

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

Sec. 1. 35-A MRSA §7104-B, sub-§3, ¶A, as enacted by PL 1999, c. 409, §2, is amended to read:

A. Limit the amount collected to no more than ~~0.5%~~ 0.6% of retail charges for telecommunications services as determined by the commission, excluding interstate tolls or interstate private line services;

Sec. 2. One-time increase in funding for telecommunications education access fund. Notwithstanding the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 35-A, section 7104-B, subsection 3, paragraph A, the limit on the amount collected for the telecommunications education access fund, as established in Title 35-A, section 7104-B, subsection 2, in fiscal year 2005-06 and fiscal year 2006-07 is 0.8% of retail charges for telecommunications services as determined by the Public Utilities Commission, excluding interstate tolls or interstate private line services.

SUMMARY

This bill increases the amount the Public Utilities Commission may collect from carriers for contributions to the telecommunications education access fund. The current law limits the collection from carriers to 0.5% of retail charges for telecommunications services. This bill increases the collection limit to 0.6%, with a one-time increase to 0.8% for fiscal years 2005-06 and 2006-07. These increases will allow the Public Utilities Commission to cover costs while recipients await E-rate discounts and to fund up to \$500,000 per year to pay for electronic databases pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 35-A, section 7104-B, subsection 5, paragraph H.