

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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FIRST SPECIAL SESSION
NEW DRAFT OF H. P. 1135, L. D. 1606
(NEW TITLE)
(EMERGENCY)

ONE HUNDRED AND FIRST LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document

No. 1674

H. P. 1164 House of Representatives, January 13, 1964
Reported by Mrs. Smith from the Committee on Appropriations and Financial
Affairs and ordered printed under Joint Rules No. 10.
HARVEY R. PEASE, Clerk

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED
SIXTY-FOUR

**AN ACT Appropriating Funds for Grants-in-Aid for Construction of Municipal
Sewage Treatment Facilities and Relating to Issuance of Water and Sewer
System Revenue Bonds by Municipalities.**

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

Whereas, the Federal Government through P. L. 660 84th Congress has for some years made available grants-in-aid for municipal sewage treatment works construction and since 1957 the State has also had such a program; and

Whereas, at present many communities have applied for state grants; and

Whereas, since the present and future economy of such communities is involved in a clean waters program; and

Whereas, the following legislation is vitally necessary to aid the economy and health of such communities; and

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

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

Sec. 1. Water Improvement Commission; appropriation. There is appropriated from the General Fund of the State the sum of \$400,000 to be available to

the Water Improvement Commission for supplying grants-in-aid for sewage works construction as provided in the Revised Statutes of 1954, chapter 79, section 7-A. Any balance of this appropriation shall lapse June 30, 1965.

Sec. 2. Breakdown of appropriation. The breakdown of the funds appropriated is as follows:

WATER IMPROVEMENT COMMISSION	1963-64
Municipal Sewerage	
All Other	\$400,000

Sec. 3. R. S., c. 90-A, § 1, sub-§ XI, repealed and replaced. Subsection XI of section 1 of chapter 90-A of the Revised Statutes, as enacted by section 1 of chapter 405 of the public laws of 1957, is repealed and the following enacted in place thereof:

‘XI. “Revenue producing municipal facility” means a water system or a sewage disposal system.’

Sec. 4. R. S., c. 90-A, § 1, sub-§§ XII-XVIII, additional. Section 1 of chapter 90-A of the Revised Statutes, as enacted by section 1 of chapter 405 of the public laws of 1957, is amended by adding thereto 7 new subsections, to be numbered XII to XVIII, to read as follows:

‘XII. “Water system” means and includes all plants, systems, facilities or properties used or useful or having the present capacity for future use in connection with the supply or distribution of water, and any integral part thereof, including but not limited to water supply systems, water distribution systems, reservoirs, wells, intakes, mains, laterals, aqueducts, pumping stations, stand-pipes, filtration plants, purification plants, hydrants, meters, valves and all necessary appurtenances and equipment and all properties, rights, easements and franchises relating thereto and deemed necessary or convenient by the municipal officers for the operation thereof.

XIII. “Sewage” means the water-carried wastes created in and carried or to be carried away from residences, hotels, schools, hospitals, industrial establishments, commercial establishments or any other private or public building together with such surface or ground water or household and industrial wastes as may be present.

XIV. “Sewage disposal system” means and includes any plant, system, facility or property used or useful or having the present capacity for future use in connection with the collection, treatment, purification or disposal of sewage, including industrial wastes resulting from any processes of industry, manufacture, trade or business or from the development of any natural resources, or any integral part thereof, including but not limited to treatment plants, pumping stations, intercepting sewers, truck sewers, pressure lines, mains and all necessary appurtenances and equipment, and all property, rights, easements and franchises relating thereto and deemed necessary or convenient by the municipal officers for the operation thereof.

XV. “Sewers” means and includes mains, pipes and laterals for the reception

of sewage and carrying such sewage to an outfall or some part of a sewage disposal system, including pumping stations.

XVI. "Sewer system" shall include both sewers and sewage disposal systems and all property, rights, easements and franchises relating thereto.

XVII. "Improvements" means such repairs, replacements, additions, extensions and betterments of and to a water system or a sewer system as are deemed necessary by the municipal officers to place or to maintain such system in proper condition for its safe, efficient and economic operation or to meet requirements for service in areas which may be served by the municipality and for which no existing service is being rendered.

