

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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FIRST REGULAR SESSION

ONE HUNDRED AND NINTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document

No. 1114

S. P. 367

In Senate, March 12, 1979

Referred to the Committee on Taxation. Sent down for concurrence and ordered printed.

Presented by Senator Silverman of Washington.

MAY M. ROSS, Secretary of the Senate

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED
SEVENTY-NINE

AN ACT to Increase State Aid to Towns for Fighting Forest Fires.

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

Sec. 1. 25 MRSA § 2505, as amended by PL 1971, c. 97, § 12 is further amended to read:

§ 2505. Payment of costs; state reimbursement

Municipalities, within the State, outside the limits of the Maine Forestry District, shall be holden to pay for controlling and extinguishing forest fires up to ~~1%~~ $\frac{1}{2}\%$ of their state valuation and the State shall reimburse them $\frac{1}{2}$ the above costs incurred by the forest fire warden in charge therein. Reimbursement will not be allowed for use or loss of municipally owned equipment within the town in which the fire occurred. A town going to the aid of another, even to protect itself, when requested by the state forest ranger in charge, shall be paid by the town aided if the total suppression cost of the town is not over ~~1%~~ $\frac{1}{2}\%$ of its state valuation.

Sec. 2. 25 MRSA § 2506, as amended by PL 1971, c. 97, § 13 is further amended to read:

§ 2506. Payment of costs beyond $\frac{1}{2}\%$ of state valuation

All forest fire suppression costs in municipalities within the State, outside the limits of the Maine Forestry District, in an amount greater than ~~1%~~ $\frac{1}{2}\%$ of the state valuation of the municipality in which the fire occurred shall be paid by the State. Any municipality in order to pay labor quickly may pay beyond ~~1%~~ $\frac{1}{2}\%$ of its state valuation and submit for full state reimbursement or forward the unpaid bills, approved by the state forest ranger in charge, for payment.

STATEMENT OF FACT

The state valuation of smaller communities has become so large that under present law a major forest fire could use up a large portion of the community's budget, afflicting it with financial hardship. This bill lowers substantially the contribution for fighting forest fires a local community would have to make.