## MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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## 116th MAINE LEGISLATURE

## FIRST REGULAR SESSION-1993

Legislative Document

No. 1276

H.P. 947

House of Representatives, April 15, 1993

An Act to Improve the Operation of Prelitigation Screening Panels.

Reference to the Committee on Judiciary suggested and ordered printed.

JOSEPH W. MAYO, Clerk

Presented by Representative CATHCART of Orono. Cosponsored by Representative: SAXL of Bangor.

Sec. 1.	24 MRSA	§2853, sub-§10	is	${\tt enacted}$	to	read:

10. Use of filing fees. The Judicial Department shall retain filing fees payable under this subchapter in a designated and segregated account. These funds must be used to operate the prelitigation screening panels and may be used for hiring staff, paying panel chairs or paying the expenses of the panel system as approved by the Chief Justice of the Superior Court.

## STATEMENT OF FACT

The operation of Maine's prelitigation screening panels, established in 1986, is in jeopardy because of the difficulty of finding panel chairs in a timely fashion. Although cases have been screened since January 1, 1987, many cases are awaiting the appointment of a panel chair. Each case, on average, pays \$600 in filing fees to the General Fund. Use of these funds to better administer the panels will significantly improve the operation of the panels by allowing for more timely appointment.