

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

The following document is provided by the  
**LAW AND LEGISLATIVE DIGITAL LIBRARY**  
at the Maine State Law and Legislative Reference Library  
<http://legislature.maine.gov/lawlib>



Reproduced from scanned originals with text recognition applied  
(searchable text may contain some errors and/or omissions)



# 122nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

## SECOND REGULAR SESSION-2006

---

Legislative Document

No. 1964

H.P. 1376

House of Representatives, January 12, 2006

---

### **An Act To Assist Visually Impaired Persons and Persons with Disabilities in Obtaining Information Regarding Current Events**

---

Approved for introduction by a majority of the Legislative Council pursuant to Joint Rule 203.

Reference to the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs suggested and ordered printed.

*Millicent M. MacFarland*  
MILLICENT M. MacFARLAND  
Clerk

Presented by Speaker RICHARDSON of Brunswick.  
Cosponsored by Representatives: GROSE of Woolwich, WATSON of Bath, WEBSTER of Freeport, Senator: MAYO of Sagadahoc.

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

4 **Sec. 1. 27 MRSA §40** is enacted to read:

6 **§40. Accessible electronic information services**

8 **1. Definitions.** As used in this section, unless the  
context otherwise indicates, the following terms have the  
following meanings.

10 **A. "Accessible electronic information service"** means news  
and other information, including but not limited to  
newspapers, provided to eligible individuals from a  
multistate service center using high-speed computers and  
telecommunications technology for interstate acquisition of  
content and rapid distribution in a form appropriate for use  
by such individuals.

18 **B. "Blind and disabled persons"** means individuals who are  
eligible for library loan services through the Library of  
Congress and the National Library Service for the Blind and  
Physically Handicapped pursuant to 36 Code of Federal  
Regulations, Section 701.10(b).

24 **C. "Qualified entity"** means an agency, instrumentality or  
political subdivision of the State or a nonprofit  
organization that:

28 (1) Provides interstate access for eligible persons to  
read daily newspapers through producing audio or  
Braille editions by computer;

32 (2) Obtains electronic news text either over the  
Internet or through direct transfer arrangements made  
with participating news organizations; and

36 (3) Provides a means of program administration and  
reader registration on the Internet.

40 **2. Provision of service.** The State Librarian shall enter  
into an agreement with a qualified entity to provide an  
accessible electronic information service for eligible blind and  
disabled persons. The State Librarian shall make maximum use of  
federal and other funds available by obtaining grants or in-kind  
support from appropriate programs and, if necessary, securing  
access to low-cost interstate rates for telecommunications by  
reimbursement or other means.

2           **Sec. 2. Appropriations and allocations.**    The following  
3 appropriations and allocations are made.

4           **LIBRARY, MAINE STATE**

6           **Maine State Library 0217**

8           Initiative:   Provides funds for provision of accessible  
9 electronic information services.

10	<b>GENERAL FUND</b>	<b>2005-06</b>	<b>2006-07</b>
12	All Other	\$0	\$26,960
14	<b>GENERAL FUND TOTAL</b>	<hr/> \$0	<hr/> \$26,960

16

**SUMMARY**

18

20           This bill directs the State Librarian to enter into an  
21 agreement with a qualified entity to provide an accessible  
22 electronic information service for eligible blind and disabled  
persons.