



Testimony of the Island Institute In Support of LD 240, An Act to Increase Public Access to Utilities

January 9th, 2024

Senator Lawrence, Representative Zeigler, Members of the Committee on Energy, Utilities, Technology. My name is Nick Battista and I am testifying on behalf of the Island Institute in support of the ideas motivating LD 240.

The Island Institute is a 40-year-old nonprofit organization based in Rockland, Maine. We have long supported the expansion of broadband in Maine. All Mainers should be able to use high-speed, reliable internet, including those who live in multi-dwelling units.

This legislation starts to address an important issue facing some communities in Maine and will soon be facing more communities. Internet access in multi-dwelling units is often provided or enabled by the building owner. Where there is limited competition for high-quality internet, this is not an issue. However, we are starting to see increased competition between multiple high-quality internet service providers in some towns and communities.

With multiple internet service providers making investments in communities like Rockland, Camden, Belfast and similar communities across the coast, we are starting to see a set of communities where there is or soon will be competition. This legislation helps ensure that all Mainers can access the internet wires that run down their street.

Please support LD 240 and the ideas motivating this legislation.