

Electric Ratepayer Advisory Council

March 9, 2026

At Public Utilities Commission and via Teams

Attendees:

- **Voting:** Jessica Fay, Andrea Steward, Victoria Forkus, Mark Morisette, Lisa Henaghan, Sharon Klein, Eloise Vitelli, David Zachow, John Bliss. Absent: Shawn Lovley, Nakia Dana, Katy Childs, Amy Turner.
- **Ex-Officio:** Heather Sanborn, Phil Bartlett, Ian Burnes, Kiera Reardon (for Dan Burgess). Absent: Erik Jorgensen.
- **Public & Staff:** Alf Anderson, Peter Fitzgerald, Elizabeth Deprey, Derek Davidson, Kris Winther, Kathleen Bowman, Leona Michelson, Kathy Largay, Sylvia Most.

The meeting began with an announcement that the Office of the Public Advocate expects to have a renovated conference room available to host ERAC meetings starting in fall 2026. Members also discussed the **meeting schedule for the remainder of the year** and tentatively agreed to continue meetings through June, take July and August off, and resume in September.

An update was provided on **LD 2203**, legislation addressing the impact of competitive electricity supply contracts on LIAP participants. The bill would prevent competitive electricity providers from charging LIAP customers more than the standard offer rate and would authorize the Public Utilities Commission to adopt rules to implement the policy. The bill received bipartisan support in committee and is expected to move to the House and Senate floors soon.

Two working groups provided updates. The **focus group working group** is reviewing existing reports and research on engagement with low-income populations in Maine to identify gaps before conducting additional outreach. The **winter disconnection working group** is reviewing PUC Chapter 815 rules related to winter collections and discussing low participation in the Energy Crisis Intervention Program (ECIP) program. Utilities will provide additional data on winter arrearages and program utilization at a future working group meeting. Notes were distributed prior to the meeting.

The remainder of the meeting focused on a discussion of how to define **electricity affordability**, in light of legislation directing the PUC to develop an affordability metric. Members discussed energy burden metrics, the role of household income and other expenses, the impact of electrification on energy costs, and the importance of considering both electricity rates and customer usage. Participants also noted that affordability is influenced by the rate of cost increases, predictability of bills, and

consumer perceptions, in addition to objective cost measures. The conversation highlighted the complexity of developing an affordability metric and the need for continued discussion as the PUC and other stakeholders begin this work.

The next ERAC meeting will be held on April 13 via Teams.