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## **Our Power Applauds Move by Gov. Mills to Oppose Versant Rate Hike, But Says Real Change Also Needed**

October 4, 2022 | PORTLAND, ME Our Power Executive Director Andrew Blunt and Senator Nicole Grohoski, Versant customer and member of the Maine Legislature's Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology, issued the following statement in response to [today's announcement](#) that the Energy Office of Governor Janet Mills will intervene at the Public Utilities Commission to oppose the [pending request by Versant for an additional 28% rate increase](#).

"Our Power applauds this effort by Governor Mills," said Blunt. "But let's be honest: the profits made by private utilities on investments like this are protected by [US Supreme Court case law](#). State law and regulation is powerless here. Either we invest in improving our grid and rates go up, or we don't. If we stick with this failing business model, we can't have it both ways. The fact is, a customer-owned utility could make these investments at half the cost to the average ratepayer."

"Today, many of Maine's consumer-owned utility customers pay [half as much for their electricity](#) as the captive Maine customers of Versant and CMP," added Sen. Grohoski. "These Mainers in 97 towns have real energy sovereignty, fewer outages, and can more easily afford to switch to heat pumps. When we own our grid, we will save money by investing at half the cost than the multinational corporations charge us."

Versant last received a delivery rate hike of [17.5%](#) in November of 2021, and has recently [requested an additional 28%](#). CMP last received a hike of [11.5%](#) in August 2021, and recently [requested an additional 30%](#).

Supply costs have also increased dramatically for Versant and CMP customers, but less so for Maine's nine consumer-owned utilities.

Note: Maine's investor-owned utilities are quick to point out that they have less control over supply costs when discussing supply cost hikes, but equally quick to conflate the two portions of the bill when discussing the percentage increase of their proposed delivery charges. Consistency in reporting such numbers is essential to the public interest. Our Power urges reporters to insist on "apples to apples" rate hike numbers. Public understanding of cost drivers as bills continue to increase is best served by reporting the percent increase *to delivery costs* of a delivery rate increase, and the percent increase *to supply costs* of a supply cost increase.

For delivery alone, Versant and CMP currently charge customers [49% more per kWh](#) than Maine's consumer-owned utilities.

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