

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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FIRST REGULAR SESSION

ONE HUNDRED AND TENTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document

No. 322

H. P. 283

House of Representatives, January 20, 1981

On Motion of Representative Cox of Brewer referred to the Committee on Judiciary. Sent up for concurrence and ordered printed.

EDWIN H. PERT, Clerk

Presented by Representative Joyce of Portland.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-ONE

AN ACT to Require Reasonable Notice of Rent Increase for Residential Dwelling Units.

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

14 MRSA § 6024 is enacted to read:

§ 6024. Notice of rent increase

Rent charged for residential estates at will or residential leaseholds may be increased by the lessor only after 60 days' notice to the tenant. A written or oral waiver of this requirement is against public policy and is null and void. Any person in violation of this section is liable for the return of any sums unlawfully obtained from the lessee, with interest, and reasonable attorney's fees and costs.

STATEMENT OF FACT

There is currently no statutory requirement for reasonable notice before a landlord raises the rent charged to a tenant in a residential dwelling. The courts have established, by common law, a reasonable notice standard of one month.

This bill will require landlords to give a 60 days' written notice before raising the rent. Many elderly, disabled and low income people living on fixed incomes need this protection as rents continue to increase uncontrollably and indiscriminately. At the very least, those people should have reasonable prior notice to ensure ample opportunity to prepare for increases or to seek alternative housing.