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Mainers Submit Public Comments to the Secretary of State on Consumer-Owned Utility Ballot Initiative

(Augusta ME) – Last Friday, Mainers from all across the state submitted public comments to Secretary of State Shenna Bellows in an effort to ensure clear, unambiguous question wording for the November ballot initiative aimed at creating a consumer owned utility, owned by Maine ratepayers.

Many of those who submitted comments sought to remind voters and the Secretary of State that both CMP and Versant are government-owned. Specifically, the largest shareholder of Central Maine Power’s parent company, Spanish-owned Iberdrola, is the sovereign wealth fund of Qatar. Maine’s other investor-owned electric utility, Versant Power, is 100 percent owned by the city of Calgary.

Andrew Blunt, Executive Director of Our Power, the group supporting the measure, said, “Mainers from across the state recommended a number of changes to more clearly and accurately convey the choice our initiative offers to voters.”

“So long as Mainers are not confused by the question itself, on top of the flood of self-serving misinformation from CMP and Versant’s distant, quasi-governmental owners, they will know to vote “yes” for lower cost and reliable electricity, and local control of our energy future,” he continued.

Our Power is a group of Maine ratepayers, business leaders, energy experts, conservationists, and others committed to putting the Pine Tree State’s energy future in the hands of Mainers, not foreign government-owned entities. Frustrated with the historic high cost of electricity and unprecedented poor customer service, 80,154 Mainers signed petitions to place an initiative on the ballot to retire CMP and Versant in Maine and replace them with a locally-owned and controlled electric utility like the ones operating in several Maine municipalities.

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