

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST SPECIAL SESSION-2025

Legislative Document

No. 1737

S.P. 683

In Senate, April 22, 2025

An Act to Ensure the Future of Maine's Sporting Camp Heritage

Reference to the Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D M Grant", is positioned above the printed name of the Secretary of the Senate.

DAREK M. GRANT
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator STEWART of Aroostook.

Cosponsored by Senators: BALDACCI of Penobscot, FARRIN of Somerset, HICKMAN of Kennebec, Representative: CARUSO of Caratunk.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 12 MRSA §11154, sub-§14, ¶A**, as enacted by PL 2013, c. 538, §24, is
3 amended to read:

4 A. For the purposes of this subsection, "hunting outfitter" means a person who operates
5 a ~~sporting camp as defined under Title 22, section 2491, subsection 11 that is licensed~~
6 ~~under Title 22, chapter 562 and who provides package deals that include food, lodging~~
7 ~~and the services of a guide licensed under chapter 927 for the purpose of hunting~~
8 commercial sporting camp as defined under Title 22, section 2491, subsection 2-C that
9 is licensed under Title 22, chapter 562 and who provides the services of a guide
10 licensed under chapter 927 for the purpose of hunting.

11 **Sec. 2. 22 MRSA §2491, sub-§2-C** is enacted to read:

12 **2-C. Commercial sporting camp.** "Commercial sporting camp" means a building or
13 group of buildings devoted primarily to the offering of lodging, meals, equipment and
14 professional guide services for a fee to persons engaged in hunting, fishing or
15 snowmobiling if the commercial sporting camp:

16 A. Is located in an unorganized territory, abuts an unorganized territory in the State or
17 is in a municipality or other organized territory of less than 1,500 residents;

18 B. Has a caretaker present on site or nearby;

19 C. Does not operate primarily to serve day visitors;

20 D. Is not a hotel, motel, bed and breakfast, campground, children's camp or educational
21 camp or a housekeeping cabin that is not qualified to serve meals;

22 E. Is open to the public and is not restricted to members only;

23 F. Is not organized as a nonprofit organization;

24 G. Is authorized to collect sales tax pursuant to Title 36; and

25 H. Does not primarily solicit reservations on electronic platforms for short-term rentals.

26 **Sec. 3. 22 MRSA §2492, sub-§1, ¶D-1** is enacted to read:

27 D-1. A commercial sporting camp pursuant to section 2495-A;

28 **Sec. 4. 22 MRSA §2494, first ¶**, as amended by PL 2021, c. 125, §11, is further
29 amended to read:

30 Each application for, or for renewal of, a license to operate an eating establishment,
31 lodging place, recreational camp, commercial sporting camp, youth camp, public pool,
32 public spa or campground within the meaning of this chapter must be accompanied by a
33 fee, appropriate to the size of the establishment, place, camp, pool, spa or area of the
34 licensee, determined by the department and not to exceed the fees listed below. All fees
35 collected by the department must be deposited into a special revenue account established
36 for this purpose. No such fee may be refunded. No license may be assignable or
37 transferable. The fees may not exceed:

38 **Sec. 5. 22 MRSA §2495, first ¶**, as amended by PL 2021, c. 125, §13, is further
39 amended to read:

1 The department shall, within 30 days following receipt of a complete application, issue
2 an annual license to operate any eating establishment, lodging place, recreational camp,
3 commercial sporting camp, youth camp, campground, public pool or public spa that is
4 found to comply with this chapter and the rules adopted by the department.

5 **Sec. 6. 22 MRSA §2495-A** is enacted to read:

6 **§2495-A. Commercial sporting camp license**

7 Notwithstanding any provision of this chapter to the contrary, the department shall
8 issue a license to a commercial sporting camp in accordance with the following
9 requirements.

10 **1. Other laws of State.** The department may not require as a condition of licensing
11 an applicant for a commercial sporting camp license to demonstrate compliance with any
12 other laws of the State except for compliance with the requirements of this chapter.

13 **2. Sprinkler system, plumbing and septic system requirements.** The department
14 may not require as a condition of licensing a commercial sporting camp located in an area
15 without a municipal water supply to:

16 A. Install a sprinkler system in any buildings; or

17 B. Upgrade or make changes to any plumbing or septic system as long as the current
18 plumbing and septic system is operational.

19 **3. Transfer of license.** A license issued to a commercial sporting camp transfers to
20 the new owner following the sale of the commercial sporting camp without additional
21 requirements for licensing as long as the new owner otherwise meets the requirements for
22 licensing.

23 **4. Food service.** A commercial sporting camp must qualify to serve meals to persons
24 lodging at the commercial sporting camp, and a commercial sporting camp may not be
25 prohibited from serving or catering meals to the general public if the commercial sporting
26 camp meets the requirements of a Class A restaurant.

27 **5. Additional penalty.** In addition to any penalties provided in section 2498 that the
28 department may impose, an applicant that misrepresents its qualifications for a license as a
29 commercial sporting camp under section 2491, subsection 2-C or this section commits a
30 Class E crime.

31 **Sec. 7. 22 MRSA §2498, sub-§1, ¶A**, as amended by PL 2017, c. 322, §7, is further
32 amended to read:

33 A. The department may impose penalties for violations of this chapter, or the rules
34 adopted pursuant to this chapter, on any eating establishment, lodging place,
35 recreational camp, commercial sporting camp, youth camp, public pool or public spa
36 or campground. The penalties may not be greater than \$100 for each violation. Each
37 day that the violation remains uncorrected may be counted as a separate offense.
38 Penalties may be imposed for each violation of the rules.

39 **Sec. 8. 22 MRSA §2498, sub-§1, ¶B**, as amended by PL 2017, c. 322, §7, is further
40 amended to read:

41 B. The department may direct an eating establishment, lodging place, recreational
42 camp, commercial sporting camp, youth camp, public pool or public spa or

campground to correct any violations in a manner and within a time frame that the department determines is appropriate to ensure compliance with state rules or to protect the public health. Failure to correct violations within the time frames constitutes a separate finable violation.

Sec. 9. 22 MRSA §2498, sub-§1, ¶C, as amended by PL 2021, c. 125, §14, is further amended to read:

C. The department may impose penalties up to \$5,000 on any person, corporation, firm or copartnership that operates any eating establishment, lodging place, recreational camp, commercial sporting camp, youth camp, public pool or public spa or campground without an active, valid license, as determined by the department. Each day any such person, corporation, firm or copartnership operates without an active, valid license constitutes a separate offense.

SUMMARY

This bill establishes a separate license for a commercial sporting camp that is different than the existing license for a recreational camp or sporting camp. The bill defines "commercial sporting camp." Under the provisions of the bill, the Department of Health and Human Services may not require a commercial sporting camp located in an area without a municipal water supply to install sprinkler systems or to make upgrades or improvements to existing plumbing systems or septic systems as long as those plumbing and septic systems are operational. The department may not require an applicant for a license to demonstrate compliance with any other state laws except for compliance with the licensing requirements. The bill provides that a commercial sporting camp must qualify to serve meals and may not be prohibited from serving or catering meals to the general public if the camp meets the requirements of a Class A restaurant. The bill also makes a commercial sporting camp eligible for a separate moose permit drawing.