

PLEASE NOTE: Legislative Information **cannot** perform research, provide legal advice, or interpret Maine law. For legal assistance, please contact a qualified attorney.

## **An Act To Transfer the Administration of the Renewable Resource Fund from the State Planning Office to the Public Utilities Commission**

**Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

**Sec. 1. 35-A MRSA §3210, sub-§5**, as amended by PL 1999, c. 372, §1 and PL 2003, c. 20, Pt. OO, §2 and affected by §4, is further amended to read:

### **5. Funding for research and development; community demonstration projects.**

The commission by rule shall establish and administer a program allowing retail consumers of electricity to make voluntary contributions to fund renewable resource research and development and to fund demonstration community projects using renewable energy technologies. ~~The State Planning Office shall administer the program.~~ The program must:

- A. Include a mechanism for customers to indicate their willingness to make contributions;
- B. Provide that transmission and distribution utilities collect and account for the contributions and forward them to the commission;
- C. Provide for a distribution of the funds to the University of Maine System, the Maine Maritime Academy or the Maine Community College System for renewable resource research and development; and
- D. Provide for a distribution of the funds to Maine-based nonprofit organizations that qualify under the federal Internal Revenue Code, Section 501(c)(3), consumer-owned electric cooperatives, community-based nonprofit organizations ~~and~~, community action programs, municipalities and school administrative districts for demonstration community projects using renewable energy technologies.

Rules adopted under this subsection are routine technical rules pursuant to Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter H-A2-A.

**Sec. 2. 35-A MRSA §3210, sub-§6**, as enacted by PL 1999, c. 372, §2, is amended to read:

**6. Fund.** There is established the Renewable Resource Fund, referred to in this subsection as the "fund." The fund is a nonlapsing fund administered by the ~~State Planning Office~~commission. All funds collected by the commission pursuant to subsection 5 must be deposited in the fund for distribution by the ~~State Planning Office~~commission in accordance with subsection 5. The ~~State Planning Office~~commission may seek and accept funding for the program established pursuant to subsection 5 from other sources, public or private. Any funds accepted for use in the program established pursuant to subsection 5 must be deposited in the fund.

## **SUMMARY**

This bill transfers administrative responsibilities from the Executive Department, State Planning Office to the Public Utilities Commission of the program established by the commission allowing retail electricity customers to make voluntary contributions to fund renewable resource research and development and to fund demonstration community projects using renewable energy technologies. It also expands the list of entities that are eligible to participate in the demonstration community projects to include municipalities and school administrative districts.