



Contact: Lucy Hochschartner, Deputy Campaign Manager, 207-200-4207,
lucy@ourpowermaine.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Maine Supreme Judicial Court rejects Secretary of State's draft ballot language for public power referendum

April 10, 2023 - In an [opinion](#) issued today by the Maine Supreme Judicial Court, the court upheld the ruling of the Cumberland County Superior Court and is sending the draft ballot language question back to the Secretary of State's office.

The court found that [the Secretary's question wording](#), and in particular its use of the phrase "quasi-governmental," is misleading to voters and risks confusing them at the polls.

The original complaint was filed by members of Our Power, the campaign advocating for the new utility: Sen. Rick Bennett (R-Oxford); John Clark, former General Manager of Houlton Water Company, Sen. Nicole Grohoski (D-Ellsworth); and Wayne Jortner, lead petitioner for the Our Power initiative and former Senior Counsel for the Public Advocate.

Sen. Nicole Grohoski (D-Ellsworth), plaintiff, Maine state Senator, and Our Power board member says, "Today, Maine's Supreme Judicial Court ruled in our favor, and the Secretary of State will now be required to reword the ballot language to be clearer for voters. We know that when Mainers understand that they have the ability to take back power from foreign-owned CMP and Versant and put it in their own hands to lower costs and improve service, they are excited to vote "yes" for Pine Tree Power this November."

Youth leaders were pleased with the ruling as well. "I'm excited to see the Maine Supreme Judicial Court standing up for voters today," says **Our Power board member**

and Maine Youth for Climate Justice representative Emily Rochford. “As someone who works with young voters, I know that there is incredible support for Pine Tree Power — a utility owned by Mainers for Mainers that will be cheaper, more reliable, and more climate-friendly — and I am confident that we will prevail in November,” she continued.

Finally, **Al Cleveland, Campaign Manager for Our Power,** added, “Our Power is glad to see the Maine Supreme Judicial Court take action and are confident that voters will vote to take their energy future away from foreign-owned corporations and put it into their own hands this November. We would also like to thank the Murray Plumb & Murray legal team for taking on this case pro bono and the Sierra Club and Benjamin Gaines for their support efforts.”

The Court has remanded the language back to the Secretary of State who has to revise the language according to the decision. The Pine Tree Power campaign is confident voters will support this issue.

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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.