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Legislative Document

No. 1176

S.P. 397

In Senate, March 28, 2017

**An Act To Ensure the Safety of Low-income Persons Who Are Deaf
and Who Use Video and Captioned Phones by Providing Equitable
Access to the Internet**

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

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Heather J.R. Priest".

HEATHER J.R. PRIEST
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator DION of Cumberland.
Cosponsored by Representative TALBOT ROSS of Portland and
Senators: CHENETTE of York, DIAMOND of Cumberland, HILL of York, Representatives:
BERRY of Bowdoinham, COOPER of Yarmouth, RILEY of Jay, RYKERSON of Kittery,
SANBORN of Portland.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 35-A MRSA §9219** is enacted to read:

3 **§9219. Price reduction for broadband services provided to low-income persons who**
4 **are deaf**

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

7 A. "Broadband services" means all communications services that the authority by
8 rule determines to be necessary for an eligible person to effectively access and use
9 the Internet. "Broadband services" does not include usage-sensitive intrastate toll
10 services subject to rate reduction under section 7302.

11 B. "Eligible person" means a person who:

12 (1) Is deaf as described in section 8702, subsection 3; and

13 (2) Meets income qualifications established by the authority by rule.

14 **2. Discount.** In accordance with rules adopted by the authority, a communications
15 service provider shall provide a 70% price reduction on all broadband services provided
16 to an eligible person who applies to the authority and receives certification from the
17 authority that the person qualifies as an eligible person.

18 **3. Rules.** Notwithstanding section 9205, subsection 3, rules adopted under this
19 section are routine technical rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

20 **SUMMARY**

21 This bill requires communications service providers to provide a 70% price reduction
22 on all broadband services provided to a low-income person who is deaf.