

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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130th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2021

Legislative Document

No. 1235

S.P. 402

In Senate, March 25, 2021

**An Act To Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue To Connect Maine
with a World-class Internet Infrastructure**

Received by the Secretary of the Senate on March 23, 2021. Referred to the Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs pursuant to Joint Rule 308.2 and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D M Grant'.

DAREK M. GRANT
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator BENNETT of Oxford.
Cosponsored by Representative BERRY of Bowdoinham and
Senator: MAXMIN of Lincoln, Representative: SKOLFIELD of Weld.

1 **Preamble.** Two thirds of both Houses of the Legislature deeming it necessary in
2 accordance with the Constitution of Maine, Article IX, Section 14 to authorize the issuance
3 of bonds on behalf of the State of Maine to provide funds as described in this Act,

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

5 **Sec. 1. Authorization of bonds.** The Treasurer of State is authorized, under the
6 direction of the Governor, to issue bonds in the name and on behalf of the State in an
7 amount not exceeding \$100,000,000 for the purposes described in section 5 of this Act.
8 The bonds are a pledge of the full faith and credit of the State. The bonds may not run for
9 a period longer than 10 years from the date of the original issue of the bonds.

10 **Sec. 2. Records of bonds issued; Treasurer of State.** The Treasurer of State
11 shall ensure that an account of each bond is kept showing the number of the bond, the name
12 of the successful bidder to whom sold, the amount received for the bond, the date of sale
13 and the date when payable.

14 **Sec. 3. Sale; how negotiated; proceeds appropriated.** The Treasurer of State
15 may negotiate the sale of the bonds by direction of the Governor, but no bond may be
16 loaned, pledged or hypothecated on behalf of the State. The proceeds of the sale of the
17 bonds, which must be held by the Treasurer of State and paid by the Treasurer of State
18 upon warrants drawn by the State Controller, are appropriated solely for the purposes set
19 forth in this Act. Any unencumbered balances remaining at the completion of the project
20 in this Act lapse to the Office of the Treasurer of State to be used for the retirement of
21 general obligation bonds.

22 **Sec. 4. Interest and debt retirement.** The Treasurer of State shall pay interest
23 due or accruing on any bonds issued under this Act and all sums coming due for payment
24 of bonds at maturity.

25 **Sec. 5. Disbursement of bond proceeds from General Fund bond issue.** The
26 proceeds of the sale of the bonds authorized under this Act must be expended as designated
27 in the following schedule under the direction and supervision of the agencies and entities
28 set forth in this section.

29 **CONNECTMAINE AUTHORITY**

30 Provides funding for grants and loans to provide a world-class affordable high-speed
31 Internet infrastructure to reach 98% of homes and businesses in the State within 5 years,
32 to leverage federal, private and other funding. Grant and loan funding must target high-
33 quality infrastructure in order to get the best return on investment over the next 20
34 years. The infrastructure must be affordable, reliable, secure, fast and enduring. It
35 must provide symmetrical-speed broadband expandable to gigabit speeds. Bond-
36 funded backbone and middle-mile infrastructure must provide open-access
37 infrastructure that allows for competition between service providers and choice for
38 consumers and must provide for neutral networks prohibiting the blocking of websites
39 and charging extra for not slowing down content. Bond-funded last-mile infrastructure
40 may be open access at the discretion of the applicant.

41 Total \$100,000,000

