



125th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2011

Legislative Document

No. 554

H.P. 437

House of Representatives, February 15, 2011

An Act To Amend the Telecommunications Education Access Fund

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
Clerk

Presented by Representative CUSHING of Hampden.
Cosponsored by Senator THIBODEAU of Waldo and
Representatives: CAIN of Orono, FITTS of Pittsfield, RICHARDSON of Carmel, ROSEN of
Bucksport, VALENTINO of Saco.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 35-A MRSA §7104-B, sub-§1, ¶B,** as enacted by PL 1999, c. 409, §2, is
3 amended to read:

4 B. "Qualified school" means a public school, including its administrative offices and
5 noninstructional facilities, as defined in Title 20-A, section 1, subsection 24; a private
6 school approved under Title 20-A, section 2901 or 2951; or a school that provides
7 free public access to all advanced telecommunications services available at that
8 school, if the commission determines, in consultation with the Department of
9 Education, that including that school as a qualified school is in the public interest.

10 **Sec. 2. 35-A MRSA §7104-B, sub-§4,** as amended by PL 2001, c. 522, §2, is
11 further amended to read:

12 **4. Use of fund.** The fund must be used to provide discounts to qualified libraries,
13 qualified schools and the Raymond H. Fogler Library at the University of Maine ~~for~~ in
14 support of the following:

- 15 A. Telecommunications services;
- 16 B. Internet access;
- 17 C. Internal connections;
- 18 D. Computers;
- 19 E. Training; and
- 20 F. Content.

21 **Sec. 3. 35-A MRSA §7104-B, sub-§4-A,** as enacted by PL 2009, c. 274, §18, is
22 amended to read:

23 **4-A. State Librarian; Commissioner of Education; University of Maine System.**
24 The State Librarian ~~or,~~ the Commissioner of Education or the University of Maine
25 System may enter into contracts or order services on behalf of qualified schools and
26 qualified libraries in connection with the fund and may take advantage of any discounts
27 available pursuant to the federal Telecommunications Act of 1996.

28 **Sec. 4. 35-A MRSA §7104-B, sub-§5,** as amended by PL 2001, c. 522, §2, is
29 further amended to read:

30 **5. Guidelines for funding.** The commission shall allocate money from the fund
31 using the following guidelines:

- 32 A. To ensure ~~a basic level of~~ connectivity for all of the qualified schools and
33 qualified libraries in the State;
- 34 B. To ensure that all qualified schools, qualified libraries and the Raymond H. Fogler
35 Library at the University of Maine are capable of using the advanced technology
36 equipment obtained through the fund;

- 1 C. To ensure that more technologically sophisticated equipment is available to
2 students in grades 9 to 12 and in larger qualified libraries in the State;
- 3 D. To provide for necessary equipment to use the services obtained through the fund;
- 4 E. To provide for internal connections necessary to use the services obtained through
5 the fund;
- 6 F. To provide training to teachers so that they may assist and educate their students
7 in the use of the advanced technology equipment;
- 8 G. To provide for the establishment of computer technology training programs in
9 schools to provide training to students in areas such as, but not limited to, electronic
10 commerce, Internet proficiency and World Wide Web-enabled systems; and
- 11 H. To provide for electronic database content to be used for the purposes of
12 accessing information by schools and libraries.

13 ~~A minimum of 25% of each annual program budget must be devoted to targeted projects~~
14 ~~that are innovative and technologically advanced.~~

15 **SUMMARY**

16 This bill makes changes to provisions governing the telecommunications education
17 access fund to maximize the participation of federal funds, update outdated language and
18 improve the State's ability to bring high-speed broadband service to schools and libraries.