

For Immediate Release

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Statement of Our Power campaign in response to LD 840 and 1328

Today, legislators are considering two bills to hold CMP responsible for their actions: LD 840 and LD 1328.

“It’s past time for Maine’s legislature to support getting CMP out of Maine and creating a consumer-owned utility that will put Mainers first,” **says Stephanie Clifford, Our Power campaign manager.**

LD 840, An Act To Prevent Power Line Electrocutions removes the liability exemption now in effect for CMP and other utilities in Maine. No other Maine business has such an exemption, and the utility loophole can have serious consequences.

In 2002 a boatyard worker in Penobscot was electrocuted, suffering life-threatening injuries. The CMP line was legally required to be set at 45.5 feet high but it was only 30 feet high. The man spent two months in the hospital, endured many painful surgeries and the electrocution left him with 42 percent whole body permanent impairment. CMP was at first fined \$6 million, but then [escaped legal responsibility.](#)

“The state can not and should not condone CMP’s bad decisions that imperil lives,” **says Stephanie Clifford, Our Power campaign manager.** “There need to be consequences for CMP’s poor performance and Mainers shouldn’t be left holding the bag. Every other business in Maine is responsible for its own mistakes — CMP should be too.”

LD 1328, An Act To Protect Maine Electricity Customers from Threats of Disconnection in the Wintertime, aims to stop CMP from threatening to disconnect electricity for Mainers every winter.

“It’s time to stop CMP and Versant from bullying Mainers by threatening winter disconnection, though the companies know full well that winter disconnection is not allowed,” **says Stephanie Clifford, Our Power campaign manager.** “Unlike investor

owned utilities, a consumer-owned electric utility, as is being proposed this session, would represent Maine people, not issue empty threats.”

“CMP’s threats are its underhanded collection method, and need to stop. While the PUC has outlawed winter disconnection, it has not yet banned these scary threats. Maine’s two large investor-owned utilities issued more than 150,000 disconnection notices in winter 2019 alone!”

Pine Tree Power will be a nonprofit, consumer-owned utility dedicated to providing Mainers with lower cost, locally-controlled, more reliable, cleaner electricity.

www.OurPowerMaine.org