



127th MAINE LEGISLATURE

SECOND REGULAR SESSION-2016

Legislative Document

No. 1558

H.P. 1061

House of Representatives, January 14, 2016

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

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.

Handwritten signature of Robert B. Hunt in cursive.

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.

