MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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116th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-1993

Legislative Document

No. 596

S.P. 182

In Senate, February 23, 1993

An Act Concerning Technical Changes to the Tax Laws.

(EMERGENCY)

Submitted by the Department of Administrative and Financial Services pursuant to Joint Rule 24.

Reference to the Committee on Taxation suggested and ordered printed.

JOY J. O'BRIEN Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator SUMMERS of Cumberland.

Emergency preamble. Whereas, Acts of the Legislature do not 2 become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and 4 Whereas, delay in making technical changes to the tax laws would interfere with administration of those laws; and 6 Whereas, legislative action is immediately necessary to 8 ensure continued and efficient administration of the tax laws; and 10 Whereas, in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of 12 Maine and require the following legislation as immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and 14 safety; now, therefore, 16 Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows: 18 Sec. 1. 36 MRSA §151, as amended by PL 1991, c. 824, Pt. B, \$10 and repealed and replaced by c. 873, \$3, is repealed and the 20 following enacted in its place: 22 \$151. Review of decisions of State Tax Assessor 24 Any person who is subject to an assessment by the State Tax Assessor or entitled by law to receive notice of a determination 26 of the State Tax Assessor and who is aggrieved as a result of that action may request in writing, within 30 days after receipt 28 of notice of the assessment or the determination, reconsideration by the State Tax Assessor of the assessment or the determination. 30 If a request for reconsideration is filed within the 32 specified time period, the State Tax Assessor shall reconsider the assessment or the determination. If the petitioner has so 34 requested in the petition, the State Tax Assessor shall hold an informal conference with the petitioner to receive additional 36 information and to hear arguments regarding the protested assessment or determination. The State Tax Assessor shall give 38 the petitioner 10 working days' notice of the time and place of the conference. The conference may be held with less than 10 40 working days' notice if a mutually convenient time and place can be arranged between the petitioner and the State Tax Assessor. 42 The reconsideration, with or without an informal conference, is not an "adjudicatory proceeding" within the meaning of that term 44

The State Tax Assessor's decision on reconsideration must be mailed to the taxpayer by certified or registered mail and the decision must set forth briefly the State Tax Assessor's findings of fact and the basis of decision in each case decided in whole

in the Maine Administrative Procedure Act.

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or in part adversely to the taxpayer. The State Tax Assessor's decision on reconsideration constitutes final agency action that is subject to review by the Superior Court in accordance with the Maine Administrative Procedure Act, except that Title 5, sections 11006 and 11007 do not apply. The Superior Court shall conduct a de novo hearing and make a de novo determination of the merits of the case. It shall make its own determination as to all questions of fact or law. The Superior Court shall enter such orders and decrees as the case may require. The burden of proof is on the taxpayer.

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- Sec. 2. 36 MRSA §175, sub-§2, as amended by PL 1991, c. 820, §2, is further amended to read:
- Failure to file or pay taxes; denial of license or 16 If the State Tax Assessor determines that any person who holds a state-issued license or certificate of authority to 18 conduct a profession, trade or business has neglected or refused to file any returns at the time required under this Title or to 20 any tax liability due under this Title that has been demanded, other than taxes due pursuant to Part 2, and the person 22 continues to fail to file or pay after at least 2 specific written requests to do so, the assessor shall notify the person in writing that refusal to file the required tax return or to pay the overdue tax liability may result in loss of license or 26 certificate of authority. If the person continues for a period in excess of 30 days from notice of possible denial of renewal or 28 reissuance of a license or certificate of authority to fail to file or show reason why the person is not required to file or if 30 the person continues not to pay, the State Tax Assessor shall notify the person in writing of the determination to prevent 32 renewal, reissuance or extension of the license or certificate of authority by the issuing agency. A review of this determination is available by requesting a petition for reconsideration under 34 section 151, subject to appeal to the Superior Court 36 accordance with the Maine Administrative Procedure Act. by failure to proceed to the next step of appeal or by exhaustion 38 of the steps of appeal, the determination of the assessor's right to prevent renewal or reissuance becomes final unless otherwise 40 determined by appeal.
 - Sec. 3. 36 MRSA §175-A, sub-§1, as enacted by PL 1987, c. 402, Pt. A, §179, is amended to read:
 - 1. Filing. If any tax imposed by this Title is not paid when due, the State Tax Assessor may file in the registry of deeds of any county or in the office in which a financing statement with respect to tangible personal property is properly filed with Title 11, section 9-401, subsection (1), paragraph (b), a notice of lien specifying the amount of the tax, interest,

