

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# 114th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION - 1989

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Legislative Document

No. 874

H.P. 640

House of Representatives, March 22, 1989

Reference to the Committee on Utilities suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ed Pert".

EDWIN H. PERT, Clerk

Presented by Representative ANTHONY of South Portland.

Cosponsored by Representative ADAMS of Portland, President PRAY of Penobscot and Representative MARSH of West Gardiner.

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STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD  
NINETEEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-NINE

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**An Act to Give Deaf, Hearing Impaired and Speech Impaired Persons  
the Same Rights of Communication by Telephone as Those Given to  
Persons Without Such Impairments.**

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

3 Sec. 1. 22 MRSA §3601, sub-§2, as enacted by PL 1979, c. 546,  
5 §1, is repealed.

7 Sec. 2. 22 MRSA §3601, sub-§2-A is enacted to read:

9 2-A. Continuous telephone relay. The Public Utilities  
11 Commission shall require all telephone companies within its  
13 jurisdiction to establish or make provisions for the  
15 establishment of a system to provide continuous telephone relay  
17 services for deaf, hearing impaired or speech impaired persons  
19 who must rely on teletypewriter equipment for telephone  
21 communications. The Public Utilities Commission shall consult  
23 with appropriate agencies and organizations serving the deaf  
25 community concerning the needs of such a system and shall design  
27 and plan for the implementation of the system.

29 Sec. 3. Effective date. This Act shall take effect on July 1,  
31 1992.

### 33 STATEMENT OF FACT

35 The present telephone relay system serving the deaf and  
37 hearing impaired relies on one WATS line during normal business  
39 hours to supplement one local Portland line. This system has  
41 proven to be totally inadequate. This bill requires telephone  
43 companies under the jurisdiction of the Public Utilities  
45 Commission to provide adequate vocal relay service to the nearly  
47 1,000 deaf and hard-of-hearing citizens throughout the State who  
49 must rely on this means of communication.