CEP to market to a consumer, the customer must signal that they are open to solicitations.
- Kiera asked what the process would be from here regarding the report. Heather explained that the report is being prepared for ERAC by Tim Howington. Policy recommendations would be

provided to the Legislature in a cover letter. Effort would be made to reach consensus of the council on those recommendations.

Annual Report

- Heather went through the draft report distributed prior to the meeting, spending time on the proposed priorities on p. 8-9.
 - o Work groups will be tasked with further defining the projects to help in the development of RFPs.
 - o Discussion ensued on the winter disconnect initiative
 - Derek indicated that Ch. 815, Section 10(c)(4) is the PUC rule stating that utilities cannot disconnect a customer for non-payment during the winter months due to health and safety concerns. It also allows utilities to issue notices to customers behind on their bills, as long as the notices don't specify a disconnection date.
 - Deirdre supplied the reference (LD 1328 P.L. 2021, ch. 347) which created the current winter disconnection notice prohibition.
- Heather led a discussion on how ERAC is funded. The OPA has funded studies for the past two years, however due to the rate case filing by CMP, it may not be able to fund both new initiatives from its current budget. A financial order may be required.

Public Comment

- Alf Anderson commented that AARP would support the outcome of the CEP report and would like to see the burden be on CEPs to verify when LIAP-eligible customers are being enrolled via an inquiry with the utility. This practice is in place in other states. He also noted that they have publicly called for an end to the CEP marketplace, and while he recognizes that there may not be an appetite for that level of response, they would like to see reforms to help support consumers.

Next Meeting – December 8 @ 2pm – via Teams

Formal meeting adjourned at 3:15pm. In-person committee members broke into two small working groups to begin discussion on new initiatives. Additional working group discussions will be held via Teams at 2pm on December 2 (Winter Disconnections) and December 4 (Focus Groups).