

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document

No. 1777

H. P. 1411

House of Representatives, April 7, 1975

Referred to Committee on Public Utilities. Sent up for concurrence and ordered printed.

EDWIN H. PERT, Clerk

Presented by Mr. Cooney of Sabattus.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED
SEVENTY-FIVE

AN ACT Requiring Periodic Review to Assure that Telephone Costs to Subscribers Reflect Actual and Potential Economies to Companies and Actual Usage by Subscribers.

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

35 MRSA c. 184 is enacted to read:

CHAPTER 184

COMMUNITY INTEREST STUDIES AND EXTENDED
AREA SERVICE

§ 2601. Purpose

It is declared to be the public policy of this State and it is the purpose of this chapter that the costs of telephone service to subscribers shall reflect economies realized or realizable by the public utilities which provide the service and that the cost of such service to subscribers shall be related as closely as possible to the cost of providing the service and the service actually received. To the extent possible, these purposes shall be achieved without regard to the geographic boundaries of political entities of the State and the geographic boundaries of service areas of the public utilities providing the service. In the pursuit of these purposes, the Public Utilities Commission and the public utilities providing the service shall, on a recurring basis, use the most effective tools available to evaluate whether such economies exist and to relate consumer cost and service to the cost of providing such service. These tools shall include, but are not limited to, community of interest studies and extended area service.

§ 2602. Definitions

As used in this chapter unless the context otherwise indicates the following words shall have the following meanings.

1. Community of interest study. A "community of interest study" shall, at the minimum, be in the form of a description, evaluation, and recommendation regarding the frequency of telephone calls by subscribers from one exchange to all other exchanges to determine whether this frequency between the one exchange and the other exchanges individually is sufficient to warrant a poll of subscribers to establish a subscribers rate different from the one currently in effect, including the initiation of extended area service. The study shall be conducted in a statistically valid and reliable method and, if done on a sample basis, shall be a statistically random sample.

2. Extended area service. "Extended area service" shall mean a system which provides the ability to call another exchange for a fixed flat rate, determined by the cost of providing the service.

§ 2603. Requirement for community of interest study

Each telephone exchange shall be the subject of a community of interest study conducted by the owning public utility at least one time during any period of 12 consecutive months. The Public Utilities Commission may waive this requirement upon petition and for cause. Each community of interest study shall be filed with the commission, published and available for public inspection. The Public Utilities Commission shall require that a community of interest study of an exchange be conducted by the owning public utility upon a written complaint stating appropriate cause and made against a public utility by 10 persons, firms, corporations, or associations aggrieved, pursuant to section 291. The commission shall publish, in the form of a regulation, criteria which will determine whether, on the basis of a community of interest study, a poll of subscribers must be held for approval of indicated rate changes, including initiation of extended area service.

STATEMENT OF FACT

The purpose of this bill is to assure that the cost of telephone service to subscribers reflects economies realized by the providing telephone company, cost of service, and service actually received. Community of interest studies, which evaluate usage between exchanges, are required annually, and are to be published, filed with the commission, and accessible to the public. The Public Utilities Commission is required to publish criteria which will be used to determine from evidence gathered in the community interest study whether a rate change is warranted (such as initiation of extended area service) and whether affected subscribers should be polled for approval of these changes.