XVIII. "Cost" as applied to a revenue producing municipal facility shall include the purchase price of any such facility, the cost of construction, the cost of all labor, materials, machinery and equipment, the cost of improvements, the cost of all lands, property, rights, easements and franchises acquired, financing charges, interest prior to and during construction and, if deemed advisable by the municipal officers, for one year after completion of construction, cost of plans and specifications, surveys and estimates of cost and of revenues, cost of engineering and legal services, and all other expenses necessary or incident to determining the feasibility or practicability of such construction, administrative expense and such other expenses as may be necessary or incident to the financing herein authorized. Any obligation or expenses incurred by the municipality in connection with any of the foregoing items of cost may be regarded as a part of such cost and reimbursed to the municipality out of the proceeds of revenue bonds issued under the provisions of this chapter.'

Sec. 5. R. S., c. 90-A, §§ 15 and 16, repealed. Sections 15 and 16 of chapter 90-A of the Revised Statutes, as enacted by section 1 of chapter 405 of the public laws of 1957 and as repealed and replaced by chapter 69 of the public laws of 1963, are repealed.

Sec. 6. R. S., c. 90-A, §§ 15-A - 15-P, additional. Chapter 90-A of the Revised Statutes, as enacted by section 1 of chapter 405 of the public laws of 1957, is amended by adding thereto 16 new sections, to be numbered 15-A to 15-P, to read as follows:

'**Sec. 15-A. General grant of powers.** A municipality is hereby authorized and empowered:

I. To acquire, construct, reconstruct, improve, extend, enlarge, equip, repair, maintain and operate any revenue producing municipal facility consisting of a water system or part thereof or a sewer system or part thereof or any combination thereof within or without or partly within and partly without the corporate limits of the municipality;

II. To issue revenue bonds of the municipality as provided to pay the cost of such acquisition, construction, reconstruction, improvement, extension, enlargement or equipment;

III. To issue revenue refunding bonds of the municipality as provided to refund any revenue bonds then outstanding which shall have been issued under sections 15-A to 15-P;

IV. To combine a water system and a sewer system as a single system for the purpose of operation and financing as a single revenue producing municipal facility;

V. To fix and revise from time to time and to collect rates, fees and other charges for the use of or for the services and facilities furnished by any water or sewer system operated by the municipality;

VI. To acquire in the name of the municipality either by gift, purchase or the exercise of the right of eminent domain land or rights in land or water rights in connection therewith, and to acquire such personal property, as it may deem necessary in connection with the construction, reconstruction, improvement, extension, enlargement or operation of revenue producing municipal facilities, and to hold and dispose of all real and personal property under its control;

VII. To make and enter into all contracts and agreements necessary or incidental to the performance of its duties and the execution of its powers under sections 15-A to 15-P, including a trust agreement or trust agreements securing any revenue bonds issued hereunder, and to employ such consulting and other engineers, attorneys, accountants, construction and financial experts, superintendents, managers and such other employees and agents as deemed necessary, and to fix their compensation; provided all such expenses shall be payable solely from funds made available under said sections;

VIII. To exercise jurisdiction, control and supervision over any revenue producing municipal facility owned, operated or maintained by the municipality and to make and enforce such rules and regulations for the maintenance and operation of any such system as may, in the judgment of the municipal officers, be necessary or desirable for the efficient operation of any such system and for accomplishing the purposes of sections 15-A to 15-P;

IX. To enter on any lands, water or premises located within or without the municipality to make surveys, borings, soundings or examinations for the purposes of said sections;

X. To enter upon, use, occupy and dig up any street, alley, road, highway or other public places necessary to be entered upon, used or occupied in connection with the acquisition, construction, reconstruction, improvement, maintenance or operation of any water system or sewer system;

XI. To enter into contracts with the Government of the United States or any agency or instrumentality thereof, or with any other municipality, district, private corporation, co-partnership, association or individual providing for or relating to the revenue producing municipal facility;

XII. To accept from any authorized agency of the Federal Government loans or grants for the planning, construction or acquisition of any water system or sewer system or part thereof and to enter into agreements with such agency respecting any such loans or grants, and to receive and accept aid and contributions from any source of either money, property, labor or other things of value, to be held, used and applied only for the purposes for which such loans, grants and contributions may be made; and

XIII. To do all acts and things necessary or convenient to carry out the powers expressly granted in sections 15-A to 15-P.

Sec. 15-B. Issuance of revenue bonds.

