

Maine Broadband Coalition Testimony in support of LD 1065

April 13, 2023

Senator Lawrence, Representative Zeigler, and fellow members of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities, and Technology,

Maine Broadband Coalition (MBC), a non-profit that educates on expanding internet access and digital equity, **submits this testimony in support of LD 1065**, “An Act to Improve the Telecommunications Relay Services Council by Reducing Its Membership and Allowing for the Hiring of an Executive Director.”

MBC supports the initiative to reform the Council to improve its service to Maine’s deaf and hard of hearing communities. Our Coalition supports digital equity for all Mainers, particularly those who need us to adapt our digital society to ensure access for them. It is important that those Mainers with limited internet access or skills receive the benefits of connectivity. Reforming the Council to ensure it can reach decisions, and giving it leadership through a staff position, will help these users meet their communications access needs.

Too many Mainers lack access to the internet sufficient to participate in the digital society and economy. We are helping to address this issue. We believe this reform will help ensure that those Mainers get access to the services they need. Thank you for considering this change and the intention to address this matter.

Myles Smith
Executive Director
Maine Broadband Coalition