MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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SECOND REGULAR SESSION

ONE HUNDRED AND NINTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document No. 1694

S. P. 655 Office of the Secretary of the Senate

The Committee on Public Utilities suggested. Approved for introduction by the Legislative Council pursuant to Joint Rule 26.

MAY M. ROSS, Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator Hichens of York

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTY

AN ACT Relating to the Provision of Telephone Equipment by Telephone Companies to the Hearing Impaired and their Families.

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

35 MRSA § 2361 is enacted to read:

§ 2361. Telecommunication services for hearing impaired

The Public Utilities Commission shall design and implement a program requiring each telephone company to provide, upon request, a telecommunication device capable of servicing the needs of any person who has been diagnosed as deaf or hearing impaired by a licensed physician, a licensed audiologist or a federal or state agency. This equipment shall be provided at a rate not greater than the rate charged by that telephone company for conventional private line telephone service. A telecommunication device, if requested, shall be made available at the same rate as a conventional private line telephone to families or relatives of private persons diagnosed as deaf or hearing impaired and to federal or state agencies and vocal relay centers for the deaf. The Public Utilities Commission shall implement the program within a reasonable time. The Public Utilities Commission shall establish a rate recovery mechanism to allow telephone companies to recover costs as they are incurred under this section.

STATEMENT OF FACT

The purpose of this bill is to provide teletype equipment for deaf or hearing impaired individuals. This bill requires that the telephone company charge no more for these services than is charged for conventional private line service. Without this bill, the cost of such service to the individual would be prohibitive.