

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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114th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION - 1989

Legislative Document

No. 135

H.P. 100

House of Representatives, February 13, 1989

Submitted by the Department of Conservation pursuant to Joint Rule 24.
Reference to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources suggested and
ordered printed.

Ed Pert

EDWIN H. PERT, Clerk

Presented by Representative MICHAUD of East Millinocket.

Cosponsored by Representative CHONKO of Topsham, Senator ESTY of
Cumberland and Representative BUTLAND of Cumberland.

STATE OF MAINE

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

**An Act to Expand the Eligibility for Participation in the Maine
Conservation Corps to Include More Low-income Maine People.**

(EMERGENCY)



1 **Emergency preamble.** Whereas, Acts of the Legislature do not
2 become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted
3 as emergencies; and

5 Whereas, the Maine Conservation Corps, as established by
6 the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 12, section 5151, performs the
7 majority of its work during the summer months; and

9 Whereas, the Maine Job Training offices recruit Maine
10 Conservation Corps members from April until June; and

11 Whereas, unless this legislation is enacted as an emergency
12 measure, it will not take effect in time to benefit the 1989
13 Maine Conservation Corps summer program; and

14 Whereas, this will result in cancelled and understaffed
15 conservation projects, reduced efficiency and reduced service to
16 the State's low-income families and conservation agencies; and

17 Whereas, in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts
18 create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of
19 Maine and require the following legislation as immediately
20 necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and
21 safety; now, therefore,

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

23 **12 MRSA §5152**, as amended by PL 1985, c. 709, §2, is
24 further amended to read:

25 **§5152. Participants**

26 Participants in the Maine Conservation Corps shall be
27 economically disadvantaged. Individuals shall be eligible to
28 participate if their family income is 150% or less of the nonfarm
29 income official poverty line as defined by the Federal Office of
30 Management and Budget and revised annually in accordance with the
31 United States Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981, Section
32 673, Subsection 2. Priority shall be given to those who are
33 economically disadvantaged as defined by the United States Job
34 Training Partnership Act, subchapter II, Public Law 97-300. No
35 one person may be eligible if he that person has left employment
36 or school for the purpose of participating in this program.
37 Corps members may be jointly enrolled in any state or local job
38 training program or human resource development program.

39 **Emergency clause.** In view of the emergency cited in the
40 preamble, this Act shall take effect when approved.

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STATEMENT OF FACT

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7 In 1985, the Maine Conservation Corps law was changed to
limit participation to the economically disadvantaged, as defined
9 by the federal Jobs Training Partnership Act, rather than any
unemployed person. At that time, the unemployment rate was 6.1%
11 and the corps was already limiting participation to people
eligible under the Job Training Partnership Act.

13

15 In 1988, the unemployment rate was approximately 3.8%, 8
conservation projects were cancelled due to a failure to recruit
the minimum number of corps members required, and overall, the
17 projects which did operate in the summer and fall of 1988 were
approximately 32% below the optimal staffing levels. The results
19 were that a number of worthwhile conservation projects were not
completed, eligible people were not served when projects they
21 were recruited for were cancelled due to the lack of a minimal
size team and fewer people than possible were served due to the
reduced efficiency of the smaller teams.

23

25 This bill will allow members of the "working poor" families
in this State to participate in the Maine Conservation Corps, but
27 would still give priority to those who are economically
disadvantaged as defined by the Job Training Partnership Act.
The change will allow the corps to serve the maximum number of
29 people with low incomes while allowing the program to optimize
its efficiency in completing conservation projects of significant
31 benefit to the public.