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Resolve, To Establish a Stakeholder Group To Study the Sale or Lease of the State's Excess Broadband Capacity

Sec. 1 Creation of stakeholder group; membership. Resolved: That, within its existing resources, the Governor's Office of Energy Independence and Security shall establish a stakeholder group to study the potential sale or lease of excess broadband capacity owned by the State or through the University of Maine System. The stakeholder group must include 2 Legislators, one from the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker and one from the Senate appointed by the President of the Senate; and be it further

Sec. 2 Duties. Resolved: That the stakeholder group under section 1 shall:

1. Review and identify the financial implications of the transition from analog broadcasting to digital broadcasting and review the Federal Communications Commission's decision to allow certain institutions that hold licenses for frequencies used to broadcast broadband signals to sell the generation of excess broadband capacity, since the space occupied by one analog channel can be occupied by several digital channels;

2. Explore the potential of selling or leasing the State's and the University of Maine System's excess broadband capacity when the analog channels become digital channels;

3. Review what other states and educational systems have done in this situation in order to find ways to save the state budget allocations from the General Fund and to see how these types of savings can be done on a statewide basis. The stakeholder group shall pay particular attention to the Milwaukee, Wisconsin educational system's sale of broadband valued at \$12,600,000, with estimated additional earnings of \$108,000,000; and

4. Investigate the University of Maine System's plans to negotiate a contract for its excess broadband capacity; and be it further

Sec. 3 Report. Resolved: That, no later than January 15, 2009, the stakeholder group under section 1 shall report its findings and recommendations, and any suggested legislation, to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over utilities and energy matters.

SUMMARY

This resolve directs the Governor's Office of Energy Independence and Security to create a stakeholder group to review the potential sale of the excess capacity that occurs during the transition from analog broadcasting to digital broadcasting and to report its findings and recommendations and any suggested legislation to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over utilities and energy matters.