



129th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2019

Legislative Document

No. 382

H.P. 291

House of Representatives, January 24, 2019

**An Act To Fund Services for Blind and Visually Impaired Persons
at the Maine State Library**

Reference to the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs suggested and ordered printed.

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

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Speaker GIDEON of Freeport.
Cosponsored by Senator CARSON of Cumberland.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 27 MRSA §9** is enacted to read:

3 **§9. Blind and Visually Impaired News Access Fund**

4 The Blind and Visually Impaired News Access Fund, referred to in this section as
5 "the fund," is established as a dedicated fund within the Maine State Library to be used to
6 provide access to a news service provided by a national federation for blind and visually
7 impaired persons. The fund is nonlapsing. The fund receives money transferred by the
8 Public Utilities Commission from the state universal service fund pursuant to Title 35-A,
9 section 7104, subsection 9. The Maine State Library may accept gifts or grants, including,
10 but not limited to, federal grants, for the purposes of this section. Funds transferred from
11 the state universal service fund pursuant to Title 35-A, section 7104, subsection 9 and all
12 gifts and grants and authorized appropriations must be deposited in the fund.

13 **Sec. 2. 35-A MRSA §7104, sub-§9** is enacted to read:

14 **9. Blind and Visually Impaired News Access Fund.** The commission shall
15 annually transfer \$40,000 from a state universal service fund established pursuant to this
16 section to the Blind and Visually Impaired News Access Fund established under Title 27,
17 section 9.

18 **Sec. 3. Appropriations and allocations.** The following appropriations and
19 allocations are made.

20 **LIBRARY, MAINE STATE**

21 **Blind and Visually Impaired News Access Fund N292**

22 Initiative: Allocates ongoing funds to support access to the National Federation of the
23 Blind's news network for blind and visually impaired persons.

24

25	OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS	2019-20	2020-21
26	All Other	\$40,000	\$40,000
27			
28	OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS TOTAL	\$40,000	\$40,000

29 **SUMMARY**

30 This bill establishes the Blind and Visually Impaired News Access Fund as a
31 dedicated fund within the Maine State Library to be used to provide access to the
32 National Federation of the Blind's news network for blind and visually impaired persons.
33 This bill directs the Public Utilities Commission to transfer \$40,000 per year from the
34 state universal service fund to the Blind and Visually Impaired News Access Fund to
35 support the annual cost of providing access to the network.