

LD 307

Testimony in Support, as Amended



Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities, and Technology

Public Hearing: February 5, 2026

Submitted by:

Maine Connectivity Authority
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Position || The Maine Connectivity Authority supports LD 307, as Amended.

The Maine Connectivity Authority (MCA) supports LD 307, as amended in Representative Melanie Sach's Resolve, to Establish the Maine Artificial Intelligence Data Center Coordination Council. This amendment establishes a clear and coordinated way for the State to evaluate artificial intelligence data center development before impacts are felt by ratepayers, communities, and public infrastructure systems.

Interest in AI data centers is increasing nationwide, and Maine is no exception. These facilities can serve a critical function in the connectivity ecosystem, but they also require significant electric capacity and supporting infrastructure. If not planned for carefully, that demand can affect grid reliability, energy costs, local land and water resources, and the pace and cost of broadband expansion—particularly in rural areas where infrastructure is already constrained.

MCA's responsibility is to ensure all Maine people have access to reliable and affordable broadband service. Achieving that goal depends on coordinated, long-term infrastructure planning across energy, telecommunications, and community development. Large, energy-intensive developments have the potential to influence where broadband can be built, how quickly projects move forward, and how infrastructure costs are shared.

LD 307 takes a measured and responsible approach. It does not presume outcomes or advance specific projects. Instead, it brings together state agencies, utilities, municipalities, and other stakeholders to develop shared understanding and practical guidance. The duties outlined in the resolve—evaluating grid impacts, protecting ratepayers, considering environmental effects, improving data sharing, and supporting municipal decision-making—reflect the kinds of questions Maine should be asking now, rather than later.

MCA strongly supports the inclusion of broadband considerations within the council's scope and the inclusion of MCA as a member of the council. Broadband infrastructure does not exist in isolation, and decisions made in the energy and economic development context can have lasting effects on connectivity outcomes statewide.

The council's structure, public meeting requirements, and final report to the Legislature ensure transparency and accountability, while giving the State the time and information needed to make thoughtful policy decisions. This approach supports innovation while protecting public investments and community interests.

For these reasons, the Maine Connectivity Authority respectfully urges the Committee to support LD 307, as amended.