



132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2025

Legislative Document

No. 1096

H.P. 718

House of Representatives, March 18, 2025

**An Act to Allow Municipalities That Have Financed Fiber-optic
Broadband Infrastructure to Use Loans or Grants to Repay
Associated Debt**

Received by the Clerk of the House on March 14, 2025. Referred to the Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology pursuant to Joint Rule 308.2 and ordered printed pursuant to Joint Rule 401.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert B. Hunt".

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative MINGO of Calais.
Cosponsored by Senator MOORE of Washington and
Representatives: EDER of Waterboro, MALON of Biddeford, PERKINS of Dover-Foxcroft,
QUINT of Hodgdon, RUDNICKI of Fairfield, TUELL of East Machias, YUSUF of Portland,
Senator: CYRWAY of Kennebec.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 35-A MRSA §9211-A, sub-§3-B** is enacted to read:

3 **3-B. Purpose of the fund; repayment of existing debt.** In addition to grants and
4 grant match funding provided in accordance with subsections 3 and 3-A, the fund may be
5 used to provide funding to a municipal entity applying for project grants to repay debt that
6 was incurred by the municipal entity for the construction of a gigabit fiber-optic broadband
7 network owned by the municipal entity. For purposes of this subsection, "municipal entity"
8 means a municipality or a group of municipalities working together to support a gigabit
9 fiber-optic broadband network project.

10 **Sec. 2. 35-A MRSA §9402, sub-§4-A** is enacted to read:

11 **4-A. Municipal entity.** "Municipal entity" means a municipality or a group of
12 municipalities working together to support a broadband network project.

13 **Sec. 3. 35-A MRSA §9405, sub-§11-A** is enacted to read:

14 **11-A. Loans or grants to repay debt.** To make alone or in participation or
15 cooperation with others direct loans or grants, as allowed by law, to a municipal entity for
16 the repayment of debt incurred by the municipal entity for the construction of broadband
17 infrastructure owned by the municipal entity;

18 **Sec. 4. 35-A MRSA §9405-A** is enacted to read:

19 **§9405-A. Municipally owned broadband infrastructure; duty of authority**

20 In administering a grant or award for the development or construction of broadband
21 infrastructure owned by a municipal entity, the authority shall permit the use of such funds
22 for the repayment of debt incurred by the municipal entity related to the development or
23 construction of the broadband infrastructure unless such use is prohibited by the federal
24 agency or other source providing the grant or award.

25 **SUMMARY**

26 This bill authorizes the Municipal Gigabit Broadband Network Access Fund to provide
27 funding to municipal entities applying for project grants to repay debt that was incurred by
28 a municipal entity for the construction of a municipally owned gigabit fiber-optic
29 broadband network project. It specifies that the Maine Connectivity Authority may make
30 direct loans or grants to municipal entities for the repayment of debt incurred by a
31 municipal entity for the construction of municipally owned broadband infrastructure. The
32 bill also requires the authority, in administering a grant or award for the development or
33 construction of municipally owned broadband infrastructure, to permit the use of grant or
34 award funds for the repayment of debt incurred by a municipal entity related to the
35 development or construction of the broadband infrastructure unless such use is prohibited
36 by the source of the grant or award.