

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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118th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-1997

Legislative Document

No. 944

S.P. 293

In Senate, February 11, 1997

**Resolve, Establishing a Commission to Study the Funding and
Distribution of Teletypewriters and Other Telecommunications
Equipment for People with Disabilities.**

Reference to the Committee on Judiciary suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Joy J. O'Brien".

JOY J. O'BRIEN
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator TREAT of Kennebec.
Cosponsored by Representative JONES of Bar Harbor and
Senator HARRIMAN of Cumberland, Representatives: COLWELL of Gardiner, KERR of
Old Orchard Beach, MADORE of Augusta, O'NEAL of Limestone, ROWE of Portland.

2 **Sec. 1. Commission established. Resolved:** That the Commission
to Study the Funding and Distribution of Teletypewriters and
4 Other Telecommunications Equipment for People with Disabilities,
referred to in this resolve as the "commission," is established;
and be it further

6
8 **Sec. 2. Commission membership. Resolved:** That the commission
consists of the following 12 members:

10 1. One member of the Senate, appointed by the President of
the Senate;

12
14 2. One member of the House of Representatives, appointed by
the Speaker of the House of Representatives;

16 3. One representative of the Public Advocate;

18 4. One representative of the Public Protection Division
within the Office of the Attorney General;

20 5. One representative of a deaf advocacy organization,
appointed by the Governor;

24 6. One representative of a disability advocacy
organization, appointed by the Governor;

26
28 7. Three representatives of telephone companies providing
phone service within the State including one representative of
independent telephone companies, appointed by the Governor; and

30
32 8. Three members of the general public who currently use or
plan to use teletypewriters or special telecommunications
equipment for persons with disabilities, appointed by the
34 Governor; and be it further

36 **Sec. 3. Convening of commission. Resolved:** That all
appointments must be made no later than 30 days after the
38 effective date of this resolve. The Chair of the Legislative
Council shall call the first meeting within 14 days after all
40 appointments are made. The commission shall elect a chair from
among its members; and be it further

42
44 **Sec. 4. Duties. Resolved:** That the commission shall study the
following:

46 1. The current use and distribution of teletypewriters and
other telecommunications equipment for persons with disabilities
48 in the State, including the current loaner program;

50 2. The use and distribution of teletypewriters and other

2 telecommunications equipment for persons with disabilities in
3 other states, including, but not limited to, the financing of
4 teletypewriters and other telecommunications equipment and the
5 type of equipment currently being used; and

6 3. The compliance requirements of the federal Americans
7 with Disabilities Act of 1990 regarding the use of
8 teletypewriters and other telecommunications equipment;

10 4. How to purchase specialized customer premise equipment
11 or SCPE, such as artificial larynges, signaling devices,
12 amplified handsets, large number dial overlays, direct telephone
13 dialing, telebraille, teletypewriters or telecommunications
14 equipment for persons with disabilities, and other devices that
15 provide access to telephone networks for people with hearing,
16 speech, vision or mobility impairments;

18 5. Establishing a system of administration and record
19 keeping, as well as distribution, repair and replacement of SCPE
20 units for certified subscribers; and

22 6. Establishing a funding mechanism for expansion of the
23 program that will include use of additional equipment; and be it
24 further

26 **Sec. 5. Report. Resolved:** That the commission shall prepare a
27 written report of its findings and submit the report, together
28 with any necessary implementing legislation, within 30 days after
29 the convening of the Second Regular Session of the 118th
30 Legislature. If the commission requires an extension, it may
31 apply to the Legislative Council, which may grant the extension;
32 and be it further

34 **Sec. 6. Staff assistance. Resolved:** That the commission shall
35 request staff assistance from the Legislative Council; and be it
36 further;

38 **Sec. 7. Compensation. Resolved:** That the members of the
39 commission are entitled to reimbursement for travel and other
40 necessary expenses upon application to the Legislative Council.
41 The Executive Director of the Legislative Council shall
42 administer the commission's budget.

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45 **SUMMARY**

46 This resolve establishes the Commission to Study the Funding
47 and Distribution of Teletypewriters and Other Telecommunications
48 Equipment for People with Disabilities. The commission will
49 review the current system of distribution and funding of the
50

2 equipment and explore alternatives, including programs in other
3 states and distribution through telecommunications companies.
4 The commission will also explore alternative funding mechanisms
5 for expansion of the current loaner program that will include the
6 use of additional equipment.