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**UPDATED: Energy, Utilities and Technology Committee Votes to Send Pine Tree Power to Ballot**

After hearing from Mainers, many of whom took the time to emphasize their support for Pine Tree Power, the Energy, Utilities and Technology committee voted to send the initiative on. With a unanimous "ought not to pass" vote, this decision will lead to the question ending up on the ballot unamended.

After yesterday's updated language from the [Secretary of State](#), the initiative will be headed to the ballot. Voters will be asked, "Do you want to create a new power company governed by an elected board to acquire and operate existing for-profit electricity transmission and distribution facilities in Maine?" Our Power is confident given Central Maine Power and Versant's worst-in-the-nation rankings, exploitative practices, and unreliable service, the answer will be yes.

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: At Public Hearing, Mainers Support Sending LD 1611, the Pine Tree Power Initiative, to Voters**

May 4, 2023 - Today, the Energy Utilities and Technology Committee held a public hearing on LD 1611, "An Act to Create the Pine Tree Power Company, a Nonprofit, Customer-owned Utility." This bill made it to the legislature through

the citizen referendum process and, if not passed by the legislature, will go to the voters this November.

Supporters of the Pine Tree Power initiative turned out to reiterate that they are asking legislators to support this bill by sending it straight to the voters. Campaign manager for the initiative, **Al Cleveland said, "Throughout 2021 and 2022, over 350 volunteers collected over 80,000 signatures to get a question on the statewide ballot that would allow Mainers to take control of our electric grid. 80,000 Mainers are using their constitutional right to decide collectively about the future of our energy security, our climate, and our rates. This committee has seen and supported various versions of this effort; it is clear that it is time to let the people of Maine decide about the future of the Pine Tree Power Company. We are asking for you to support this bill by sending it to the ballot.**

Many others came to testify as well. **Steve Turner of Mechanic Falls said, "This is the stack of bogus electricity bills I received from CMP one fine morning in November 2019. It measures one quarter-inch thick. It cheers me to know I'm not alone: CMP admits to overcharging over 100,000 Mainers. Like countless others across our state, I believe voters should have the chance to decide whether we want to keep paying for a state-sanctioned monopoly's worst-in-the-nation service, or if we want to create a consumer-owned utility for lower-cost, and cleaner, more reliable power."** Even legislators came out to testify in support of the initiative, including Sen. Nicole Grohoski (D) Ellsworth, Rep. Richard Bennett (R) Oxford, and Rep. Jennifer Poirier (R) Skowhegan.

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*For more information, questions, or interview requests, please contact deputy campaign manager, Lucy Hochschartner at [lucy@ourpowermaine.org](mailto:lucy@ourpowermaine.org) or (207)-*

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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.*

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