I. The municipal officers of any municipality with a population of 2,500 or more according to the most recent Federal Census is authorized to provide by resolution, at one time or from time to time, for the issuance of revenue bonds of the municipality for the purpose of paying the cost of acquiring, constructing, reconstructing, improving, extending, enlarging or equipping any revenue producing municipal facility, provided no revenue bonds of a town shall be issued until the general purpose for which the bonds are to be issued and the maximum principal amount of such bonds to be authorized have been approved by ballot by a majority of the votes cast on the question and the number of votes cast is at least 20% of the total vote for all candidates for Governor cast in the municipality at the last gubernatorial election. The ballot submitted to the voters of a town to authorize the issuance of revenue bonds shall state the general purpose for which the proposed bonds are to be issued and the maximum principal amount of the proposed bonds authorized to be issued. The voting at meetings held in towns shall be held and conducted in accordance with sections 37 to 39, even though the town has not accepted the provisions of said section 37.

II. The bonds of each issue of revenue bonds shall be dated, shall mature at such time or times not exceeding 30 years from their date or dates, and shall bear interest at such rate or rates not exceeding 6% per year, as may be determined by the municipal officers, and may be made redeemable before maturity, at the option of the municipality, at such price or prices and under such terms and conditions as may be fixed by the municipal officers prior to the issuance of the bonds. The municipal officers shall determine the form of the bonds, including any interest coupons to be attached thereto, and the manner of execution of the bonds, and shall fix the denomination or denominations of the bonds and the place or places of payment of principal and interest, which may be at any bank or trust company within or without the State. Revenue bonds shall be executed in the name of the municipality by the manual or facsimile signature of such official or officials as may be authorized in said resolution to execute such bonds but at least one signature on each bond shall be a manual signature. Coupons, if any attached to such bonds, shall be executed with the facsimile signature of the officer or officers of the municipality, designated in said resolution. In case any officer whose signature or a facsimile of whose signature shall appear on any bonds or coupons shall cease to be such officer before the delivery of such bonds, such signature or such facsimile shall nevertheless be valid and sufficient for all purposes the same as if he had remained in office until such delivery. Notwithstanding any of the other provisions of sections 15-A to 15-P or any recitals in any bonds issued under said sections, all such bonds shall be deemed to be negotiable instruments issued under the laws of this State. The bonds may be issued in coupon or registered form or both, as the municipal officers may determine, and provision may be made for the registration of any coupon bonds as to principal alone and as to both principal and interest, and for the reconversion

into coupon bonds of any bonds registered as to both principal and interest. The municipal officers may sell such bonds in such manner, either at public or private sale, and for such price, as it may determine to be for the best interests of the municipality, but no such sale shall be made at a price so low as to require the payment of interest on the money received therefor at more than 6% per year, computed with relation to the absolute maturity or maturities of the bonds in accordance with standard tables of bond values, excluding from such computation the amount of any premium to be paid on redemption of any bonds prior to maturity. The proceeds of the bonds of each issue shall be used solely for the purpose for which such bonds shall have been authorized, and shall be disbursed in such manner and under such restrictions, if any, as the municipal officers may provide in the resolution authorizing the issuance of such bonds or in the trust agreement hereinafter mentioned securing the same. If the proceeds of such bonds, by error of estimates or otherwise, shall be less than such cost, additional bonds may in like manner be issued to provide the amount of such deficit and, unless otherwise provided in the authorizing resolution or in the trust agreement securing such bonds, shall be deemed to be of the same issue and shall be entitled to payment from the same fund without preference or priority of the bonds first issued for the same purpose, provided the aggregate principal amount of revenue bonds of a town may not exceed the amount approved by the voters as provided. The resolution providing for the issuance of revenue bonds, and any trust agreement securing such bonds, may contain such limitations upon the issuance of additional revenue bonds as the municipal officers may deem proper, and such additional bonds shall be issued under such restrictions and limitations as may be prescribed by such resolution or trust agreement. Prior to the preparation of definitive bonds, the municipal officers may, under like restrictions, issue interim receipts or temporary bonds, with or without coupons, exchangeable for definitive bonds when such bonds shall have been executed and are available for delivery. The municipal officers may provide for the replacement of any bonds which shall become mutilated or be destroyed or lost. Bonds may be issued under sections 15-A to 15-P without obtaining the consent of any commission, board, bureau or agency of the State or of the municipality, and without any other proceeding or the happening of other conditions or things than those proceedings, conditions or things which are specifically required by said sections. Revenue bonds issued under said sections shall not be deemed to constitute a debt or liability of the municipality or a pledge of the faith and credit of the municipality, but such bonds shall be payable solely from the funds provided therefor, and a statement to that effect shall be recited on the face of the bonds.

