MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document **No. 538**

H. P. 431 House of Representatives, February 17, 1977

On motion of Mr. Hughes of Auburn, referred to Committee on Judiciary. Sent up for concurrence and ordered printed.

EDWIN H. PERT, Clerk

Presented by Mrs. Kany of Waterville.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED SEVENTY-SEVEN

AN ACT to Establish More Convenient Hours to Permit Easier Access to Small Claims Court.

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

4 MRSA § 181 is enacted to read:

§ 181. Hours for small claims

The District Court in each district shall be available for the hearing of small claims under Title 14, chapter 737 either one evening per month from the hours of 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. or on one Saturday per month from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. In each district there shall be an office of the clerk of the District Court available during the same hours to receive notice of any small claim from any person.

STATEMENT OF FACT

The intent of this bill is to permit working people easier access to the small claims court by providing that the small claims court shall be available during either one evening per month or on one Saturday per month. Currently most small claims are heard during hours which are inconvenient for working people. Small claims courts are supposed to permit citizens to settle claims of less than $800 with a minimum of technicalities. It is imperative, therefore, that small claims courts be open when working people can most easily use them.

This bill does not require a larger number of hours for the hearing of small claims; it merely provides that the existing number of hours be at a more convenient time.