penalty and costs due, the name and last known address of the person liable for the amount and the fact that the State Tax Assessor has complied with all the provisions of this Title in the assessment of the tax. From-the-time-of-filing,-the-amount set-forth-in-a-eertificate-filed-in-a-registry-of-deeds-of-a county-constitutes-a-lien-upon-all-real-property-in-that-county then-owned-or-thereafter-acquired-by-that-person-in-the-period 8 before-the-expiration-of-the-lien --- From-the-time-of-filing -- the amount-set-forth-in-a-certificate-filed-in-the-office-in-which-a 10 financing-statement-with-respect-to-personal-property-is-properly filed-constitutes-a-lien-upon-all-personal-property-in-this-State 12 then-owned-or-thereafter-acquired-by-that-person-in-the-period before-the-expiration-of-the-lien,-except-that-that The lien 14 arises at the time the assessment is made or deemed to be made constitutes a lien upon all property, whether real or 16 personal, belonging to the taxpayer. The lien imposed by this section is not valid against any mortgagee, pledgee, purchaser or judgment creditor until notice of the lien has been filed by the 18 State Tax Assessor, with respect to real property, in the 20 registry of deeds of the county where such property is located and, with respect to personal property, in the office in which a 22 financing statement for such personal property is normally filed. Notwithstanding the above, a tax lien upon personal 24 property shall does not extend to those types of personal property which--are not subject to perfection of a security interest by means of the filing under Title 11, sections 9-104, 26 subsection (7); 9-104, subsection (12); 9-302, subsection (3); 28 The lien shall-be is prior to any mortgage or security interest recorded, filed or otherwise perfected after 30 notice, other than a purchase money security perfected in accordance with Title 11, section 9-301, subsection 32 (2) and Title 11, section 9-312, subsection (4). In the case of any mortgage or security interest properly recorded or filed 34 prior to the notice of lien which that secures future advances by the mortgagee or secured party, the lien shall-be is junior to 36 all advances made within 45 days after filing of the notice of lien, or made without knowledge of the lien or pursuant to a 38 commitment entered into without knowledge of the lien. Subject to the limitations in this section, the lien provided in this 40 section has the same force, effect and priority as a judgment lien and shall-centinue continues for 5 10 years from the date of 42 recording unless sooner released or otherwise discharged. lien may, within the 5-year 10-year period, or within 5 10 years 44 from the date of the last extension of the lien in the manner provided in this subsection, be extended by filing for record in 46 the appropriate office a copy of the notice and, from the time of filing, that lien shall must be extended for 5 10 years unless 48 sooner released or otherwise discharged.

Sec. 4. 36 MRSA §176-A, sub-§9, ¶B, as enacted by PL 1989, c. 880, Pt. E, §3, is amended to read:

B. The owners of any <u>real</u> property sold as provided in subsection 6, their heirs, executors or administrators, or any person having any interest in or lien on the sold property, or any person in their behalf, are permitted to redeem the property sold at any time within 90 days after the sale of the property. The property may be redeemed upon payment to the assessor, for the use of the purchaser, or the heirs or assigns of the purchaser, of the amount paid by the purchaser and interest on that amount at the rate of 20% per annum, together with the expenses of the proceeding.

