

Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology
Summaries of Enacted Laws from the 1st Regular and Special Session of the 130th
Legislature

LD 143, An Act Regarding the Arrearage Management Program

Public Law 2021, chapter 101 extends the repeal date for the arrearage management program from September 30, 2022 to September 30, 2024. It includes a requirement that if an investor-owned transmission and distribution utility produces any materials, either written or electronic, regarding the arrearage management program offered by the utility, those materials must state in plainly worded language and in a type size that is no less than 12 points that Maine law requires the utility to offer an arrearage management program to its customers and that certain costs associated with the program are not paid for by the utility and are recoverable in rates. It requires the Public Utilities Commission as part of its Docket No. 2021-00061 to consider proven, global best practices to assist low-income ratepayers, including, but not limited to, the use of lower tier rates for customers based on income. It requires the commission to provide to the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology any information or decisions made in relation to Docket No. 2021-00061 by January 15, 2022. Lastly, it allows the committee to report out a bill based on the information provided by the commission.

LD 251, An Act Regarding Public Utility Assessments, Fees and Penalties

Public Law 2021 chapter 318 does the following:

1. It requires the Public Utilities Commission and the Public Advocate, respectively, in calculating assessments charged to public utilities to apportion the assessment within each category of public utility between investor-owned utilities and consumer-owned utilities based on an accounting of the portion of the commission's resources and the Public Advocate's resources, respectively, devoted to matters related to investor-owned utilities and the portion devoted to matters related to consumer-owned utilities.
2. It requires the portion of the assessment applicable to investor-owned utilities and consumer-owned utilities within each category as determined by the Public Utilities Commission and the Public Advocate, respectively, to be allocated to each utility based on a three-year rolling average of revenue reported by the utility.
3. It requires the commission, in its annual report, to report on any filing fees or penalties collected from public utilities in the previous year that have not been adjusted in the previous five years and to provide information regarding the dollar value of those filing fees or penalties identified adjusted for inflation based on the Consumer Price Index for each fee and penalty since the last adjustment. It allows the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over utilities and energy matters to report out a bill to adjust those identified fees or penalties for inflation.
4. It requires the commission and the Public Advocate to report annually, beginning in 2022, on the portion of resources devoted to matters related to investor-owned utilities and the portion of resources devoted to matters related to consumer-owned utilities and on commission and Public Advocate expenses, respectively, per dollar of intrastate gross operating revenue for investor-owned utilities and consumer-owned utilities.
5. It amends the law governing filing fees for reorganizations of utilities to authorize the commission to order a filing fee of up to 5/100 of one percent of the transaction value as determined by the commission and to require the commission to order payment of a filing fee equal to 5/100 of one percent of the transaction value if a reorganization would result in the transfer of ownership and control of a public utility or the parent company of a public utility. Under current law the commission may charge a filing fee of up to \$50,000 to an applicant seeking approval for a reorganization.
6. It adjusts several filing fees and penalties for inflation.

LD 251 Continued

7. It requires, by January 15, 2021, both the commission and the Public Advocate to submit initial calculations related to the portion of the assessment applicable to investor-owned utilities and consumer-owned utilities within each category of public utility that would be allocated to each utility based on a 3-year rolling average of revenue reported by the utility. It allows the committee to report out a bill based on the information provided.
8. It has an effective date of August 1, 2022 for those portions of the law that amend Maine Revised Statutes, Title 35-A, section 116, subsections 1 and 8.

LD 256, An Act To Adjust Sewer and Wastewater Lien Fees

Public Law 2021, chapter 70 increases from \$13 to \$25 the flat fee paid by a delinquent sewer or wastewater ratepayer and provides that the \$25 fee be adjusted annually by the treasurer of the district for inflation based on the Consumer Price Index.

LD 314, An Act To Continue the Green Power Electricity Offer

Public Law 2021, chapter 40 reestablishes the green power provisions, which require the Public Utilities Commission to arrange for a green power offer that is composed of green power supply. The original green power offer provisions were repealed on April 1, 2021. The new green power provisions do not include a repeal provision.

LD 336, An Act To Encourage Research To Support the Maine Offshore Wind Industry

Public Law 2021, chapter 327 directs the Public Utilities Commission to require the negotiation of a long-term contract for the design, permitting, construction and operation of the State's proposed floating offshore wind research array between the developer of the research array and an investor-owned transmission and distribution utility. It specifies that the commission must require the execution of a project labor agreement containing certain terms and conditions by any entity with which the commission directs an investor-owned transmission and distribution utility to enter into a long-term contract for capacity, energy or renewable energy credits.

