MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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122nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2005

Legislative Document

No. 523

H.P. 399

House of Representatives, February 1, 2005

An Act To Designate 2-1-1 Maine, Incorporated as the Sole Provider for 2-1-1 Information and Referral Services for the State of Maine

(EMERGENCY)

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

Millicent M. Macfarland MILLICENT M. MacFARLAND Clerk

Presented by Representative BRAUTIGAM of Falmouth.
Cosponsored by Senator BROMLEY of Cumberland and
Representatives: ADAMS of Portland, DAVIS of Falmouth, DUCHESNE of Hudson,
EBERLE of South Portland, EMERY of Cutler, FISCHER of Presque Isle, Speaker
RICHARDSON of Brunswick, Senator: RAYE of Washington.

Emergency preamble. Whereas, acts of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

Whereas, on July 21, 2000 the Federal Communications Commission determined that there was sufficient public benefit to justify the use of a scarce public resource to assign 2-1-1 to be used for access to community information and referral services; and

Whereas, the Legislature finds that the implementation of a single, easy-to-use telephone number, 2-1-1, and an Internet database for public access to information and referral for health and human services and disaster-related information will benefit the citizens of this State by providing easier access to available health and human services, by reducing inefficiencies in connecting people with the desired service providers and by reducing duplication of effort; and

Whereas, 2-1-1 Maine, Incorporated, a nonprofit organization incorporated under the laws of this State and controlled by the United Way of Greater Portland, in consultation with the other United Way agencies serving this State and Ingraham, has been organized for the purpose of operating a 2-1-1 information and referral service serving this State; and

Whereas, 2-1-1 Maine, Incorporated has retained Ingraham to operate the 2-1-1 Maine, Incorporated call center and maintain and update the information database to be used by the call center; and

Whereas, the Legislature finds that Ingraham is an experienced provider of information and referral services operating statewide Maine and is capable of operating the 2-1-1 Maine, Incorporated call center and maintaining and updating the associated database; and

 Whereas, the Legislature further finds that there is currently no entity authorized to provide information and referral services in Maine using the FCC-reserved 2-1-1 telephone number; and

Whereas, the Public Utilities Commission has determined that it has no jurisdiction to designate an information and referral service provider entitled to use the 2-1-1 telephone number in this State; and

Whereas, in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now, therefore,

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

Sec. 1. Designation as 2-1-1 information and referral services provider. 2-1-1 Maine, Incorporated is designated as the sole entity entitled to use the 2-1-1 telephone number, reserved by the Federal Communications Commission in FCC Docket 00-256, in the provision of information and referral services in the State of Maine, whether through wireline, mobile or voice-over-Internet telecommunications services.

Emergency clause. In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this Act takes effect when approved.

16 SUMMARY

2-1-1 Maine, Incorporated was formed by the United Way of Greater Portland, in consultation with the other United Way agencies serving the State and Ingraham, to provide a statewide information and referral service using a database developed by Ingraham with the support of United Way funding and the 2-1-1 telephone number reserved by the Federal Communications Commission for such providers. Ingraham, which already operates an information and referral service in Maine, will operate the 2-1-1 Maine, Incorporated call center and maintain and update the statewide database to be used in providing the service.

In order to obtain the funding necessary to provide the service, 2-1-1 Maine, Incorporated requires designation by the State of Maine as the sole 2-1-1 information and referral provider for Maine. The Public Utilities Commission has determined that it does not have jurisdiction to designate a 2-1-1 provider. This bill designates 2-1-1 Maine, Incorporated as the 2-1-1 provider.