Sec. 15-C. Revenues. The municipal officers shall fix the schedule of rates, fees and other charges for the use of, and for the services furnished or to be furnished by any revenue producing municipal facility and the municipal officers may revise such schedule of rates, fees and charges from time to time. Such rates, fees and charges shall not be subject to supervision or regulation by any other commission, board, bureau or agency of the municipality or of the State and the municipality shall charge and collect the rates, fees and charges so fixed or revised. Such rates, fees and charges shall be so fixed and revised as to provide funds sufficient at all times to pay the cost of maintaining, repairing and

operating such revenue producing municipal facility or parts thereof, including reserves for such purposes, and to pay the principal of and the interest on the revenue bonds, as the same shall become due and payable, and reserves therefor. Such rates, fees and charges shall be just and equitable, and in the case of a water system or a sewer system may be based or computed either upon the quantity of water used or upon the number and size of water or sewer connections or upon the number and kind of plumbing fixtures in use in the premises connected with or upon the number or average number of persons residing or working in or otherwise connected with such premises or upon the type or character of such premises or upon any other factor affecting the use of the facilities furnished or upon any combination of the foregoing factors. Any charges for sewer services, including services to manufacturing and industrial plants, obtaining all or a part of their water supply from sources other than the water system of the municipality may be determined by gauging or metering or in any other manner approved by the municipal officers. In cases where the character of the sewage from any manufacturing or industrial plant, building or premises is such that it imposes an unreasonable burden upon the sewer system, an additional charge may be made therefor, or the municipal officers may, if they deem it advisable, compel such manufacturing or industrial plant, building or premises to treat such sewage in such manner as shall be specified by the municipal officers before discharging such sewage into any sewers owned or maintained by the municipality. Municipal officers may combine any water system or sewer system owned and operated by the municipality and may provide a single schedule of rates, fees and charges for the services and facilities furnished by such combined system. They may provide for reductions in such schedule in cases where water is furnished to premises which are not connected with the sewer system of the municipality.

Sec. 15-D. Collection of charges. Any resolution providing for the issuance of revenue bonds under sections 15-A to 15-P or the trust agreement securing such bonds may include any or all of the following provisions, and may require the municipal officers to adopt such resolutions or take such other lawful action as shall be necessary to effectuate such provisions and the municipal officers are hereby authorized to adopt such resolutions and to take such other action:

I. That the municipality may require the owner, tenant or occupant of each lot or parcel of land who is obligated to pay rates, fees or charges for the use of or for the services furnished by any water system or sewer system owned or operated by the municipality to make a reasonable deposit with the municipality in advance to insure the payment of such rates, fees or charges and to be subject to application to the payment thereof if and when delinquent.

II. That if the rates, fees or charges for the use of or for the services furnished by any water system or sewer system owned or operated by the municipality shall not be paid within 90 days after the same shall become due and payable, the municipality may at the expiration of such 90-day period disconnect the premises from the water system or otherwise suspend services, and the municipality may proceed to recover the amount of any such delinquency with interest in a civil action.

III. That if the rates, fees or charges for the use of or for the services fur-

nished by any sewer system owned or operated by the municipality by or in connection with any premises not served by a water system owned or operated by the municipality shall not be paid within 90 days after the same shall become due and payable the owner, tenant or occupant of such premises shall cease to dispose of sewage or industrial wastes originating from or on such premises by discharge thereof directly or indirectly into the sewer system of the municipality until such rates, fees or charges shall be paid; that if such owner, tenant or occupant shall not cease such disposal at the expiration of such 90-day period it shall be the duty of any public or private corporation, board, body or person supplying water to or selling water for use on such premises to cease supplying water to or selling water for use on such premises within 5 days after receipt of notice of such delinquency from the municipality; and that if such public or private corporation, board, body or person shall not, at the expiration of such 5-day period, cease supplying water to or selling water for use on such premises, then the municipality may, unless it has theretofore contracted to the contrary, shut off the supply of water to such premises.

