

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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122nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2005

Legislative Document

No. 1440

H.P. 1004

House of Representatives, March 22, 2005

An Act To Encourage the Implementation of High-speed Internet Access in Rural and Isolated Areas

Reference to the Committee on Utilities and Energy suggested and ordered printed.

Millicent M. MacFarland
MILLICENT M. MacFARLAND
Clerk

Presented by Representative PINGREE of North Haven.
Cosponsored by Senator DAMON of Hancock and
Representatives: BLISS of South Portland, BRAUTIGAM of Falmouth, DAIGLE of Arundel,
FISCHER of Presque Isle, KOFFMAN of Bar Harbor, MILLER of Somerville, TARDY of
Newport, Senator: BRYANT of Oxford.

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

4 **CONCEPT DRAFT**
6 **SUMMARY**

8 This bill is a concept draft pursuant to Joint Rule 208.

10 This bill would encourage high-speed Internet access in
12 areas of the State currently not served or underserved because of
14 technical and market barriers by:

16 **1. Maine Internet Access Authority.** Creating the Maine
18 Internet Access Authority in the Public Utilities Commission to
20 encourage collaboration between Internet service providers,
traditional communications providers, state and local
governmental entities and economic and community development
groups. The members, powers, duties and goals of the authority
would be set by the Joint Standing Committee on Utilities and
Energy;

22 **2. Access to town structures.** Requiring towns to better
24 accommodate wireless Internet access from Internet service
26 providers by providing access to water towers or other similarly
accessible towers and public buildings for no cost or a greatly
reduced fee;

28 **3. State matching fund.** Encouraging Internet access in
30 rural communities and competition among Internet service
32 providers in larger communities by creating a state matching fund
for implementation of new creative Internet access technologies
or for laying messenger wire in communities on current pole
structures for Internet access; and

34 **4. Publication of fees.** Requiring all Internet,
36 Voice-over-Internet Protocol and broadband service providers to
include all fees in the advertised prices of their products.