



STATE OF MAINE
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
1 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333-0001

Paul R. LePage
GOVERNOR

20 April 2018

The 128th Legislature of the State of Maine
State House
Augusta, ME

Dear Honorable Members of the 128th Legislature:


Under the authority vested in me by Article IV, Part Third, Section 2 of the Constitution of the State of Maine, I am hereby vetoing LD 1848, "An Act To Extend Arrearage Management Programs".

This bill extends programs at CMP and Emera which help low income residential customers clear up amounts they owe to both T&D utilities to September 30, 2021. Despite the bill's good intentions, the data shows that the program didn't work, and that efforts to fix it will likely add cost and not benefit.

The PUC testimony on the Arrearage Management Program (AMP) states: "The Commission does not believe that the desired outcome of improved payment performance during and after participation in an AMP by customers can be achieved with the current AMP structure and that extending the program another three years will not change this conclusion." Participating customers' bill payment patterns did not improve after their participation in the program, and were not substantively different or better than bill payment patterns of customers that did not participate in the program. While this bill changes the expired program by adding financial and budgetary guidance for participants, adding these changes will likely only increase the administrative costs of the program.

This bill is another example of the legislature trying to insert itself where it does not belong and substitute its judgement for that of expert regulatory bodies. For these reasons, I return LD 1848 unsigned and vetoed. I strongly urge the Legislature to sustain it.

Sincerely,


Paul R. LePage
Governor



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