This law includes a legislative finding that a long-term contract between an investor-owned transmission and distribution utility and New England Aqua Ventus, LLC for capacity, energy and renewable energy credits generated from a floating offshore wind research array is in the public interest and is in furtherance of existing State laws and policies. It requires the commission, if it would be in the public interest and in furtherance of existing State laws and policies, to order the negotiation of a long-term contract between a utility and New England Aqua Ventus, LLC within nine months of the effective date of the law. It places certain terms and conditions on any negotiations or long-term contracts the commission may order, including: the invitation of the Office of the Public Advocate and the Governor's Energy Office to participate in the negotiations; the retention by the commission, at the developer's expense, of expert consultants; the use of a project labor agreement with requirements; and specific requirements for any pricing structure adopted within a power purchase agreement.

The law requires the commission, in consultation with the Public Advocate and Governor's Energy Office, to submit a report, by February 1, 2022, to the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology regarding technology, location and other options for the creation of transmission infrastructure related to the deployment of offshore wind energy generation in the Gulf of Maine. It allows the committee to report out a bill based on the report.

LD 340, An Act To Allow for the Establishment of Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy Programs

Public Law 2021, chapter 142 allows the Efficiency Maine Trust or a municipality to establish a commercial property assessed clean energy program to finance energy savings improvements on qualifying property.

LD 347, An Act To Facilitate Maine’s Climate Goals by Encouraging Use of Electric Vehicles

Public Law 2021, chapter 402 does the following.

1. It amends the Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Fund established in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 35-A, section 10125 to provide that expenditures from the fund must be consistent with the allowable uses of and any criteria or limitations placed upon the expenditure of those funds by the sources of those funds.
2. It amends eligibility criteria for electric vehicle rebates under the Electric Vehicle Fund established in Title 35-A, section 10126.
3. It directs the Public Utilities Commission to open an inquiry to review alternative rate structures to support electric vehicle charging stations for nonresidential applications, including, but not limited to, for light duty vehicles, medium duty vehicles, heavy duty vehicles and transit and other fleet vehicles. As part of that inquiry, the commission must require each transmission and distribution utility in the State to develop and submit by November 1, 2021 one or more proposed rate schedules to support the installation and sustainable operation of existing and new electric vehicle charging stations. It requires that, no earlier than April 1, 2022, the commission approve, approve with modifications or reject a rate schedule proposed by a transmission and distribution utility. On or before February 15, 2022, the commission is required to submit a report to the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology regarding its findings from that inquiry and any recommendations, including any proposed legislation, regarding the establishment of alternative rate structures to support electric vehicle charging stations for nonresidential applications. After reviewing the report, the joint standing committee may report out legislation related to the commission's report to the 130th Legislature.

LD 385, An Act To Resolve Conflicts in and Make Other Changes to the Laws Governing the Efficiency Maine Trust

Public Law 2021, chapter 209 reconciles a number of conflicts in the Efficiency Maine Trust Act created through the enactment of different legislation during the 129th Legislature.

It provides as goals for the Efficiency Maine Trust:

1. The weatherization by 2030 of 35,000 homes and businesses, with at least 10,000 of such projects completed in low-income households through the combined efforts of the trust and the Maine State Housing Authority;
2. The promotion of the purchase of high-efficiency heat pump systems to achieve by 2030 the goal of at least 115,000 households in the State wholly heated by heat pumps and an additional 130,000 households in the State partially heated by heat pumps; and
3. The promotion of the purchase of battery electric vehicles and plug-in hybrid vehicles to achieve by 2030 the goal of at least 120,000 such vehicles registered in the State.

LD 385 Continued

It broadens the existing authorization for the trust to establish training programs for installers of solar energy equipment to include energy equipment generally. It also authorizes the trust to offer training programs to code enforcement officers, inspectors or other professionals involved in designing, marketing, regulating or educating about energy equipment and to offer training programs to contractors or other professionals involved in designing, installing or constructing energy efficiency, weatherization or other building performance measures for homes and businesses.

