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STATE OF MAINE
ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTIETH LEGISLATURE
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, UTILITIES AND TECHNOLOGY

MEMORANDUM

TO: Senator Cathy Breen, Senate Chair
Representative Teresa Pierce, House Chair
Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs

FROM: Senator Mark Lawrence, Senate Chair *ML* *AS*
Representative Seth Berry, House Chair *SB* *AD*
Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology

DATE: February 5, 2021

SUBJECT: Supplemental budget recommendations

Pursuant to Joint Rule 314, on February 4, 2021, the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology (EUT Committee) reviewed the provisions of the Governor’s proposed supplemental budget for FY21 included under its subject matter jurisdiction.

The EUT Committee voted unanimously¹ to approve the initiative pertaining to the Governor’s Energy Office as contained in Part A of proposed supplemental budget (page A-34; OFPR Worksheet, page 2).

With respect to the initiative pertaining to the ConnectMaine Authority (the Authority) as contained in Part A of the proposed supplemental budget (page A-15; OFPR Worksheet, page 1), 7 members of the EUT Committee voted to approved that initiative as presented.² Two members (Representatives Foster and Wadsworth) voting in opposition to the Authority initiative recommend removal of the initiative from the proposed supplemental budget. One member voting in opposition to the Authority initiative (Representative Grohoski) proposes amending the initiative to reduce from \$1.8 million to \$300,000 the amount of one-time General Funds provided to the Authority through the supplemental budget (see attached).

Representative Grohoski further recommends that, during the upcoming deliberations on the Governor’s proposed biennial budget, the EUT Committee and the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs consider providing the Authority with one-time funding of up

¹ Members present and voting include: Senator Lawrence; Representatives Berry, Carlow, Cuddy, Foster, Grohoski, Kessler, Wadsworth, Wood, and Zeigler. Senators Vitelli and Stewart and Representative Grignon were absent.

² In favor: Senator Lawrence; Representatives Berry, Carlow, Cuddy, Kessler, Wood, and Zeigler. Absent: Senators Vitelli and Stewart and Representative Grignon.

to \$1.5 million for an enhanced broadband mapping tool project, as is proposed in the supplemental budget, only in conjunction with amendments to Title 35-A, chapter 93 to require a communications service provider to submit to the Authority detailed, address-specific data regarding the services it provides in the State as a condition of receiving funds or technical assistance from the Authority, as well as amendments to ensure that such submitted data is considered confidential in accordance with Title 35-A, section 9207.

Please find attached related OFPR worksheets outlining the committee's recommendations regarding the specified supplemental budget initiatives.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment. If you have any questions, please let us know.

cc: Members, Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs
Members, Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology

Representative Grohoski – Proposed Amendment

Sec. A-7. Appropriations and allocations. The following appropriations and allocations are made.

CONNECTMAINE AUTHORITY

ConnectMaine Fund Z294

Initiative: Provides one-time funding to support grant operationalization, technical evaluation of projects and audit processes.

GENERAL FUND	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
All Other	\$300,000	\$0	\$0
GENERAL FUND TOTAL	\$300,000	\$0	\$0

Justification:

This initiative provides funding to support grant operationalization, technical evaluation of projects and audit processes in association with the \$15 million bond approved by voters in July 2020 and serves an immediate need to effectively administer those funds and ensure those funds are used appropriately.

CONNECTMAINE AUTHORITY

DEPARTMENT TOTALS	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
GENERAL FUND	\$300,000	\$0	\$0
DEPARTMENT TOTAL - ALL FUNDS	\$300,000	\$0	\$0

Sec. A-7. Appropriations and allocations.

The following appropriations and allocations are made.

CONNECTMAINE AUTHORITY

ConnectMaine Fund Z294

Initiative: Provides one-time funding for an enhanced broadband mapping tool project.

Ref. #: 89

One Time

Committee Vote:

7-3

AFA Vote: _____

GENERAL FUND	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
All Other	\$1,800,000	\$0	\$0
GENERAL FUND TOTAL	\$1,800,000	\$0	\$0

Justification:

This initiative provides funding for a subscription to a broadband mapping tool that will assess broadband infrastructure throughout the state to determine the locations of gaps in broadband service and estimate the costs of broadband implementation in these gap areas. This tool will improve infrastructure expansion for broadband and will facilitate the most efficient investment options for broadband expansion. Additionally, this funding includes \$300,000 to support grant operationalization, technical evaluation of projects and audit processes.

CONNECTMAINE AUTHORITY

DEPARTMENT TOTALS	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
GENERAL FUND	\$1,800,000	\$0	\$0
DEPARTMENT TOTAL - ALL FUNDS	\$1,800,000	\$0	\$0

Sec. A-15. Appropriations and allocations.

The following appropriations and allocations are made.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

Governor's Energy Office Z122

Initiative: Reduces funding by managing general operating expenses within available resources. This initiative relates to the curtailments ordered in Financial Order 001152 F1.

Ref. #: 212 One Time Committee Vote: 10-0 AFA Vote: _____

GENERAL FUND	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
All Other	(\$30,000)	\$0	\$0
GENERAL FUND TOTAL	(\$30,000)	\$0	\$0

Justification:

GEO can absorb this 10% cut in funding within existing operations.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

DEPARTMENT TOTALS	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
GENERAL FUND	(\$30,000)	\$0	\$0
DEPARTMENT TOTAL - ALL FUNDS	(\$30,000)	\$0	\$0