Sec. 15-E. Application of revenues. The resolution authorizing the issuance of revenue bonds under sections 15-A to 15-P, or any trust agreement securing such bonds, may provide that all or a sufficient amount of the revenues derived from the revenue producing municipal facility of the municipality, after providing for the payment of the cost of repair, maintenance and operation and reserves therefor as may be provided in such resolution or trust agreement, shall be set aside at such regular intervals as may be provided in such resolution or trust agreement and deposited to the credit of a sinking fund for the payment of the interest on and the principal of revenue bonds issued under said sections as the same shall become due, and the redemption price or purchase price of bonds retired by call or purchase. The use and disposition of moneys to the credit of such sinking fund shall be subject to such regulations as may be provided in the resolution authorizing the issuance of the revenue bonds or in the trust agreement securing such bonds and, except as may otherwise be provided in such resolution or trust agreement, such sinking fund shall be a fund for the benefit of all bonds without distinction or priority of one over another. The municipality shall cause to be made at least once each year a comprehensive report of the operations of the revenue producing municipal facility, including all matters relating to rates, revenues, expense of repair, maintenance and operation and of renewals and replacements, principal and interest requirements and the status of all funds. Copies of such annual reports shall be filed with the clerk of the municipality and shall be open to the inspection of all interested persons.

Sec. 15-F. Pledges and covenants; trust agreement. In the discretion of the municipal officers of any municipality, each or any issue of revenue bonds may be secured by a trust agreement by and between the municipality and a corporate trustee, which may be any trust company within or without the State. The resolution authorizing the issuance of the bonds or such trust agreement may pledge the revenues to be received, but shall not convey or mortgage any revenue producing municipal facility or any part thereof, and may contain such provisions for protecting and enforcing the rights and remedies of the bondholders as may be reasonable and proper and not in violation of law, including

covenants setting forth the duties of the municipality and the municipal officers in relation to the acquisition, construction, reconstruction, improvement, repair, maintenance, operation and insurance of any such system or systems, the fixing and revising of rates, fees and charges, and the custody, safeguarding and application of all moneys, and for the employment of consulting engineers in connection with such acquisition, construction, reconstruction or operation. Such resolution or trust agreement may set forth the rights and remedies of the bondholder and of the trustee, if any, and may restrict the individual right of action by bondholders as is customary in trust agreements or trust indentures securing bonds or debentures of corporations. Such resolution or trust agreement may contain such other provisions in addition to the foregoing as the municipal officers may deem reasonable and proper for the security of the bondholders. Except as in sections 15-A to 15-P otherwise provided, the municipal officers may provide for the payment of the proceeds of the sale of the bonds and the revenues of any revenue producing municipal facility or part thereof to such officer, board or depository as it may designate for the custody thereof, and for the method of disbursement thereof, with such safeguards and restrictions as it may determine. All expenses incurred in carrying out such resolution or trust agreement may be treated as a part of the cost of operation. All pledges of revenue under sections 15-A to 15-P shall be valid and binding from the time when such pledge is made; all such revenues so pledged and thereafter received by the municipality shall immediately be subject to the lien of such pledges without any physical delivery thereof or further action under the Uniform Commercial Code or otherwise, and the lien of such pledges shall be valid and binding as against all parties having claims of any kind in tort, contract or otherwise against the municipality, irrespective of whether such parties have notice thereof.

Sec. 15-G. Sewer connections. On or after the placing in operation of a sewage disposal system the owner, tenant or occupant of each lot or parcel of land within the municipality which abuts upon a street or other public way containing a sewer which is connected with such sewage disposal system and upon which lot or parcel a building shall have been constructed for residential, commercial or industrial use, shall, as may be so required by the rules and regulations of the municipal officers or by resolution, connect such building with such sewer, and shall cease to use any other method for the disposal of sewage, sewage waste or other polluting matter. All such connections shall be made in accordance with rules and regulations which shall be adopted from time to time by the municipal officers, which rules and regulations may provide for a charge for making any such connection in such reasonable amount as the municipal officers may fix and establish.

Sec. 15-H. Trust funds. Notwithstanding any other law, all moneys received pursuant to the authority of sections 15-A to 15-P shall be deemed to be trust funds, to be held and applied solely as provided in said sections. The resolution authorizing the issuance of bonds or the trust agreement securing such bonds shall provide that any officer to whom, or bank, trust company or other fiscal agent to which, such moneys shall be paid shall act as trustee of such moneys and shall hold and apply the same for the purposes hereof, subject to such regulations as may be provided in such resolution or trust agreement or as may be required by sections 15-A to 15-P.