LD 487, An Act Regarding Certain Employees of and To Provide for the Payment of Certain Filing Fees to the Public Advocate

Public Law 2021, chapter 195 changes the title of the Business Services Manager position to Senior Assistant to the Public Advocate to clarify that a person in the position may perform duties aside from business-related duties. It requires the payment of a filing fee to the Office of the Public Advocate by an applicant for approval of a reorganization by the Public Utilities Commission, not to exceed 3/100 of 1% of the total transaction value of the reorganization, to be expended by the Public Advocate in representing the interests of consumers in the reorganization proceeding or conducting public outreach to inform consumers about the proceeding. It requires that, in the case of a petition for approval by the Public Utilities Commission of the erection of a transmission line capable of operating at 69 kilovolts or more, the person filing the petition must pay to the Office of the Public Advocate a filing fee equal to 3/100 of 1% of the estimated cost to erect that transmission line, to be expended by the Public Advocate in representing the interests of consumers in the petition proceeding or conducting public outreach to inform consumers about the proceeding.

LD 500, Resolve, Regarding Legislative Review of Portions of Chapter 895: Underground Facility Damage Prevention Requirements, a Major Substantive Rule of the Public Utilities Commission

Resolve 2021, chapter 16 authorizes final adoption by the Public Utilities Commission of portions of Chapter 895: Underground Facility Damage Prevention Requirements, a provisionally adopted major substantive rule of the commission, only if the rule is amended prior to final adoption to clarify that a damage prevention incident may be reported by an excavator to the Public Utilities Commission via e-mail.

Resolve 2021, chapter 16 was finally passed as an emergency measure effective May 25, 2021.

LD 507, An Act To Improve Consumer Protections for Community Solar Projects

Public Law 2021, chapter 107 clarifies the enforcement of provisions governing project sponsors in order to protect a customer who participates in or is solicited to participate in community solar projects through a net energy billing arrangement based upon a shared financial interest in a distributed generation resource under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 35-A, section 3209-A from fraud and other unfair and deceptive business practices. It specifies the provisions that are the responsibility of the Public Utilities Commission to enforce and requires that the commission report for any suspected violations of other specified provisions to the Attorney General. It also specifies that any violation of the provisions governing project sponsors is a violation of the Maine Unfair Trade Practices Act. It allows the commission to adopt consumer protection provisions in its net energy billing rules as routine technical rules on a one-time basis. Lastly, it provides allocations for additional positions at the commission in order to implement these protections.

LD 508, An Act To Improve Regulation of Door-to-door Marketing of Retail Energy Supply

Public Law 2021, chapter 108 establishes additional requirements for and places certain limitations and penalties on competitive electricity providers that use third-party sales agents. It defines “3rd-party sales agent” and “door-to-door sales.” It requires third-party sales agents to register with the Public Utilities Commission and to comply with federal and state laws and rules regarding door-to-door sales. The law prohibits a third-party sales agent, on behalf of a competitive electricity provider, from entering into an agreement to provide service to a residential consumer when that service is solicited using door-to-door sales practices without providing the residential consumer a standard disclosure form that meets requirements prescribed by the commission by rule. The bill prohibits a competitive electricity provider or a third-party sales agent from representing itself as an alternative to or affiliated in any way with a transmission and distribution utility. It allows the consumer to rescind the consumer's selection of a competitive electricity provider orally or in writing within five days of receipt of the first bill or invoice, but requires the consumer to pay that first bill or invoice in full.

LD 511, An Act Regarding Services Designed to Reduce the Number of So-called Robocalls and Automatically Dialed Telephone Calls

Public Law 2021, chapter 109 clarifies that a telephone utility must inform each subscriber as to the nature and cost of any service offered that is designed to reduce the number of calls received by a subscriber that are made using an automated telephone calling device or an artificial or prerecorded voice and describe how the subscriber may elect to enroll in or take advantage of the service.