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Sec. 5. 36 MRSA §176-A, sub-§16, as amended by PL 1991, c. 846, §3, is further amended to read:

Time for collection of taxes. Taxes must be collected by levy within 10 years after the assessment of the tax, or prior to the expiration of any period of collection agreed upon in writing by the assessor and the taxpayer. The period agreed upon may be extended by subsequent agreements in writing made before the expiration of the period previously agreed upon. Any levy action ordered by the assessor before the expiration of the 10-year period continues beyond the expiration of the 10-year period for a period of 6 months from the date such levy is first made or until the liability out of which such levy arose is satisfied or becomes unenforceable, whichever occurs first. running of the 10-year period is stayed during the time that a consensual payment plan between the taxpayer and the assessor is in effect. When any question relative to the taxes is pending before any agency or court at the end of the 10-year period, the assessor's right to collect any tax due by levy continues until 6 years after the final determination of the question. taxpayer files for protection under the United States Bankruptcy Code, the assessor's right to collect any tax due by levy continues until 6 years after the date of discharge or dismissal of the bankruptcy proceeding.

Sec. 6. 36 MRSA $\S187$ -B, last \P , as enacted by PL 1991, c. 873, $\S5$ and affected by $\S\S8$ and 9, is amended to read:

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For purposes of this section, the term "person" includes an individual, corporation or partnership or any officer or employee of a corporation, including a dissolved corporation, or a member or employee of a partnership who, as the officer, employee or member, is under a duty to perform the act in respect of which a violation occurs.

Sec. 7. 36 MRSA §191, sub-§2, ¶F, as amended by PL 1979, c. 127, §193, is further amended to read:

F. The transmission of information among employees of the Bureau of Taxation for the purposes of enforcing the tax laws of this State and the delivery by a register of deeds to the State Tax Assessor or delivery by the State Tax Assessor to the appropriate <u>municipal</u> assessor of "declarations of value" in accordance with section 4641-D;

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Sec. 8. 36 MRSA §208, as amended by PL 1985, c. 764, §6, is further amended to read:

§208. Equalization

The Director-of-the-Bureau-of-Taxation-shall-have State Tax Assessor has the duty of equalizing the state and county taxes among the several towns and unorganized territory. -He- The State Tax Assessor shall equalize and adjust the assessment list of each town, by adding to or deducting from it such amount as will make it equal to its just value as of April 1st. Notice of the proposed valuations of municipalities within each county shall must be sent annually by certified mail to the ehairman chair of the board of assessors, and ehairman chair of the board of selectmen in municipalities having selectmen, ο£ municipality within that county on or before the first day of September -- preceding -- the -- regular -- session -- of -- the -- Legislature October. The valuation so determined is subject to review by the State Board of Property Tax Review pursuant to subchapter II-A, but the valuation finally certified to the Secretary of State pursuant to section 381 shall must be used for all computations required by law to be based upon the state valuation with respect to municipalities.

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Sec. 9. 36 MRSA §653, sub-§1, ¶E, as amended by PL 1989, c. 501, Pt. Z and c. 502, Pt. A, §128, is repealed and the following enacted in its place:

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E. The word "veteran" as used in this subsection means any person, male or female, who was in active service in the Armed Forces of the United States during any federally recognized war period, the Korean Campaign or the Vietnam War and who, if discharged, retired or separated from the Armed Forces, was discharged, retired or separated under other than dishonorable conditions. A veteran of the Vietnam War must have served on active duty for a period of more than 180 days, any part of which must have occurred after August 4, 1964 and before May 7, 1975, except if the veteran died in service or was discharged for a service-connected disability after that date. "Vietnam War" means that period between August 5, 1964 and May 7, 1975;

