



127th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2015

Legislative Document

No. 1363

S.P. 496

In Senate, April 23, 2015

An Act To Secure the Maine Electrical Grid from Long-term Blackouts

Reference to the Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Heather J.R. Priest".

HEATHER J.R. PRIEST
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator MIRAMANT of Knox.
Cosponsored by Representative BEAVERS of South Berwick and
Senator: WOODSOME of York, Representatives: BABBIDGE of Kennebunk, BEEBE-
CENTER of Rockland, CHIPMAN of Portland, DUNPHY of Embden, HOBBS of Saco,
RYKERSON of Kittery.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 35-A MRSA §3144** is enacted to read:

3 **§3144. Protection from geomagnetic disturbances and electromagnetic pulses**

4 The commission shall direct transmission and distribution utilities to take actions to
5 ensure that their systems are protected from or able to negate effects of geomagnetic
6 disturbances and electromagnetic pulses.

7 All costs incurred by transmission and distribution utilities as a result of the
8 requirement imposed under this section are just and reasonable for rate-making purposes.
9 The costs of a failure of a transmission and distribution system resulting from
10 geomagnetic disturbances or electromagnetic pulses are the responsibility of the
11 transmission and distribution utility and may not be borne by ratepayers.

12 **Sec. 2. Mitigation; geomagnetic disturbances and electromagnetic pulses.**

13 In accordance with the Maine Revises Statutes, Title 35-A, section 3144, by July 1, 2016,
14 the Public Utilities Commission shall direct transmission and distribution utilities to
15 undertake mitigation measures to protect their systems from geomagnetic disturbances
16 and electromagnetic pulses as identified in the Public Utilities Commission report dated
17 January 20, 2014, entitled Report to the Legislature Pursuant to Resolves 2013, Chapter
18 45, Regarding Geomagnetic Disturbances (GMD) and Electromagnetic Pulse (EMP),
19 including but not limited to the installation of additional geomagnetically induced current
20 monitoring sites, neutral current blocking devices, supervisory control and data
21 acquisition system protectors and the holding of sufficient spare transformers on site to
22 more quickly replace damaged transformers.

23 **SUMMARY**

24 This bill gives the Public Utilities Commission the authority to require transmission
25 and distribution utilities to take necessary actions to ensure that their systems are
26 protected from or able to negate effects of geomagnetic disturbances and electromagnetic
27 pulses. This bill provides that any costs incurred by a transmission and distribution utility
28 as a result of a directive by the commission are just and reasonable for rate-making
29 purposes; however, the costs of a failure of a transmission and distribution system
30 resulting from geomagnetic disturbances or electromagnetic pulses are the responsibility
31 of the transmission and distribution utility and may not be borne by ratepayers.

32 The bill also directs the Public Utilities Commission, by July 1, 2016, to direct
33 transmission and distribution utilities to undertake mitigation measures, including but not
34 limited to the installation of additional geomagnetically induced current monitoring sites,
35 neutral current blocking devices and supervisory control and data acquisition system
36 protectors and the holding of sufficient spare transformers on site to more quickly replace
37 damaged transformers. Identified measures were included in the Public Utilities
38 Commission report dated January 20, 2014, entitled Report to the Legislature Pursuant to
39 Resolves 2013, Chapter 45, Regarding Geomagnetic Disturbances (GMD) and
40 Electromagnetic Pulse (EMP).