LD 528, An Act To Advance Energy Storage in Maine

Public Law 2021, chapter 298:

1. Establishes a state goal for energy storage system development of 300 megawatts of installed capacity by December 31, 2025, and 400 megawatts of installed capacity by December 31, 2030, and requires the Governor's Energy Office, every two years beginning in 2031, to set the state goal for energy storage system development and report that goal to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over energy and utility matters;
2. Amends the laws governing the Efficiency Maine Trust to ensure that the trust's authority explicitly and affirmatively includes energy storage by adding direct references to energy storage in relevant sections of statute; directs the trust to explore and evaluate options to expand existing opportunities and develop new opportunities to support energy storage measures that cost-effectively reduce or shift demand or balance; directs the trust to explore alternative methods to demonstrate cost-effectiveness for energy storage projects or programs; requires, beginning January 1, 2022, the trust to conduct a pilot program to provide energy storage systems to critical care facilities and limits the pilot program to 15 megawatts of energy storage capacity; and requires the trust, in its annual report, to specify its activities undertaken under the energy storage pilot program;
3. Directs the Public Utilities Commission to investigate opportunities to modernize transmission and distribution utility rate designs through time-of-use or other time-differentiated rates; develop and implement a pilot program to test and evaluate time-of-use rates in conjunction with energy storage; and develop and implement a schedule for regular review and update of rate designs and ensure that the review includes consideration of time-differentiated rates;

LD 528 Continued

4. It requires the commission to evaluate the feasibility and possible benefits of a power-to-fuel pilot program that would result in the development of power-to-fuel projects utilizing renewable energy, to estimate ratepayer impacts. It requires the commission submit a report to the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology by February 1, 2022. It allows the committee to report out a bill based on the report; and
5. It requires the Governor's Energy Office to conduct an energy storage market assessment study and submit a report on that study by March 1, 2022. It allows the committee to report out a bill based on that report.

LD 597, An Act To Establish the Thermal Energy Investment Program

Public Law 2021, chapter 199 establishes the Thermal Energy Investment Fund and creates the Thermal Energy Investment Program within the Efficiency Maine Trust. The law specifies that funds collected from alternative compliance payments made by competitive electricity providers to satisfy the portfolio requirements for thermal renewable energy credits must be used to fund the Thermal Energy Investment Fund. It requires the trust to use funds from the fund, if there are any, to provide incentives and low-interest or no-interest loans for new thermal energy-derived projects. It requires that the trust consult with the Finance Authority of Maine, when appropriate, in the development of any Thermal Energy Investment Program incentives and the distribution of money from the Thermal Energy Investment Fund. It prohibits the use of funds for incentives or loans for the refurbishment or maintenance of existing facilities.

LD 815, An Act To Support School Decarbonization

Public Law 2021, chapter 152 changes the school energy savings program, which was developed and administered by the Efficiency Maine Trust, to a school decarbonization program. It requires the trust to provide technical and financial support to help kindergarten to grade 12 schools become carbon neutral. It also repeals the school solar energy program administered by the trust.

LD 936, An Act To Amend State Laws Relating to Net Energy Billing and the Procurements of Distributed Generation

Public Law 2021, chapter 390 specifies the requirements that must be met for a distributed generation resource with a nameplate capacity of at least two megawatts and no more than five megawatts to be able to participate in net energy billing under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 35-A, sections 3209-A and 3209-B. It also specifies a goal for the development of commercially operational distributed generation resources of 750 total megawatts. It prohibits the Public Utilities Commission from procuring distributed generation under Title 35-A, chapter 34-C. It provides funding for an additional position at the commission.

The law also requires the Governor's Energy Office in coordination with the commission to convene a stakeholder group to consider various distributed generation project programs to be implemented between 2024 and 2028 and the need for improved grid planning. It defines, for the purposes of this stakeholder process, "distributed generation project" as a renewable energy project with a nameplate capacity of no more than five megawatts that has identified residential, commercial and institutional customers, including but not limited to, net energy billing arrangement projects. It specifies those stakeholders that must be included, requires both an interim report and final report and specifies what must be examined for each report. It allows the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology to report out a bill during the Second Regular Session of the 130th Legislature based on the interim report and the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over energy and utility matters to report out a bill to the First Regular Session of the 131st Legislature based on the final report.

LD 1008, An Act To Require Joint Use Entities To Establish Permanent Liaisons with All County Emergency Management Agencies

Public Law 2021, chapter 154 requires a joint use entity, which includes a public utility, voice service provider, dark fiber provider, wholesale or retail competitive local exchange carrier, cable television system, unlit fiber provider, telecommunications service provider or information service provider, to designate a permanent liaison with each county emergency management agency in the State in counties in which the joint use entity has facilities in order to assist in the coordination of efforts during a disaster or civil emergency.