2	Sec. 10. 36 MRSA §1481, sub-§4-A is enacted to read:
4	4-A. Truck camper. "Truck camper" means a slide-in camper
б	designed to be mounted on a truck body to provide temporary living quarters for recreational, camping, travel or other use.
8	Sec. 11. 36 MRSA §1481, sub-§5, as amended by PL 1981, c. 706, §18, is further amended to read:
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12	5. Vehicle. "Vehicle" means a motor vehicle, mobile home, camper trailer, <u>truck camper</u> , heavier-than-air aircraft or lighter-than-air aircraft. "Vehicle" shall <u>does</u> not include any
14	snowmobiles as defined in Title 12, section 1971 7821.
16	Sec. 12. 36 MRSA §1482, sub-§1, ¶C, as amended by PL 1991, c. 846, §15, is further amended to read:
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20	C. For the privilege of operating a motor vehicle or camper trailer on the public ways, each motor vehicle, other than a stock race car, or each camper trailer to be so operated is
22	subject to excise tax as follows: A sum equal to 24 mills on each dollar of the maker's list price for the first or
24	current year of model, 17 1/2 mills for the 2nd year, 13 1/2 mills for the 3rd year, 10 mills for the 4th year, 6 1/2
26	mills for the 5th year and 4 mills for the 6th and succeeding years. The minimum tax is \$5 for a motor vehicle
28	other than a bicycle with motor attached, \$2.50 for a bicycle with motor attached, \$15 for a camper trailer other
30	than a tent trailer <u>or truck camper</u> and \$5 for a tent trailer <u>or truck camper</u> . The excise tax on a stock race car
32	is \$5.
34	(1) On new registrations of automobiles, trucks and truck tractors, the excise tax payment must be made
86	prior to registration and is for a one-year period from the date of registration.
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0	(2) Vehicles registered under the International Registration Plan are subject to an excise tax determined on a monthly proration basis if their
2	registration period is less than 12 months.
4	Sec. 13. 36 MRSA §1482, sub-§2, ¶B, as amended by PL 1991, c.
6	846, §16, is further amended to read:
8	B. The excise tax levied in this section on automobiles, camper trailers, trucks, truck campers and truck tractors is, during the last 4 months of a registration year, 1/2 the

sum named in subsection 1, paragraph C.

2	Sec. 14. 36 MRSA 91/52, Sub-93-C, as enacted by PL 1991, c. 780, Pt. CCC, §1, is repealed.
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6	Sec. 15. 36 MRSA §1760, sub-§23, as repealed and replaced by PL 1991, c. 788, §6 and amended by c. 846, §21, is repealed and the following enacted in its place:
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10	23. Certain vehicles purchased by nonresidents. Sales of the following vehicles purchased by a nonresident and intended to
12	be driven or transported outside the State immediately upon delivery by the seller:
14	A. Motor vehicles, except all-terrain vehicles as defined in Title 12, section 7851 and snowmobiles as defined in
16	Title 12, section 7821;
18	B. Semitrailers:
20	<pre>C. Aircraft;</pre>
22	D. Truck bodies and trailers manufactured in the State; and
24	E. Camper trailers, including truck campers.
26	If the vehicles are registered for use in the State within 12 months of the date of purchase, the person seeking registration
28	is liable for use tax on the basis of the original purchase price.
30	Sec. 16. 36 MRSA §1951-A, sub-§2, as amended by PL 1991, c.
32	780, Pt. Q, $\S 2$ and affected by $\S 4$, is further amended to read:
34	2. Estimated payment. Every retailer that had a tax liability under this Part in excess of \$250,000 for the preceding
36	calendar year and is required to file a monthly return shall pay over to the State Tax Assessor by the 24th day of each month an
38	amount equal to 80% of the retailer's liability under this Part for the corresponding month in the prior year or 80% of the
40	retailer's liability under this Part for the actual month. Payments made pursuant to this subsection must be credited
42	against tax due with the monthly return. The State Tax Assessor shall prescribe the voucher required to be filed with the
44	payment. If the retailer does not file the required voucher, the amount of the retailer's liability is equal to an amount that is
46	80% of the retailer's liability under this Part for the corresponding month in the prior year.
48	When the business of a retailer required to make estimated
50	payments pursuant to this section is transferred to a new owner, the successor business shall continue to make estimated payments

