

Good afternoon,

My name is Kathy Upton, and I am co-director of the Cherryfield Public Library. Thank you for allowing me to testify today. I am here with my co director Cara Sawyer. The Cherryfield Public Library Trustees have allowed us to close for the day to be here. They realize how important this service is to our patrons.

We are a small town of 1200 residents in western Washington County. There is a long standing tradition of having a library in Cherryfield; it was established in 1837 by a group of forward thinking ladies.

As you are all aware, libraries have changed a great deal in the last few years. No longer are we simply a book repository; we have become a place where people come to find all matter of information. For many small towns like ours, the library is the only hot spot. You will find cars in the parking lot at all hours using our Wi-Fi.

In this age of a paperless society, a high speed broadband connection is a necessity. Unfortunately, it is not readily available in our area. This is why our MSLN connection is so important. It is one of the most used services we offer at the library.

Our patrons use the MSLN connection for many different things. Some use it to make out applications for work, unemployment, state licenses, and other online forms. Many come to do their taxes. Others may need to update a resume or send it to a potential employer. They could even conduct a job interview with one of our Tandberg units. These units also allow for people to attend meetings face to face without leaving town. When it can take one to two hours or more to get to a meeting from rural areas, this is a wonderful service to have available. Students come in to do research and homework. Genealogy is another big draw. All Maine libraries have access to Ancestry as part of the Marvel Database. I could spend the 3 minutes allotted just on Marvel. If you have never used Marvel I am sure that someone at the State Library would be happy to show you how.

We have people who Skype with their families, keep in touch with Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Snapchat, etc. None of these would be possible without our MSLN connection.

As a matter of fact, I could not do my job without the internet. Our automation system allows us to easily and efficiently check in and out materials, and to see if an item is available through the online catalog. We also order interlibrary loans using email. Being a small library with just over 8000 titles, interlibrary loan allows us to get almost any material a patron wants.

In closing I am asking you to please support LD256.

Thank you.