

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# 114th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION - 1989

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Legislative Document

No. 714

H.P. 529

House of Representatives, March 8, 1989

Reference to the Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ed Pert".

EDWIN H. PERT, Clerk

Presented by Representative PRIEST of Brunswick.

Cosponsored by Representative CARROLL of Gray, Representative FOSTER of Ellsworth and Senator BRANNIGAN of Cumberland.

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STATE OF MAINE

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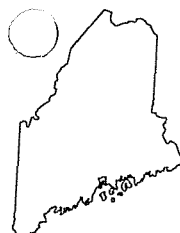
IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD  
NINETEEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-NINE

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**An Act to Make Supplemental Appropriations and Allocations for the Expenditures of State Government Necessary to the Proper Operations of State of Maine's Workers' Compensation Commission for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 1990, and June 30, 1991.**

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(EMERGENCY)



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

5           Whereas, the increased complexity and greater numbers of  
7           claims for workers' compensation benefits, together with the  
          larger regulatory role assigned to the Workers' Compensation  
9           Commission in recent legislation, threaten the commission's  
          ability to meet basic statutory deadlines; and

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

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

19          Supplemental appropriations from the General Fund. There is  
21          appropriated from the General Fund to the Workers' Compensation  
          Commission the following:

|   | 1989-90         | 1990-91         |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|
| <b>WORKERS' COMPENSATION COMMISSION</b> |                 |                 |
| <b>Workers' Compensation Commission</b> |                 |                 |
| 29           Positions                  | (2)             | (2)             |
| Personal Services                       | \$37,234        | \$39,669        |
| 31           All Other                  | 3,300           | 3,200           |
| Capital Expenditures                    | 3,850           |                 |
| 33           TOTAL                      | <u>\$44,384</u> | <u>\$42,869</u> |

35           Provides funds for 2 Clerk  
37           Typist II positions for the  
39           Portland and Lewiston regional  
41           offices due to a serious  
          shortage of clerical  
43           assistance. This shortage of  
          manpower has created stress  
45           over the workload which has  
          become unreasonable. These  
47           positions have also been  
          requested in the emergency  
          appropriations bill for fiscal  
49           year 1988-89.

|   |                      |                 |                 |
|---|----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1 | Positions            | (1)             | (1)             |
|   | Personal Services    | \$25,112        | \$26,788        |
| 3 | All Other            | 11,650          | 11,350          |
|   | Capital Expenditures | 3,891           |                 |
| 5 |                      |                 |                 |
|   | TOTAL                | <u>\$40,653</u> | <u>\$38,138</u> |

7  
9 Provides funds for a Product Support Specialist. Position will provide computer support and ongoing word processing training statewide. Please note that this position has also been requested in the emergency appropriations bill for fiscal year 1988-89.

|    |                      |                 |                 |
|----|----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 19 | Positions            | (1)             | (1)             |
|    | Personal Services    | \$18,238        | \$19,480        |
| 21 | All Other            | 1,650           | 1,600           |
|    | Capital Expenditures | 2,018           |                 |
| 23 |                      |                 |                 |
|    | TOTAL                | <u>\$21,906</u> | <u>\$21,080</u> |

25  
27 Provides funds for one Clerk II position to speed up the assignment of notices of controversy.

|    |                      |                 |                 |
|----|----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 31 | Positions            | (1)             | (1)             |
| 33 | Personal Services    | \$21,271        | \$22,436        |
|    | All Other            | 4,925           | 4,825           |
| 35 | Capital Expenditures | 2,210           |                 |
| 37 |                      |                 |                 |
|    | TOTAL                | <u>\$28,406</u> | <u>\$27,261</u> |

39 Provides funds for an Accountant I in the Administrative Services Unit in order to keep up with daily work.

|   |                      |                 |                  |
|---|----------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| 1 | All Other            | \$4,000         | \$17,000         |
| 3 | Capital Expenditures | 38,500          | 162,100          |
| 5 | TOTAL                | <u>\$42,500</u> | <u>\$179,100</u> |

6 Provides funds for additional  
7 computer hardware and related  
8 maintenance in order to  
9 enhance and improve the  
10 computer system.

|    |   |                  |                  |
|----|---|------------------|------------------|
| 11 | <b>WORKERS' COMPENSATION COMMISSION</b> |                  |                  |
| 13 | TOTAL                                   | <u>\$177,849</u> | <u>\$308,448</u> |

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

19 **STATEMENT OF FACT**

21 Legislative reforms in 1983, 1985 and 1987 placed  
23 significant new duties on the Workers' Compensation Commission.  
24 The growth in the numbers and complexity of claims, combined with  
25 statutory requirements that the commission exercise a more active  
26 and forceful regulatory role, threatens the ability of the  
27 commission to meet basic statutory deadlines. Adequate funding  
28 of the commission saves money in the workers' compensation system  
29 by providing adequate support for the claims process. Revenues  
30 from the 2% insurance premium tax on workers' compensation  
31 premiums continue to exceed commission expenditures. The product  
32 support specialist and the 2 clerk typist II positions have also  
33 been requested in the emergency appropriations bill for fiscal  
year 1988-89.