Sec. 15-I. Remedies. Any holder of revenue bonds issued under sections 15-A to 15-P or of any of the coupons appertaining thereto, and the trustee under any trust agreement, except to the extent the rights given may be restricted by the resolution authorizing the issuance of such bonds or such trust agreement, may, either at law or in equity, by suit, action, mandamus or other proceeding, protect and enforce any and all rights under the laws of the State or granted hereunder or under such resolution or trust agreement, and may enforce and compel the performance of all duties required by said sections or by such resolution or trust agreement to be performed by the municipality, the municipal officers, or by any officer thereof, including the fixing, charging and collecting of rates, fees and charges for the use of or for the services and facilities furnished by the revenue producing municipal facility.

Sec. 15-J. Revenue refunding bonds. The municipal officers are authorized to provide by resolution for the issuance of revenue refunding bonds of the municipality for the purpose of refunding any revenue bonds then outstanding which shall have been issued under sections 15-A to 15-P, including the payment of any redemption premium thereon and any interest accrued or to accrue to the date of redemption of such bonds, and, if deemed advisable by the municipal officers, for the additional purpose of constructing improvements, extensions or enlargements of the revenue producing municipal facility in connection with which the bonds to be refunded shall have been issued. The municipal officers are further authorized to provide by resolution for the issuance of revenue bonds of the municipality for the combined purpose of refunding any revenue bonds or revenue refunding bonds then outstanding which shall have been issued under said sections 15-A to 15-P, including the payment of any redemption premium thereon and any interest accrued or to accrue to the date of redemption of such bonds, and paying all or any part of the cost of acquiring or constructing any additional revenue producing municipal facility or part thereof, or any improvements, extensions or enlargements of any revenue producing municipal facility. The issuance of such bonds, the maturities and other details thereof, the rights and remedies of the holders thereof, and the rights, powers, privileges, duties and obligations of the municipality and the municipal officers with respect to the same, shall be governed by the foregoing provisions of sections 15-A to 15-I insofar as the same may be applicable.

Sec. 15-K. Authorizing resolution. Notwithstanding any other law, either general, special or local, or any charter or charter amendment theretofore adopted by such municipality, or any ordinance, resolution, bylaw, rule or regulation of such municipality, it shall not be necessary to publish any resolution adopted under sections 15-A to 15-P, either before or after its final passage.

Sec. 15-L. Exemption from taxation. As proper revenue producing municipal facilities as defined are essential for the health of the inhabitants of the municipalities, and as the exercise of the powers conferred to effect such purposes constitute the performance of essential municipal functions, and as municipal facilities acquired or constructed under sections 15-A to 15-P constitute public property and are used for municipal purposes, no municipality shall be required to pay any taxes or assessments upon any such system or any part thereof, whether located within or without the corporate limits of the municipality, or

upon the income therefrom, and any bonds issued under sections 15-A to 15-P, and their transfer and the income therefrom, including any profit made on the sale thereof, shall at all times be free from taxation within the State.

Sec. 15-M. Alternative method. Sections 15-A to 15-L shall be deemed to provide an additional and alternative method for the doing of the things authorized and shall be regarded as supplemental and additional to powers conferred by other laws, and shall not be regarded as in derogation of or as repealing any powers now existing under any other law, either general, special or local; provided the issuance of revenue bonds or revenue refunding bonds under said sections need not comply with the requirements of any other general or special law applicable to the issuance of bonds.

Sec. 15-N. Liberal construction. Sections 15-A to 15-P, being necessary for the welfare of the municipalities and their inhabitants, shall be liberally construed to effect the purposes thereof.

Sec. 15-O. Provisions of act severable. The provisions of sections 15-A to 15-P are severable, and if any provisions of said sections shall be held unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, the decision of such court shall not affect or impair any of the remaining provisions or sections.

Sec. 15-P. Inconsistent laws inapplicable. All other general or special laws, or parts thereof, inconsistent with sections 15-A to 15-M are declared to be inapplicable to the provisions of said sections.'

Emergency clause. In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this act shall take effect when approved.