

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# 123rd MAINE LEGISLATURE

## FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2007

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Legislative Document

No. 1767

S.P. 626

March 28, 2007

### An Act To Encourage Community Network Development

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

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joy J. O'Brien".

JOY J. O'BRIEN  
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator PERRY of Penobscot.

Cosponsored by Representative RICHARDSON of Carmel and Senators: BROMLEY of Cumberland, MARTIN of Aroostook, MILLS of Somerset, MITCHELL of Kennebec, RAYE of Washington, Representatives: FISCHER of Presque Isle, PINGREE of North Haven, TARDY of Newport.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 5 MRSA §12004-G, sub-§33-G** is enacted to read:

3 **33-G.**

4 <u>Technology</u>	<u>Education and</u>	<u>Expenses Only</u>	<u>35-A MRSA</u>
5	<u>Municipal</u>		<u>§9152</u>
6	<u>Technology</u>		
7	<u>Advisory</u>		
8	<u>Committee</u>		

9 **Sec. 2. 35-A MRSA c. 92** is enacted to read:

10 **CHAPTER 92**

11 **TECHNOLOGY PARTNERSHIPS**

12 **§9151. Definitions**

13 As used in this chapter, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms  
14 have the following meanings.

15 **1. Advisory committee.** "Advisory committee" means the Education and Municipal  
16 Technology Advisory Committee established in Title 5, section 12004-G, subsection  
17 33-G.

18 **2. Community network.** "Community network" means a computer system within a  
19 municipality that provides free or low-cost access to information and services through a  
20 centrally managed network or intranet or Internet connection or any combination of  
21 network and connections.

22 **3. Fund.** "Fund" means the Education and Municipal Technology Partnership Fund  
23 established in section 9153, subsection 3.

24 **§9152. Advisory committee established**

25 **1. Members.** The advisory committee consists of the following 11 members:

26 A. The chair of the ConnectME Authority, as established in section 9203, or the  
27 chair's designee;

28 B. Three members representing postsecondary education, appointed by the  
29 Governor;

30 C. One member of a statewide association of municipal governments, appointed by  
31 the Governor;

32 D. Three members of the public, appointed by the Governor;

1 E. Two members representing a community that has an operational community  
2 network, appointed by the Governor; and

3 F. One member representing a provider of Internet service serving a rural area of the  
4 State, appointed by the Governor.

5 2. Terms; vacancies. Members of the advisory committee appointed by the  
6 Governor serve 3-year terms or until their successors are appointed. A vacancy is filled  
7 for the remainder of the term that is vacated.

8 3. Chair; clerk. The advisory committee shall annually elect a chair and a clerk  
9 from among its members at its first meeting of the calendar year.

10 **§9153. Community network development**

11 1. Technology partnerships. The advisory committee shall provide oversight and  
12 advice to existing community networks and shall encourage and aid in the development  
13 of community networks by municipalities in partnerships with local schools in the  
14 municipalities. In performing these duties the advisory committee shall:

15 A. Coordinate with the University of Maine System and act as a liaison between the  
16 system and local community network partners to ensure that appropriate information  
17 technology training programs and courses are available to teachers from kindergarten  
18 to grade 12;

19 B. Provide ongoing expert advice and guidance for developing and established  
20 community networks; and

21 C. Administer a grant program pursuant to subsection 2.

22 2. Grant program. The advisory committee shall administer a grant program from  
23 the fund to provide grants to communities and schools partnering to develop community  
24 networks. The advisory committee shall by routine technical rule adopted pursuant to  
25 Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A establish the process and criteria for grant  
26 application and distribution.

27 3. Fund established. The Education and Municipal Technology Partnership Fund is  
28 established as a nonlapsing fund administered by the advisory committee. The fund  
29 consists of money appropriated or allocated to it and may receive money from any  
30 source, including grants, gifts, bequests and donations.

31 4. Annual report. The advisory committee shall submit an annual report by January  
32 31st to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over utilities.  
33 The report must:

34 A. Identify community networks in the State with which the advisory committee has  
35 been involved and the status of their development;

36 B. Provide an accounting of the grant program administered pursuant to subsection  
37 2;

38 C. Summarize the progress made over the past year in developing new community  
39 networks;

1 D. Summarize the support provided to already existing community networks over the  
2 past year; and

3 E. Outline proposals and plans for additional community networks.

4 **Sec. 3. Education and Municipal Technology Advisory Committee;**  
5 **staggered terms.** Notwithstanding the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 35-A, section  
6 9152, subsection 2, of the 10 initial members appointed by the Governor to the Education  
7 and Municipal Technology Advisory Committee, the Governor shall appoint 3 for 3-year  
8 terms, 4 for 2-year terms and 4 for 1-year terms.

9 **Sec. 4. Appropriations and allocations.** The following appropriations and  
10 allocations are made.

11 **PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

12 **Public Utilities - Administrative Division 0184**

13 Initiative: Provides one-time funds for initial funding of the Education and Municipal  
14 Technology Partnership Fund for the community networks grant program administered  
15 by the Education and Municipal Technology Advisory Committee pursuant to the Maine  
16 Revised Statutes, Title 35-A, section 9153 and ongoing funds to pay expenses incurred by  
17 advisory committee members. Funds appropriated in this section do not lapse, but must  
18 be carried forward for the same purposes.

19

20 <b>GENERAL FUND</b>	<b>2007-08</b>	<b>2008-09</b>
21 All Other	\$90,000	\$10,000
22		
23 GENERAL FUND TOTAL	<u>\$90,000</u>	<u>\$10,000</u>

24 **SUMMARY**

25 This bill establishes the Education and Municipal Technology Advisory Committee  
26 to aid in the development and maintenance of community networks by municipalities and  
27 schools within those municipalities working in partnership. Under the bill, a community  
28 network is a computer system within a municipality that provides free or low-cost access  
29 to information and services through a centrally managed network or intranet or Internet  
30 connection or any combination of network and connections. The bill makes a one-time  
31 appropriation for the purpose of establishing a grant program from a fund to be  
32 administered by the advisory committee to aid in the development of community  
33 networks and an ongoing appropriation for expenses of the advisory committee members.