	and has the option of employing the sales made by the predecessor
2	business during the 12 months preceding the transfer in
	determining its own estimated payments during the next 12
4	months. For purposes of this provision, "successor business"
	means a taxpayer that has acquired the organization, trade or
6	business of a retailer required to make estimated payments
	pursuant to this section or that has acquired 50% or more of the
8	assets thereof.
10	Sec. 17. 36 MRSA §2013, sub-§1, ¶C, as amended by PL 1989, c.
	533, §13, is further amended to read:
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	C. "Depreciable machinery and equipment" means that part of
14	the following machinery and equipment for which depreciation
	is allowable under the United-States-Internal-Revenue-Code
16	code and repair parts for that machinery and equipment:
18	(1) New or used machinery and equipment for use
	directly and primarily in commercial agricultural
20	production, including self-propelled vehicles, but
	excluding motor vehicles as defined in section 1752,
22	subsection 7, attachments and equipment for the
	production of field and orchard crops; new or used
24	machinery and equipment used for use directly and
	primarily in production of milk andin, animal
26	husbandry and production of livestock, including
	poultry; or
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	(2) New or used watercraft used directly and primarily
30	for commercial fishing; and nets, traps, cables, tackle
	and related equipment necessary to the operation of a
32	commercial fishing venture, but excluding motor
	vehicles as defined in section 1752, subsection 7.
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	Sec. 18. 36 MRSA §2855, sub-§14, as enacted by PL 1981, c.
36	711, §10, is amended to read:
38	14. Met proceeds. "Net proceeds" means a mining company's
	federal taxable income from the property with respect to a mine
40	site (computed without allowance for depletien) depletion as
	defined in Section 613 of the code $\underline{\mathtt{code}}$ adjusted as follows+.
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	A. The following deductions shallbe <u>are</u> allowed in
44	addition to those allowed in computing taxable income from
	the property under the code:
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	(1) Cost depletion as would be allowed under Section
48	611 of the code without regard to percentage depletion;

	(2) Exploration and development costs as defined in
2	Sections 616 and 617 of the code. Exploration and development costs incurred prior to the commencement of
4	mining shall must be recovered proportionately over the
	life of the mine in the same manner as that provided in
6	Section 611 of the code with respect to cost
	depletion. Exploration and development costs incurred
8	after the commencement of mining shall must be recovered in the year incurred;
10	recovered in the feat insurred,
	(3) Net operating loss deductions as defined in
12	Section 172 of the code, but not including the exclusions under paragraph B; and
14	exclusions under paragraph by and
	(4) Reasonable accruals for all reclamation,
16	restoration and shut-down costs required by state or
	federal laws, regulations or permits. These accruals
18	shall <u>must</u> be made on a proportionate basis over the
20	accrual period.
20	B. The following may not be allowed as deductions:
22	b. The following may not be afflowed as deductions:
22	(1) Property taxes paid which that are allowed as a
24	credit against the tax provided by this chapter;
26	(2) The tax provided by this chapter; and
28	(3) Percentage depletion as allowed under Section 613 of the code.
30	,
	Sec. 19. 36 MRSA §5160, as repealed and replaced by PL 1985,
32	c. 783, §28, is amended to read:
34	§5160. Imposition of tax
36	The tax is imposed, at the rates provided by section 5111
	for resident individuals, upon the taxable income of estates and
38	trust trusts. The tax shall must be paid by the fiduciary.
40	Sec. 20. 36 MRSA §5215, sub-§1, as enacted by PL 1977, c. 722,
40	is amended to read:
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	1. Credit allowed. A taxpayer, other than a public
44	utility, as defined by Title 35 35-A, section 15 102, shall-be is
	allowed a credit to be computed as hereinafter provided against
46	the tax imposed by this Part, subject to the limitations
40	contained in subsection 3. The amount of the credit shall-equal
48	equals the qualified federal credit, as defined in subsection 2,
	for taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 1979.

Sec. 21. 36 MRSA §5253, sub-§1, as amended by PL 1991, c. 9, Pt. E, §25 and affected by §26, is further amended to read:

Every person required to deduct and withhold General. tax under this Part shall, for each calendar quarter, on or before the 21st day of the month following the close of the calendar quarter or such other reporting period as the State Tax Assessor may require, file a withholding return and remit payment as prescribed by the State Tax Assessor. Whenever,-for-federal income-tax-purposes-under-the-Code,-Section-6302-and-regulations adopted -- to -- the -- Code /-- an -- employer -- is -- required -- to -- deposit withhelding-taxes-en-an-8th-menthly-period,-the-employer-shall pay-over-the-amount-required-to-be-withheld-by-this-Part-to-the State-Tax-Assessor-within-3-days-of-the-last-day-of-each-month for-which-the-amount-equals-or-exceeds-\$3,000-or-within-3-days-of the --end -of--any - other--8th-monthly--period -for--which --the--amount required-to-be-withheld-by-this-Part-but-not-yet-paid-over-during the-month-equals-or-exceeds-\$3,000,--All-other-persons-shall-pay ever-to-the-State-Tax-Assessor-taxes-required-to-be-withheld-by this-Part-at-the-time-they-are-required-to-file-a-withholding The State Tax Assessor shall prescribe the voucher return. required to be filed with the-payment payments.

