

*129th Legislature*  
*Senate of*  
*Maine*  
*Senate District 24*

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Testimony in Support of LD 68  
An Act to Improve the Record Keeping of the Public Utilities Commission

Good afternoon Senator Lawrence, Representative Berry, and members of the Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology. I am Brownie Carson, I proudly represent all of the people of Brunswick, Freeport, Harpswell, North Yarmouth, and Pownal in the Maine Senate, and I am here today to present LD 68, An Act to Improve the Record Keeping of the Public Utilities Commission.

Many years ago, one of my constituents in Freeport, Gary Remal, walked into the office of the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) and filed a complaint. Power outages were occurring at Mr. Remal's home every day, and he wanted Central Maine Power (CMP) to provide him with more reliable service. In October 2017, when Mr. Remal asked the PUC for a record of his complaint, he was told that the PUC does not keep records of all complaints. The PUC is a specialized court for utilities, but is not required to keep records of settlement agreements, docket books, or any files related to complaints it receives. This bill corrects that.

After his initial complaint to the PUC, Mr. Remal signed an agreement with CMP that he could continue to contact the company to discuss its service. Mr. Remal called CMP over the years, including after a heavy storm in October 2017, when Mr. Remal's power had been out for days. After speaking with local CMP representatives, he called the president of CMP. Mr. Remal recalls that the president was very defensive, assuring him that the company knew how to run a reconstruction. Shortly after Mr. Remal spoke with the president, a Freeport police officer knocked on Mr. Remal's door and told him that if he ever called CMP again, he would be arrested. Shocked, Mr. Remal called the PUC to get a copy of his original settlement agreement, only to be told the PUC had not kept a record of his settlement. For fear of arrest, Mr. Remal has not called CMP since the police officer knocked on his door sixteen months ago.

This bill requires that in addition to keeping records of proceedings, investigations, and formal public hearings, the PUC must keep a record of complaints, including results and conclusions such as orders, findings, decisions, and settlement agreements. No one should ever have to go through the ordeal Mr. Remal did. This bill will help make sure that utility customers receive the service they deserve from companies and the justice they deserve from the state.