



# 128th MAINE LEGISLATURE

## FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2017

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Legislative Document

No. 421

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H.P. 301

House of Representatives, February 7, 2017

**An Act To Promote Economic Development and Critical  
Communications for Rural Family Farms, Businesses and  
Residences by Strategic Public Investment in High-speed Internet**

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Reference to the Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "R B. Hunt".

ROBERT B. HUNT  
Clerk

Presented by Representative McCREA of Fort Fairfield.  
Cosponsored by Representative BERRY of Bowdoinham, Senator DOW of Lincoln and  
Representatives: GATTINE of Westbrook, MARTIN of Eagle Lake, MARTIN of Sinclair,  
McELWEE of Caribou, PARKER of South Berwick, SHERMAN of Hodgdon, Senators:  
DAVIS of Piscataquis, GRATWICK of Penobscot.

1 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

2 **CONCEPT DRAFT**

3 **SUMMARY**

4 This bill is a concept draft pursuant to Joint Rule 208.

5 This bill proposes to increase funding to the ConnectME Authority from \$1,000,000  
6 to \$5,000,000 to expand universal broadband and high-speed Internet into rural areas  
7 identified as the 6% of the State unserved by high-speed Internet. This bill proposes to  
8 make expanding high-speed Internet into unserved rural areas a key emphasis in the  
9 economic development of and to multiply the return to the State by directing the  
10 ConnectME Authority to use the increased funding to increase the rate of strategic  
11 broadband investment and leverage additional federal funding to provide middle-mile and  
12 last-mile infrastructure in the unserved areas and to correct broadband deficiencies  
13 identified in the ConnectME Authority's baseline update of 2013.