

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# 118th MAINE LEGISLATURE

## FIRST REGULAR SESSION-1997

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Legislative Document

No. 643

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H.P. 472

House of Representatives, January 30, 1997

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**An Act to Permit Forest Fire Wardens and Forest Rangers to Carry  
Weapons.**

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Reference to the Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joseph W. Mayo".

JOSEPH W. MAYO, Clerk

Presented by Representative HATCH of Skowhegan.  
Cosponsored by Representatives: RINES of Wiscasset, SAMSON of Jay, Senator:  
CATHCART of Penobscot.

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

2  
4           **Sec. 1. 12 MRSA §8901, sub-§4** is enacted to read:

6           4. Weapons. A forest ranger may carry a weapon that has  
8           been sanctioned by the Department of Conservation if the ranger  
10           is certified as having completed a safety course for that  
12           weapon. The ranger is responsible for all expenses associated  
14           with safety certification and with owning and using the weapon.

16           **Sec. 2. 12 MRSA §8902**, as amended by PL 1985, c. 108, §3, is  
18           further amended to read:

20           **§8902. Forest fire wardens**

22           The director shall appoint a forest fire warden in each  
24           organized municipality. The municipal fire chief shall must be  
26           appointed as forest fire warden if practicable and no other  
28           person may be appointed without the approval of the municipal  
30           officers. All appointed forest fire wardens shall serve at the  
          pleasure of the director and shall be sworn to the faithful  
          discharge of these duties and a certificate thereof shall must be  
          returned to the bureau. Whoever has been notified of this  
          appointment shall file with the director his an acceptance or  
          rejection within 10 days. The appointed forest fire warden may  
          appoint one or more deputy forest fire wardens subject to  
          approval of the municipal officers. A deputy forest fire warden  
          may act for the forest fire warden in the absence of the  
          appointed forest fire warden, but no compensation in addition to  
          that provided in this section may be made.

32           The State shall pay the appointed forest fire warden an  
34           annual fee of \$100. This payment shall must be made contingent  
36           upon attendance at forest fire training schools, preparation of  
38           an annual forest fire plan for his the town for which the warden  
40           works and such reports as the director may require. This fee in  
          no way limits payment to the warden from his the town. His The  
          warden's services for work on actual forest fires, as well as  
          that of deputy forest fire wardens, shall must be paid by the  
          town and at a rate determined by the town.

42           The forest fire warden or deputy warden may carry a weapon  
44           that has been sanctioned by the Department of Conservation if the  
46           warden or deputy warden is certified as having completed a safety  
          course for that weapon. The warden or deputy warden is  
          responsible for all expenses associated with safety certification  
          and with owning and using the weapon.

48           **Sec. 3. 12 MRSA §8903**, as enacted by PL 1979, c. 545, §3, is  
50           further amended to read:

2 §8903. General deputy wardens

4 The director may appoint general deputy wardens as an  
6 adjunct to the personnel regularly employed in the forest fire  
8 control program. They shall aid in forest fire prevention and  
10 shall take immediate action to control any unauthorized forest  
12 fires, employ assistance when required and notify the nearest  
14 forest ranger or town forest fire warden with dispatch. Such  
16 general deputy wardens and those they employ may receive the  
18 prevailing local fire fighting wages for the period so engaged.

12  
14 A general deputy warden may carry a weapon that has been  
16 sanctioned by the Department of Conservation if the general  
18 deputy warden is certified as having completed a safety course  
for that weapon. The general deputy warden is responsible for  
all expenses associated with safety certification and with owning  
and using the weapon.

20

22 SUMMARY

22 This bill permits forest fire wardens, forest rangers,  
24 deputy wardens and general deputy wardens to carry weapons that  
26 have been sanctioned by the Department of Conservation. The bill  
28 requires forest fire wardens and forest rangers to attend a  
safety course prior to carrying the weapon and to pay all  
expenses associated with carrying the weapon.