



130th MAINE LEGISLATURE

SECOND REGULAR SESSION-2022

Legislative Document

No. 1913

S.P. 674

In Senate, January 12, 2022

**An Act To Review Strategies for Improving Utility Rate
Affordability and To Provide Utility Relief**

Approved for introduction by a majority of the Legislative Council pursuant to Joint Rule 203.

Received by the Secretary of the Senate on January 10, 2022. Referred to the Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology pursuant to Joint Rule 308.2 and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D M Grant'.

DAREK M. GRANT
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator VITELLI of Sagadahoc.
Cosponsored by Representative FAY of Raymond and
Senators: BAILEY of York, BRENNER of Cumberland, CURRY of Waldo, HICKMAN of
Kennebec, President JACKSON of Aroostook, RAFFERTY of York, Representative: PIERCE
of Falmouth.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 35-A MRSA §1702**, as amended by PL 2021, c. 318, §8, is further amended
3 by amending the section headnote to read:

4 **§1702. Duties Powers and duties**

5 **Sec. 2. 35-A MRSA §1702, first ¶**, as enacted by PL 1987, c. 141, Pt. A, §6, is
6 amended to read:

7 The powers, duties and responsibilities of the Public Advocate are to represent the
8 using and consuming public in matters within the jurisdiction of the commission, including,
9 but not limited, to, the following:

10 **Sec. 3. 35-A MRSA §1702, sub-§11** is enacted to read:

11 **11. Stakeholder group.** The Public Advocate may convene a stakeholder group to
12 develop and submit to the Legislature recommendations for legislation and policy changes
13 pertaining to the commission as provided by this subsection.

14 A. The stakeholder group consists of the following members:

15 (1) The Public Advocate or the Public Advocate's designee;

16 (2) The commission's designee;

17 (3) A representative of a renewable energy advocacy organization in the State;

18 (4) A representative of tribal interests in the State;

19 (5) A representative of an organization representing the interests of senior citizens
20 and the aging population of the State;

21 (6) A representative of an environmental advocacy organization operating in the
22 State;

23 (7) A representative of an equal justice advocacy organization operating in the
24 State;

25 (8) A representative of a nonpartisan research and policy organization dedicated
26 to improving the economic well-being of low-income and moderate-income
27 residents of the State; and

28 (9) A representative of a transmission and distribution utility.

29 B. If convened, the stakeholder group shall:

30 (1) Identify different methods to ensure that residents of the State are able to afford
31 electricity as the State seeks to meet the renewable resources goal under section
32 3210, subsection 1-A, paragraph B, including modernized or new rate designs or
33 structures, measures to lower costs by reduction of demand through energy
34 efficiency, weatherization and financial assistance programs and any other option
35 for mitigating rate increases and ensuring reliability and affordability; and

36 (2) Review the utility rates in effect when the stakeholder group convenes,
37 projected changes in utility rates and the policy goals and other factors contributing
38 to projected changes in utility rates.

1 for low-income persons and directs the commission in cooperation with the Efficiency
2 Maine Trust to provide education and outreach on utility relief programs.