

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# 132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

## FIRST SPECIAL SESSION-2025

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Legislative Document

No. 1371

H.P. 894

House of Representatives, April 1, 2025

### **An Act to Tie Judicial Salaries to the Average Judicial Salaries of Other New England States**

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Received by the Clerk of the House on March 28, 2025. Referred to the Committee on  
Judiciary pursuant to Joint Rule 308.2 and ordered printed pursuant to Joint Rule 401.

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

ROBERT B. HUNT  
Clerk

Presented by Representative FREDETTE of Newport.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 3 MRSA §2-B, sub-§2**, as amended by PL 2019, c. 384, §1, is further  
3 amended to read:

4 **2. Duties of commission; biennial report.** No later than January 15th of every even-  
5 numbered year the commission shall submit to the Legislature and the joint standing  
6 committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over state and local government matters a  
7 final report of the commission. In the last year of each gubernatorial term of office, the  
8 report must contain a recommendation for compensation of the Governor as established in  
9 Title 2, section 1. A report under this subsection must contain:

10 A. A description of the commission's activities;

11 B. The recommendations of the commission:

12 (1-A) For the report required in the last year of a gubernatorial term, for  
13 compensation for the Governor, including all payments for salaries, meals,  
14 housing, travel, mileage, constituent services and all other expenses and  
15 allowances; and

16 ~~(1-B) For compensation for justices and judges, including all payments for~~  
17 ~~salaries, meals, housing, travel, mileage and all other expenses and allowances, and~~  
18 ~~for additional services by any justice or judge. Nothing in this subparagraph~~  
19 ~~prevents the judicial branch from making recommendations to the Governor or~~  
20 ~~Legislature for compensation for justices and judges, including, but not limited to,~~  
21 ~~recommendations made by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court in~~  
22 ~~preparing the budget of the judicial branch as required by Title 4, section 1; and~~

23 (1-C) For compensation of Legislators, representatives of Indian tribes, Secretary  
24 and Assistant Secretary of the Senate and Clerk and Assistant Clerk of the House  
25 of Representatives, including all payments for salaries, meals, housing, travel,  
26 mileage, constituent services and all other expenses and allowances, and for  
27 additional services by the President of the Senate, Speaker of the House of  
28 Representatives and members of legislative leadership;

29 C. The reasons for its recommendations;

30 D. Drafts of any legislation required to implement its recommendations; and

31 E. Any other material and recommendations that commission members may wish to  
32 submit.

33 Before reporting as required in this subsection and subsequent to giving public notice, the  
34 commission shall hold a public hearing on the report. Subsequent to reporting, the  
35 commission shall meet, if requested, with the Governor, the Legislative Council and  
36 legislative committees to discuss the report.

37 The joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over state and local  
38 government matters may introduce a bill based upon the final report of the commission.

39 **Sec. 2. 3 MRSA §2-B, sub-§6** is enacted to read:

40 **6. Review of judicial compensation; annual report.** In consultation with the  
41 Commissioner of Administrative and Financial Services, the commission shall calculate

1 the average salary on June 30th of each year across the other New England states for the  
2 chief justices of each state's court of final appeal; the associate justices of each state's court  
3 of final appeal; and the judges of each state's statewide trial court of general jurisdiction.  
4 For the purposes of this section, "the other New England states" include the states of  
5 Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont. No later than  
6 December 1st of each year, the commission shall submit a report to the Chief Justice of the  
7 Supreme Judicial Court and to the joint standing committees of the Legislature having  
8 jurisdiction over judiciary matters and appropriations and financial affairs detailing the  
9 average salaries calculated as required by this subsection. The joint standing committee of  
10 the Legislature having jurisdiction over appropriations and financial affairs shall, if  
11 necessary, report out a bill based upon the report proposing that, effective at the beginning  
12 of the fiscal year following the date of the report:

13 A. The salary of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court is greater than or equal  
14 to 80% of the average salary set forth in the report for the chief justices of each state's  
15 court of final appeal in the other New England states;

16 B. The salaries of the Associate Justices of the Supreme Judicial Court are greater than  
17 or equal to 80% of the average salary set forth in the report for the associate justices of  
18 each state's court of final appeal in the other New England states; and

19 C. The salaries of the Justices of the Superior Court and the Judges of the District Court  
20 are greater than or equal to 80% of the average salary set forth in the report for the  
21 judges on each state's statewide trial court of general jurisdiction in the other New  
22 England states.

23 Nothing in this subsection prevents the judicial branch from making recommendations to  
24 the Governor or Legislature for compensation for justices and judges, including, but not  
25 limited to, recommendations made by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court in  
26 preparing the budget of the judicial branch as required by Title 4, section 1. In making  
27 such recommendations, the Chief Justice shall indicate whether any recommended salary  
28 adjustments for justices or judges are less than, the same as or greater than the salaries  
29 calculated in accordance with paragraphs A to C.

## 30 **SUMMARY**

31 This bill requires the State Compensation Commission to submit a report by December  
32 1st of every year to the Chief Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court and to the joint standing  
33 committees of the Legislature having jurisdiction over judiciary matters and appropriations  
34 and financial affairs detailing the average salaries as of June 30th of the prior year of  
35 justices and judges in the other New England states. The joint standing committee of the  
36 Legislature having jurisdiction over appropriations and financial affairs is required to, if  
37 necessary, report out a bill based upon the report proposing that, effective at the beginning  
38 of the fiscal year following the date of the report the salaries of the Chief Justice of the  
39 Supreme Judicial Court, the Associate Justices of the Supreme Judicial Court, the Justices  
40 of the Superior Court and the Judges of the District Court are greater than or equal to 80%  
41 of the average salaries detailed in the report for the analogous categories of justices and  
42 judges in the other New England states.