

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document

No. 1289

H. P. 975

House of Representatives, March 7, 1973

On Motion of Mr. Carrier of Westbrook, referred to the Committee on Judiciary. Sent up for concurrence and ordered printed.

E. LOUISE LINCOLN, Clerk

Presented by Mr. Murray of Bangor.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED
SEVENTY-THREE

AN ACT to Protect Families with Children and Recipients of Certain Benefits Against Discrimination in Rental Housing.

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

Sec. 1. R. S., T. 5, § 4582, amended. Section 4582 of Title 5 of the Revised Statutes, as enacted by section 1 of chapter 501 and as amended by section 20 of chapter 622, both of the public laws of 1971, is further amended by adding at the end the following new paragraphs:

For any person to refuse to rent residential property to families having children, or single parent families, or to restrict the rental of a residential unit to a number of related persons less than can comfortably and safely occupy such unit because of the status of such families or persons as having children or being a single parent family;

For any person furnishing rental premises to refuse to rent or impose different terms of tenancy to any individual who is a recipient of federal, state or local public assistance, including medical assistance and housing subsidies because of such individual's status as such a recipient.

Sec. 2. R. S., T. 5, § 4583, amended. Section 4583 of Title 5 of the Revised Statutes, as enacted by section 1 of chapter 501 of the public laws of 1971, is amended to read as follows:

§ 4583. Application

Nothing in this Act shall be construed in any manner to prohibit or limit the exercise of the privilege of every person and the agent of any person having the right to sell, rent, lease or manage a housing accommodation to set up and enforce specifications in the selling, renting, leasing or letting thereof

or in the furnishings of facilities or services in connection therewith which are not based on the race, color, religion or country of ancestral origin, **family size or composition, or the receipt of public assistance payments** of any prospective or actual purchaser, lessee, tenant or occupant thereof. Nothing in this Act contained shall be construed in any manner to prohibit or limit the exercise of the privilege of every person and the agent of any person making loans for or offering financial assistance in the acquisition, construction, rehabilitation, repair or maintenance of housing accommodations, to set standards and preferences, terms, conditions, limitations or specifications for the granting of such loans or financial assistance which are not based on the race, color, religion or country of origin, **family size or composition, or the receipt of public assistance payments** of the applicant for such loan or financial assistance or, of any existing or prospective owner, lessee, tenant or occupant of such housing accommodation.

STATEMENT OF FACT

One of the largest housing problems in the State of Maine relates to discrimination by potential landlords against families receiving public assistance. The problem manifests itself in the form of the refusal of landlords to rent to such families. Such refusals to rent are discriminatory because they are made not with reference to the tenant's personal responsibility and integrity; but only on the general misapprehension that a family on public assistance is automatically an undesirable tenant. The purpose of this bill is to enable those citizens of Maine most in need of housing to have a fair and equal chance at obtaining it.