An Act To Clarify the Meaning of "Unserved Area" within the State's Broadband Service Laws

Received by the Clerk of the House on January 11, 2021. Referred to the Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology pursuant to Joint Rule 308.2 and ordered printed pursuant to Joint Rule 401.

Presented by Representative RISEMAN of Harrison.
Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 35-A MRSA §9204-A, sub-§1, as enacted by PL 2015, c. 284, §7, is amended to read:

1. Establish criteria defining unserved and underserved areas. The authority, by rule adopted pursuant to section 9205, subsection 3, shall establish criteria to define unserved and underserved areas with respect to broadband service. Criteria established by the authority to define unserved areas must include any geographic area where broadband service is not available or where the speeds available are less than 100 megabits per second for downloads and less than 100 megabits per second for uploads. Criteria established by the authority to define unserved and underserved areas must include the percentage of households with access to broadband service within a municipality or other appropriate geographic area. The authority shall use these criteria to determine those areas of the State that are unserved or underserved.

SUMMARY

This bill clarifies the meaning of "unserved area" within the State's broadband service laws by providing that the criteria established by the ConnectMaine Authority by rule to define that term must include any geographic area where broadband service is not available or where the speeds available are less than 100 megabits per second for downloads and less than 100 megabits per second for uploads.