

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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(Governor's Bill)  
FIRST REGULAR SESSION

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ONE HUNDRED AND NINTH LEGISLATURE

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**Legislative Document**

**No. 1605**

H. P. 1380

House of Representatives, May 9, 1979

The Committee on Labor, suggested and ordered printed.

EDWIN H. PERT, Clerk

Presented by Mr. Wyman of Pittsfield.

Cosponsors: Mr. Tuttle of Sanford and Mr. Birt of East Millinocket.

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STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED  
SEVENTY-NINE

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**AN ACT to Ensure the Prompt Decision of Cases Before the Workers'  
Compensation Commission.**

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

**Sec. 1. 4 MRSA § 9-B**, as enacted by PL 1977, c. 638, is amended by inserting at the end the following new sentence:

**The committee established pursuant to this section shall also have authority to hear claims of workers' compensation commissioners as to just cause for failing to meet the requirements to Title 39, section 99-B.**

**Sec. 2. 39 MRSA § 99-B** is enacted to read:

**§ 99-B. Prompt decision required**

**The commissioner who hears a case pursuant to section 99 shall render his decision no later than 30 days after the case has been submitted to him for decision. Whenever the commissioner exceeds the limit contained in this section, compensation to him shall be forfeited effective the day after the 30th day and for each day until the decision has been issued; provided that this provision shall not apply in any case for which the commissioner has shown just cause, as determined by the committee on judicial responsibility and disability established pursuant to Title 4, section 9-B, for delay beyond 30 days.**

**Sec. 3. Claims affected.** Section 2 shall be effective with regard to claims submitted for decision on or after January 1, 1980. Claims submitted prior to January 1, 1980, shall be decided no later than February 1, 1980.

#### STATEMENT OF FACT

This bill would require that a workers' compensation commissioner render a decision on a case before him within 30 days after the evidence has been submitted. His compensation would cease and be forfeited at any time he failed to adhere to the 30-day limit without good cause. Section 3 provides that the provisions of section 2 apply to claims submitted for decision on or after January 1, 1980. Claims submitted prior to that date must also be decided by February 1980.

Sections 1 and 2 make it possible for the committee on judicial responsibility and disability to excuse a commissioner's failure to comply with the time limit if he can show good cause for the failure.

The purpose of this bill is to speed up the processing of claims under the workers' compensation laws. This will help both employees who are without benefits during the pendency of the original petition and employers whose funds are tied up during the proceeding as well.

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