

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2025

Legislative Document

No. 311

H.P. 211

House of Representatives, February 3, 2025

**An Act to Improve Efficiency of Meat and Poultry Processing
Facilities by Requiring the Designation of State Inspectors as
Essential**

(EMERGENCY)

Received by the Clerk of the House on January 30, 2025. Referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry pursuant to Joint Rule 308.2 and ordered printed pursuant to Joint Rule 401.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "R B. Hunt".

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative FOSTER of Dexter.
Cosponsored by Senator GUERIN of Penobscot and
Representatives: ALBERT of Madawaska, CRAY of Palmyra, DANA of the Passamaquoddy
Tribe, GUERRETTE of Caribou, HALL of Wilton, QUINT of Hodgdon, SHAGOURY of
Hallowell, Senator: HICKMAN of Kennebec.

1 **Emergency preamble.** Whereas, acts and resolves of the Legislature do not
2 become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

3 **Whereas,** Maine's meat and poultry inspection program exists to protect the health
4 and welfare of consumers by ensuring that livestock and poultry used in the production of
5 meat and poultry products, respectively, are humanely handled and disease-free and the
6 resulting products are wholesome, not adulterated and correctly labeled and packaged; and

7 **Whereas,** the Legislature finds that the services provided by the meat and poultry
8 inspection program are essential services; and

9 **Whereas,** this legislation must take effect before the expiration of the 90-day period
10 to ensure the health and welfare of Maine residents and to preserve the economic welfare
11 of the State; and

12 **Whereas,** in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within
13 the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as
14 immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now,
15 therefore,

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

17 **Sec. 1. 22 MRSA §2512, sub-§1, ¶F,** as enacted by PL 1999, c. 777, §1, is
18 amended to read:

19 F. Establish standards relating to sanitation for all establishments required to have
20 inspection under paragraph A or persons required to be licensed under section 2514;
21 ~~and~~

22 **Sec. 2. 22 MRSA §2512, sub-§1, ¶G,** as enacted by PL 1999, c. 777, §1, is
23 amended to read:

24 G. Require that persons licensed under this chapter keep records; fully and correctly
25 disclose all transactions involved in their business; and afford to the commissioner and
26 the commissioner's representatives, including representatives of other governmental
27 agencies designated by the commissioner, access to their places of business and
28 opportunity, at all reasonable times, to examine the facilities, inventory and records, to
29 copy the records and to take reasonable samples of the inventory upon the payment of
30 the fair market value-; and

31 **Sec. 3. 22 MRSA §2512, sub-§1, ¶H** is enacted to read:

32 H. Designate state inspectors essential to the operations of official establishments and
33 require inspection to continue at an official establishment on state holidays or beyond
34 the regular work shift or workweek for state inspectors as long as the necessary
35 inspectors are available and the official establishment pays all overtime salaries for
36 inspections necessary to keep the plant open and other expenses caused by the overtime
37 employment.

38 **Sec. 4. 22 MRSA §2512, sub-§2, ¶E,** as amended by PL 2021, c. 64, §14, is
39 repealed.

40 **Emergency clause.** In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this legislation
41 takes effect when approved.

1 **SUMMARY**

2 This bill requires the Commissioner of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry to
3 designate state inspectors authorized to perform inspection functions under the laws
4 governing meat and poultry inspections essential to the operations of establishments at
5 which inspection of the slaughter of livestock or poultry or the preparation of livestock
6 products or poultry products occurs.

7 The bill also directs the commissioner to require, rather than authorize as in current
8 law, inspection to continue at such an establishment on state holidays or beyond the regular
9 work shift or workweek for state inspectors as long as the necessary inspectors are available
10 and the establishment pays all overtime salaries for inspections necessary to keep the plant
11 open and other expenses caused by the overtime employment.