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- Sec. 22. 36 MRSA §6251, sub-§1, as amended by PL 1989, c. 713, §2 and c. 875, Pt. E, §50, is repealed and the following enacted in its place:
 - 1. Filing claim. Subject to section 6252, an individual or 2 or more individuals jointly may elect to defer the property taxes on their homestead by filing a claim for deferral with the municipal assessor after January 1st but no later than April 1st of the first year in which deferral is claimed if:
 - A. The individual or each individual, in the case of 2 or more individuals filing a claim jointly, is 65 years of age or older on April 1st of the year in which the claim is filed; and
- B. The individual or, in the case of 2 or more individuals

 filing a claim jointly, all the individuals together have
 household income, as defined in section 6201, subsection 7,

 of less than \$32,000 for the calendar year immediately
 preceding the calendar year in which the claim is filed.
- The municipal assessor shall forward each claim filed under this subsection to the bureau within 30 days of receipt and the bureau shall determine if the property is eligible for deferral.
- Claims from new applicants may not be filed pursuant to this chapter prior to January 1, 1994. For purposes of this section,

claims prior to April 1, 1991.
Emergency clause. In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this Act takes effect when approved.
STATEMENT OF FACT
This bill makes the following technical corrections, clarifications and minor substantive changes to various laws concerning taxation.
1. It reconciles conflicting versions of the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 36, section 151.
2. It clarifies that municipal property tax debts are not taken into consideration by the State Tax Assessor when taking action against state-issued licenses or certificates of authority pursuant to Title 36, section 175.
3. It provides that a tax lien arises at the time the tax is assessed and increases the period of time during which a tax lien stays in effect before it must be renewed.
4. It provides that redemption of personal property sold by the assessor pursuant to Title 36, section 176-A may be redeemed only prior to the sale, and makes the postsale provisions of section 176-A, subsection 9, paragraph B consistent with the presale provisions of section 176-A, subsection 9, paragraph A in providing that the State can recover the expenses it incurs in conducting the sale.
5. It provides that the statute of limitations for collecting taxes by levy is stayed during the pendency of a payment plan between a taxpayer and the assessor.
6. It adds language clarifying the definition of persons subject to tax penalties pursuant to Title 36, section 187-B.
7. It clarifies a reference to municipal tax assessors in Title 36, section 191, subsection 2, paragraph F.
8. It updates a reference to the State Tax Assessor in Title 36, section 208 and provides that notice of proposed property valuations be provided annually by the assessor to municipalities.
9. It reconciles conflicting versions of Title 36, section

- 2 10. It makes Title 36, chapter 111 consistent with Public Law 1991, chapter 788, which established the requirement for registration of truck campers.
- 6 ll. It repeals Title 36, section 1752, subsection 3-C.
- 8 12. It reconciles conflicting versions of Title 36, section 1760, subsection 23.

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13. It provides that successors to retailers required to make estimated monthly sales tax payments must continue to make estimated payments.

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14. It clarifies that machinery and equipment for use in the production of milk, animal husbandry and production of livestock must be directly and primarily used for such purposes in order to qualify for a sales tax refund pursuant to Title 36, section 2013.

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- 15. It makes a technical correction to Title 36, section 22 2855, subsection 14.
- 16. It makes a technical correction to Title 36, section 5160.

- 17. It updates a statutory reference related to public utilities contained in Title 36, section 5215.
- 30 18. It amends Title 36, section 5253 to reflect a change in federal regulations related to reporting and payment of withholding taxes.
- 34 19. It codifies language from Public Law 1991, chapter 591, Part DD, section 2 related to claims filed pursuant to Title 36, chapter 908.