It also provides that a joint use entity is responsible for ensuring that such a designated permanent liaison responds immediately to any contact or request for assistance during a disaster or civil emergency from the county emergency management agency to which the liaison is designated. It further provides that a county emergency management agency that receives a communication from a joint use entity designating a permanent liaison must communicate to that joint use entity the contact information for the employee or employees of the county emergency management agency responsible for coordinating the actions of the county emergency management agency during a disaster or civil emergency.

LD 1025, An Act To Support Arrearage Management Programs through Unused Kilowatt-hour Credits Derived from Net Energy Billing Arrangements

Public Law 2021, chapter 370 requires the Public Utilities Commission to adopt routine technical rules requiring that, no earlier than April 1, 2022, each transmission and distribution utility with a net energy billing arrangement account for and, on or before January 1st of each year, apply all unused kilowatt-hour credits that were accumulated and expired in the prior calendar year for the benefit of participants in the utility's arrearage management program implemented pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 35-A, section 3214, subsection 2-A.

LD 1053, An Act To Allow Microgrids That Are in the Public Interest

Public Law 2021, chapter 236 directs the Public Utilities Commission to approve a petition to construct and operate a new microgrid if the commission finds the proposal to be in the public interest and the new microgrid meets other specified requirements. It requires that any new distributed energy sources constructed after the effective date of this law for a new microgrid must be a renewable capacity resource or a renewable resource. It provides the commission with the ability to impose such terms, conditions or requirements as, in its judgment, it considers necessary in approving a new microgrid and also gives the commission oversight to ensure reliability and security of the electrical grid and consumer protections for new microgrid consumers. It specifies that a new microgrid does not become a public utility solely as a result of its furnishing electrical service to participating consumers. It also directs the commission to submit a report to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over energy and utility matters by January 7, 2023.

The law requires that, beginning in 2025, the commission must submit information regarding microgrids in its annual report to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over public utilities.

LD 1100, An Act To Support the Continued Access to Solar Energy and Battery Storage by Maine Homes and Businesses

Public Law 2021, chapter 264 requires the Public Utilities Commission to adopt rules related to the interconnection of renewable capacity resources using solar power to investor-owned transmission and distribution utilities in a manner that supports the goals in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 35-A, section 3474. It also directs the commission to contract with an expert to evaluate near-term reforms to the State's interconnection standards, practices and procedures related to renewable capacity resources using solar power.

LD 1306, Resolve, To Facilitate the Inclusion of Crisis Response Services in Emergency Services Offered through the E-9-1-1 System

Resolve 2021, chapter 29 directs the Public Utilities Commission, Emergency Services Communications Bureau to research and review protocols and procedures necessary to ensure the delivery of crisis response services under the State's E-9-1-1 system and to submit a report on or before February 1, 2022 to the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology outlining necessary protocols and procedures and including any recommendations needed to implement those protocols and procedures. After reviewing the report, the joint standing committee may report out related legislation to the 130th Legislature. It also provides a one-time allocation for consulting services.

LD 1328, An Act To Protect Maine Electricity Customers from Threats of Disconnection in the Wintertime

Public Law 2021, chapter 347 prohibits the use by a transmission and distribution utility of a notice or communication to a residential customer in the winter months that threatens disconnection on a specified date or within a specified time period unless the utility already has permission for the disconnection from the consumer assistance and safety division within the Public Utilities Commission. It also requires that any notice that in any way mentions disconnection during the winter months also state prominently that disconnection cannot take place without the advance permission of the consumer assistance and safety division and that the customer will be notified and heard. It also specifies that the notice permitted to be sent to a residential customer from a transmission and distribution utility during the disconnection prohibition period is deemed a notice of disconnection for the purpose of establishing eligibility for certain emergency assistance programs. A violation of these requirements subjects the utility to a penalty of up to \$2,500 per violation payable to the affected customer, in addition to any other remedies to which the customer may be legally entitled.

LD 1431, An Act To Allow Certain Veterans' Organizations To Be Billed for Electricity Usage at the Same Rate as Residential Customers and To Require the Public Utilities Commission To Consider Rate Design Modifications

Public Law 2021, chapter 244 requires a transmission and distribution utility to treat an eligible military veterans' organization as a residential customer if that organization requests to be billed as a residential customer, for the purpose of billing for electric power or service provided to a facility owned or rented by that organization if that organization is billed directly for electric power or service. It establishes a repeal date for this provision of September 1, 2025. It also requires the Public Utilities Commission in its grid modernization proceeding to consider rate design modifications, including adjustments to fixed charges and demand charges.

