

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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FIRST REGULAR SESSION

ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTEENTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document

No. 916

S.P. 314

In Senate, March 25, 1987

Reference to the Committee on Labor suggested and ordered printed.

JOY J. O'BRIEN, Secretary of the Senate  
Presented by Senator EMERSON of Penobscot.  
Cosponsored by Senator TWITCHELL of Oxford.

STATE OF MAINE

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

1 AN ACT to Extend the Freeze on Maximum Weekly  
2 Benefits Under the Workers'  
3 Compensation Act.  
4

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

7 Sec. 1. 39 MRSA §53-A, as enacted by PL 1985, c.  
8 372; Pt. A, §15, is amended to read:

9 §53-A. Maximum benefit levels

10 The maximum weekly benefit payable under section  
11 54-A, 55-A or 58-A is \$447.92. Beginning on July 1,  
12 ~~1988~~ 1991, this maximum benefit level shall be ad-  
13 justed annually so that it continues to bear the same  
14 percentage relationship to the state average weekly  
15 wage, as computed by the Maine Unemployment Insurance  
16 Commission, as it did on July 1, ~~1987~~ 1990.

1           Sec. 2. Application. This Act shall apply only  
2 as to injuries occurring on or after June 30, 1985.

3   STATEMENT OF FACT

4           In 1985, the Maine legislature froze maximum ben-  
5 efit levels at \$447.92 a week. This was done in rec-  
6 ognition of the fact that, at a level of 166% of the  
7 State's average weekly wage, the State's maximum was  
8 way out of line with other states. As was true then,  
9 the vast majority of states have maximums of no  
10 greater than 100% of their average weekly wage.

11          The 1985 freeze is due to expire next year. This  
12 means that the State's maximum will continue to auto-  
13 matically increase each year after that. The State  
14 will continue to have one of the highest maximum ben-  
15 efit levels in the nation.

16          This bill imposes an additional 3-year freeze.  
17 This will result in maximum benefits elsewhere begin-  
18 ning to "catch up" with the State's. At the end of  
19 that period, it is expected that the State's maximum  
20 will be more comparable with other states.

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