

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD
TWO THOUSAND AND TWELVE

H.P. 1387 - L.D. 1875

An Act To Provide Transparency in Electricity Pricing for Maine Ratepayers

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 35-A MRSA §102, sub-§24 is enacted to read:

24. Zero-based budgeting. "Zero-based budgeting" means a method of budgeting in which programs and activities are justified for a budgetary period using cost-benefit analysis without regard to the amount that was budgeted for those programs and activities in a prior budgetary period.

Sec. 2. 35-A MRSA §116, sub-§2, as amended by PL 2007, c. 16, §2, is further amended to read:

2. Committee recommendations; legislative approval of budget. The commission shall submit its budget recommendations, using a zero-based budgeting process or other process or method directed by the State Budget Officer, as part of the unified current services budget legislation in accordance with Title 5, sections 1663 to 1666. The commission shall make a presentation of its budget recommendations contained in any current services budget legislation and any supplemental budget legislation to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over public utilities matters. The joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over public utilities matters shall review the commission's recommendations and make recommendations to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over appropriations and financial affairs regarding the budget of the commission, including but not limited to all expenditures from the fund established pursuant to this section. The commission shall make an annual report in accordance with section 120 of its planned expenditures for the year and on its use of funds in the previous year. In addition to the assessments authorized under this section, the commission may also receive other funds as appropriated or allocated by the Legislature.

Sec. 3. 35-A MRSA §116, sub-§8, ¶A, as amended by PL 1997, c. 424, Pt. B, §5, is further amended to read:

A. The Public Advocate shall submit its budget recommendations, using a zero-based budgeting process or other process or method directed by the State Budget

Officer, as part of the unified current services budget legislation in accordance with Title 5, sections 1663 to ~~1665~~ 1666. The assessments and expenditures provided in this section are subject to legislative approval. The Public Advocate shall make an annual report of its planned expenditures for the year and on its use of funds in the previous year. The Public Advocate may also receive other funds as appropriated by the Legislature.

Sec. 4. Transparency in electricity rates and assessments. The Public Utilities Commission shall develop information useful to electricity ratepayers regarding the costs and effects of state policies on electricity ratepayers. The commission and the Office of the Public Advocate shall post the information on their publicly accessible websites. The commission shall also examine means by which transmission and distribution utilities may inform customers of the information developed and posted by the commission. The commission shall report on its actions under this section together with any recommendations to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over energy, utilities and technology matters by February 15, 2013. The committee may report out a bill relating to the commission's report to the First Regular Session of the 126th Legislature.

In House of Representatives, 2012

Read twice and passed to be enacted.

..... Speaker

In Senate, 2012

Read twice and passed to be enacted.

..... President

Approved 2012

..... Governor