

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document

No. 794

H. P. 650

House of Representatives, March 8, 1977

On motion of Mr. Kelleher of Bangor, referred to the Committee on Public Utilities. Sent up for concurrence and ordered printed.

EDWIN H. PERT, Clerk

Presented by Mr. LaPlante of Sabattus.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED
SEVENTY-SEVEN

AN ACT Requiring the Public Utilities Commission to Order a Community of Interest Study upon Petition by 10% of the Service Customers in a Telephone Exchange and to Promulgate Rules and Regulations Relating to the Establishment of Extended Area Service.

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 service customers from one exchange to one or more other exchanges in order to determine whether this frequency between the one exchange and the other exchange or exchanges individually is sufficient to warrant the establishment 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. **Exchange.** "Exchange" shall mean a geographical unit established for the administration of communication service in a special area as filed with the commission in the schedule of tariffs of each telephone company.

3. **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. Petitions for extended area service

Whenever a petition in writing signed by at least 10% of the service customers of a single exchange requesting extended area service to one or more exchanges is filed with the Public Utilities Commission, the commission, being satisfied that the signatures are valid, shall order that a community of interest study be undertaken by the public utility or jointly by the public utilities that own the exchanges in question. Each community of interest study so ordered shall be filed with the commission, published and made available for public inspection. The commission shall adopt, within 90 days of the effective date of this Act, such rules and regulations as it deems appropriate to 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 a community of interest study will be undertaken upon petition by 10% of the service customers of a telephone exchange and to require the Public Utilities Commission to promulgate rules and regulations for the institution of extended area service.