

STATE OF MAINE

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IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD
TWO THOUSAND AND THIRTEEN

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H.P. 106 - L.D. 131

Resolve, Directing the Public Utilities Commission To Examine Measures To Mitigate the Effects of Geomagnetic Disturbances and Electromagnetic Pulse on the State's Transmission System

Emergency preamble. Whereas, acts and resolves of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

Whereas, the North American Electric Reliability Corporation has identified 2013 as a peak year of solar activity that could result in a geomagnetic disturbance; and

Whereas, the impact of a significant geomagnetic disturbance or electromagnetic pulse on the reliability of Maine's electric grid is unknown; and

Whereas, the Public Utilities Commission may be able to identify measures to protect Maine's electric grid through a focused examination; and

Whereas, in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now, therefore, be it

Sec. 1. Examination of vulnerabilities and mitigation. Resolved: That the Public Utilities Commission shall examine the vulnerabilities of the State's transmission infrastructure to the potential negative impacts of a geomagnetic disturbance or electromagnetic pulse capable of disabling, disrupting or destroying a transmission and distribution system and identify potential mitigation measures. In its examination, the commission shall:

1. Identify the most vulnerable components of the State's transmission system;
2. Identify potential mitigation measures to decrease the negative impacts of a geomagnetic disturbance or electromagnetic pulse;
3. Estimate the costs of potential mitigation measures and develop options for low-cost, mid-cost and high-cost measures;

4. Examine the positive and negative effects of adopting a policy to incorporate mitigation measures into the future construction of transmission lines and the positive and negative effects of retrofitting existing transmission lines;

5. Examine any potential effects of the State adopting a policy under subsection 4 on the regional transmission system;

6. Develop a time frame for the adoption of mitigation measures; and

7. Develop recommendations regarding the allocation of costs to mitigate the effects of geomagnetic disturbances or electromagnetic pulse on the State's transmission system and identify which costs, if any, should be the responsibility of shareholders or ratepayers; and be it further

Sec. 2. Monitor federal efforts regarding mitigation measures. Resolved: That the Public Utilities Commission shall actively monitor the efforts by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, the North American Electric Reliability Corporation, ISO New England and other regional and federal organizations to develop reliability standards related to geomagnetic disturbances and electromagnetic pulse; and be it further

Sec. 3. Report. Resolved: That the Public Utilities Commission shall report the results of its examination required pursuant to section 1 and the progress of regional and national efforts to develop reliability standards under section 2 to the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology by January 20, 2014. The Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology may submit a bill to the Second Regular Session of the 126th Legislature based on the report.

Emergency clause. In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this legislation takes effect when approved.