LD 1432, An Act To Update the Municipal Gigabit Broadband Network Access Fund

Public Law 2021, chapter 362 amends the Municipal Gigabit Broadband Network Access Fund as follows:

1. It limits grants under the fund to a municipality or group of municipalities;
2. It provides definitions of "gigabit fiber-optic network," "symmetrical high-speed Internet" and "open-access network" and requires the ConnectMaine Authority, beginning in 2025, to establish minimum upload and download speeds for a symmetrical high-speed Internet at least equal to the minimum upload and download speeds available to a majority of urban census blocks in the United States;
3. It removes the cap on the amount of each grant, but limits the amount of ConnectMaine funds that may be used to 50% of the total cost of a project;
4. It maintains the requirement that a municipality provide at least a 25% cash match but provides that the cash match may not consist of funds from a source other than the municipality; and

LD 1432 Continued

- 5. It removes specific reporting requirements for applicants, instead requiring them to meet application requirements established by the authority.

LD 1484, An Act To Establish the Maine Connectivity Authority

Public Law 2021, chapter 364 enacts the Connectivity Infrastructure Act, which, among other things, sets forth state connectivity goals and establishes the Maine Connectivity Authority to further those goals through the development and financing of connectivity projects and through other activities.

This law also directs the Maine Connectivity Authority, in consultation with the ConnectMaine Authority, to review the provisions of the Maine Revised Statutes pertaining to each entity and develop recommendations for any necessary changes to those provisions to facilitate the oversight of the ConnectMaine Authority by the Maine Connectivity Authority and any other recommendations. The Maine Connectivity Authority is directed to submit such recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology on or before January 15, 2022. After reviewing the recommendations, the joint standing committee may report out related legislation to the 130th Legislature.

Public Law 2021, chapter 364 was enacted as an emergency measure effective June 24, 2021.

LD 1542, An Act To Repeal and Replace the Kittery Water District Charter

Private and Special Law 2021, chapter 2 repeals and replaces the Kittery Water District charter, changing the boundaries of the district and making it a standard water district pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 35-A, chapter 64.

Private and Special Law 2021, chapter 2 was enacted as an emergency measure effective June 8, 2021.

LD 1619, An Act To Prohibit Offshore Wind Power Development in Territorial Waters and Submerged Lands of the State

Public Law 2021, chapter 407 prohibits the development of offshore wind power projects in the state-owned submerged lands or territorial waters and includes several exceptions to this prohibition. It specifies that the licensing, permitting or approval by a state agency or municipality or other political subdivision of the State of the siting, construction or operation of or the issuance of a lease or the grant of an easement or other real property interest for utility cables or transmission lines that are intended to support the generation of wind energy located seaward of territorial waters is prohibited unless, by March 1, 2023, the Governor's Energy Office has developed a strategic plan to inform the development of offshore wind power projects, has reviewed the ability of state laws and rules to protect Maine's coastal resources from the development of offshore wind energy generation located seaward of the territorial waters and, with input of the advisory board of the Offshore Wind Research Consortium established by this law, has identified the preliminary research questions the consortium seeks to answer regarding the development of offshore wind power projects. It requires the Governor's Energy Office to submit a report to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over energy and utility matters notifying the committee of the completion of these requirements.

This law establishes the Offshore Wind Research Consortium, an initiative of the Governor's Energy Office, to coordinate, support and arrange for the conduct of research on offshore wind power projects in the Gulf of Maine. It requires the Governor's Energy Office, in consultation with independent scientific experts, to establish an advisory board to oversee the development and execution of a research strategy to better understand the local and regional impacts of floating offshore wind power projects in the Gulf of Maine. It specifies the minimum membership that is required on the board and the duties and authority of the board. Consortium Fund as a nonlapsing fund to fund the consortium and the work of the advisory board. It specifies the fund is to be administered by the Governor's Energy Office and the Department of Marine Resources..

LD 1619 Continued

It establishes the Offshore Wind Research Consortium Fund as a nonlapsing fund to fund the consortium and the work of the advisory board. It specifies the fund is to be administered by the Governor's Energy Office and the Department of Marine Resources.

Lastly, this law requires the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, the Public Utilities Commission and the Department of Environmental Protection each to submit by February 1, 2022 legislation necessary to align those provisions of law under their respective jurisdictions with the prohibition on offshore wind power projects.

