

**Subject:** LD256 letter for committee

**Date:** Wednesday, February 8, 2017 at 1:16:56 PM Eastern Standard Time

**From:** Karen Eger

**To:** Ritter, James

Dear Members of the Energy, Utilities, and Technology (EUT) Committee,

I am writing in support of LD256 — a bill to stabilize the revenue of the Maine Technology Education Access Fund (MTEAF) proposed by Representative Martin Grohman of Biddeford. I have worked in public libraries in Maine since the year 2000 and have utilized the programs and services offered by the Maine State Library and the Maine School Library Network in all my workplaces. These services, funded through MTEAF, are vital to small libraries in Maine, helping us stay abreast of fast-changing technologies and fast-changing needs of our communities.

The Maine State Library has let libraries know that the old funding set-up for raising revenue for our high speed internet connection and other networking services is declining. This year again, we are asked to pay into the service in order to receive what was formerly free to all public libraries and schools. I have no problem with paying a fee at the current level but am worried on behalf of the hundreds of smaller libraries to whom \$100 is a great bite out of a tiny budget. I worry on behalf of my library, knowing that the current funding formula of taxing land line calls, will inevitably result in increasing fees that we won't be able to sustain.

We receive so much more from these services than you can imagine. Being able to join MSLN gives us access to support services that free us up to work with our communities rather than spend time on the phone negotiating with local cable providers. We also rely on MSLN to diagnose connectivity problems. I don't have to hire expensive tech support only to find out that a simple phone talk through will get us up and running again.

The Maine School Library Network acts as a great equalizer in the state of Maine for people to do all of the recreational, educational and bureaucratic tasks that make us engaged and productive citizens.

Karen McCarthy Eger  
Library Director

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Tuesday 10-8  
Wednesday 10-8  
Thursday 10-5  
Friday 1-5  
Saturday 9-1:00