

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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131st MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2023

Legislative Document

No. 1065

S.P. 434

In Senate, March 7, 2023

**An Act to Improve the Telecommunications Relay Services Council
by Reducing Its Membership and Allowing for the Hiring of an
Executive Director**

Reference to the Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology suggested 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 PIERCE of Cumberland.
Cosponsored by Representative ZEIGLER of Montville and
Senator: HARRINGTON of York, Representative: FOSTER of Dexter.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 35-A MRSA §8704, sub-§1**, as amended by PL 2017, c. 408, §6, is further
3 amended to read:

4 **1. Membership.** The council consists of ~~12~~ 10 members as follows:

5 A. The Director of the Division for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened,
6 Bureau of Rehabilitation Services, Department of Labor, or a designee;

7 B. The chair of the Commission for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened
8 established by Title 5, section 12004-J, subsection 17, or a designee;

9 C. One member from the Public Utilities Commission, appointed by the
10 commissioners;

11 D. One member from the office of the Public Advocate, appointed by the Public
12 Advocate; and

13 E. ~~Eight~~ Six members appointed by the Governor as follows:

14 (1) One member from the Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of
15 Hearing and the Governor Baxter School for the Deaf;

16 (2) One member from a statewide association for the deaf;

17 (3) One member from a disability rights organization in this State;

18 (4) One member from the largest incumbent local exchange carrier providing
19 telecommunications relay service in this State; and

20 ~~(5) One member of a telephone association in this State, except that the~~
21 ~~representative under this subparagraph may not be a representative of the carrier~~
22 ~~under subparagraph (4);~~

23 (6) Two members from the general public who use telecommunications devices
24 for the deaf that operate in connection with telecommunications relay services as
25 their primary means of telecommunications; and

26 ~~(7) One member representing a company that provides telecommunications relay~~
27 ~~services through the Internet, wireless telecommunications or cable~~
28 ~~telecommunications.~~

29 **Sec. 2. 35-A MRSA §8704, sub-§9** is enacted to read:

30 **9. Executive director.** The council shall hire a part-time executive director, who shall
31 assist in carrying out the powers and duties of the council, including by helping prepare the
32 budget under subsection 6, preparing the report under subsection 8, assisting with contract
33 negotiations and invoice processing and performing all other duties the council considers
34 necessary to achieve the council's purposes. The council may compensate the executive
35 director.

36 **SUMMARY**

37 This bill amends the law governing the Telecommunications Relay Services Council
38 to reduce the number of members appointed by the Governor from 8 to 6 by removing the
39 member of a telephone association and the member representing a company that provides

1 telecommunications relay services. It also directs the council to hire a part-time executive
2 director and allows the council to compensate the executive director.