Public Law 2021, chapter 407 was enacted as an emergency measure effective July 6, 2021.

LD 1625, An Act To Increase the Number of Lincolnville Sewer District Trustees from 3 to 5

Private and Special Law 2021, chapter 9 increases the number of trustees of the Lincolnville Sewer District from three to five. Two of the new members are alternates who may vote only if a quorum has not yet been reached. It clarifies that two members of the board of trustees of the Lincolnville Sewer District constitutes a quorum.

LD 1659, An Act To Create the Maine Clean Energy and Sustainability Accelerator

Public Law 2021, chapter 358 creates the Maine Clean Energy and Sustainability Accelerator to support the development of clean energy and sustainability projects and infrastructure through providing financing support, including loans, loan guarantees and other financial and risk mitigation products. The accelerator is administered by the Efficiency Maine Trust.

LD 1666, Resolve, To Require the Public Utilities Commission To Issue a Request for Information on a Statewide, Multi-use Online Energy Data Platform

Resolve 2021, chapter 63 requires the Public Utilities Commission to issue a request for information to evaluate the feasibility of the commission establishing and operating a statewide, multiple-use online energy data platform that will provide natural gas and electric utility customers with safe, secure access to information about their usage and will allow for the aggregation of and removal of personally identifiable information from community-level energy data. It requires the commission to submit a report, by January 31, 2022, to the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology that includes the results of the evaluation. Lastly, it allows the committee to report out a bill during the Second Regular Session of the 130th Legislature based on the report.

LD 1682, An Act To Require Consideration of Climate Impacts by the Public Utilities Commission and To Incorporate Equity Considerations in Decision Making by State Agencies

Public Law 2021, chapter 279 adds to the purposes of the Public Utilities Commission the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. It requires the commission, in its execution of its duties, powers and regulatory functions to aid in the facilitation of the achievement of the greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 38, section 576-A while ensuring system reliability and resource adequacy.

It requires the Office of Policy Innovation and the Future, in consultation with other state agencies and offices, to develop methods to incorporate equity considerations in decision making at the Department of Environmental Protection, the Public Utilities Commission and other state agencies, and to develop definitions for “environmental justice,” “environmental justice populations,” “frontline communities” and any other terms determined to be necessary to capture equity considerations in decision making at the department, the commission and other state agencies. It requires the office to allow for input from the public and stakeholders. It requires the office to submit a report that includes any recommendations regarding definitions and equity considerations, including any suggested legislation, to the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources and the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology by February 15, 2022. It allows each committee to report out a bill to the Second Regular Session of the 130th Legislature based on the report.

LD 1710, An Act To Require Prompt and Effective Use of the Renewable Energy Resources of Northern Maine

Public Law 2021, chapter 380 establishes the Northern Maine Renewable Energy Development Program, administered by the Public Utilities Commission, to remove obstacles to the use of and development of renewable energy resources in Aroostook County and any other area of the State in which the retail market is administered by the Northern Maine Independent System Administrator.

It requires the commission to issue a request for proposals for the development and construction of the 345-kilovolt double circuit generation connection line, or at the commission’s discretion a transmission line or lines capable of connecting renewable resources located in northern Maine with the electric grid operated by ISO-New England. It also requires the commission to issue a request for proposals for the development and construction of renewable energy generation projects in northern Maine to be connected to and to transmit generated electricity using the transmission line or lines constructed as a result of the request for proposals for transmission required by this law.

It provides the commission with discretion in its administration of the programs and specifies that if at the close of the competitive bidding process the commission determines that no proposal meets the requirements or that approval of a contract or contracts is not in the public interest, the commission may reject all proposals and open a new competitive bidding process.

In implementing and administering the Northern Maine Renewable Energy Development Program, the commission is directed to make every effort to facilitate the construction and development of the line or lines including participating in any regional or federal proceeding relating to the line or lines and participating in proceedings involving the inclusion or integration of the line or lines and any associated upgrades by the ISO-New England system or the New England Power Pool into the ISO-New England system's transmission plan, bulk power system and pool transmission facilities.

LD 1731, An Act To Create the Belgrade Water District

Private and Special Law 2021, chapter 11 establishes the Belgrade Water District, a standard water district pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 35-A, chapter 64.

Private and Special Law 2021, chapter 11 was enacted as an emergency measure effective June 21, 2021.