

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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116th MAINE LEGISLATURE

SECOND REGULAR SESSION-1994

Legislative Document

No. 1949

S.P. 728

In Senate, March 1, 1994

An Act to Establish Maine Quality Centers.

Reference to the Committee on Taxation suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Joy J. O'Brien".

JOY J. O'BRIEN
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator AMERO of Cumberland. (GOVERNOR'S BILL).
Cosponsored by Speaker GWADOSKY of Fairfield and
Senators: CARPENTER of York, DUTREMBLE of York, HANLEY of Oxford, KIEFFER of
Aroostook, O'DEA of Penobscot, PEARSON of Penobscot, Representatives: CAMPBELL of
Holden, DiPIETRO of South Portland, ZIRNKILTON of Mount Desert.

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

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Sec. 1. 5 MRSA §1517 is enacted to read:

§1517. Economic Stimulus and Property Tax Relief Fund

1. Economic Stimulus and Property Tax Relief Fund established. There is established the Economic Stimulus and Property Tax Relief Fund for the purpose of distributing unanticipated surplus revenues accruing in the General fund to municipalities experiencing high rates of population growth in order to meet their infrastructure needs and for economic stimulus including the staffing and funding of the Maine Quality Centers established by Title 20-A, section 12725 and the Maine Youth Apprenticeship Program established by Title 20-A, chapter 432.

The State Controller, at the close of each fiscal year, shall transfer from the unappropriated surplus of the General Fund to the Economic Stimulus and Property Tax Relief Fund an amount not to exceed 1/2 of the balance remaining after all other required transfers have been made from the excess of total General Fund revenues received over accepted estimates in that fiscal year.

The fund may not exceed \$25,000,000 and does not lapse, but remains a continuing carrying account to carry out the purposes of this section.

2. Distributions from the Economic Stimulus and Property Tax Relief Fund. Money credited to the Economic Stimulus and Property Tax Relief Fund must be distributed each fiscal year as follows:

A. An amount equal to 1/6 of the balance in the fund up to a fund balance of \$3,000,000 to the Maine Technical College System to provide staff for the Maine Quality Centers;

B. An amount equal to 1/6 of the balance in the fund up to a fund balance of \$3,000,000 to the Maine Technical College System to support the Maine Youth Apprenticeship Program;

C. An amount equal to 2/3 of the balance in the fund up to a fund balance of \$3,000,000 to the Maine Technical College System to support the purposes of the Maine Quality Centers in accordance with Title 20-A, section 12726; and

D. The balance remaining in the fund in excess of \$3,000,000 to each municipality in an amount equal to the ratio of the population in each municipality to the population in the State as a whole.

2 3. Restrictions on the use of funds for municipalities.
3 Funds distributed to municipalities pursuant to this section may
4 be expended only after the municipal legislative body has
5 authorized the expenditure in the annual municipal budget. Funds
6 may be expended only for the following purposes:

7 A. For capital construction and improvements, land
8 acquisitions, capital equipment acquisitions or other
9 nonrecurring purposes;
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11 B. For purposes for which bonds have been previously
12 authorized but not yet issued, in order to eliminate the
13 need to incur the indebtedness; and
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15 C. For the local share of state, federal or privately
16 financed capital construction and improvement projects.
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19 4. Definitions. For the purposes of computing the revenue
20 distributions from the Economic Stimulus and Property Tax Relief
21 Fund to municipalities in accordance with this section,
22 "population" means the population as determined by the latest
23 federal Decennial Census or the population as determined and
24 certified by the Department of Human Services, whichever is more
25 recent. For the purposes of this section, the Department of
26 Human Services is authorized and required to determine the
27 population of each municipality at least once each year.
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29 5. Treasurer of State. The Treasurer of State shall
30 distribute funds to the Maine Technical College System in
31 accordance with subsection 2, paragraphs A, B and C on or before
32 September 15th of each fiscal year and shall distribute the
33 balance in the Economic Stimulus and Property Tax Relief Fund to
34 each municipality in accordance with subsection 2, paragraph D on
35 or before September 15th of each fiscal year.
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37 Sec. 2. 20-A M.R.S.A. c. 431-A is enacted to read:
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39 CHAPTER 431-A

40 MAINE QUALITY CENTERS

41 §12725. Establishment
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44 There are established, under the Maine Technical College
45 System, the Maine Quality Centers, in this chapter referred to as
46 the "centers." The mission of the centers is to meet the
47 workforce education and training needs of new and expanding State
48 businesses, and provide new employment and career advancement
49 opportunities for Maine people. The centers will fulfill their
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mission by working in close coordination with state and regional economic development agencies.

§12726. Purpose

The primary purposes of the Maine Quality Centers are as follows:

1. Job creation. To encourage and facilitate the creation of new jobs in the State by offering customized education and training programs at the technical colleges free of charge to businesses that are seeking to create new jobs in the State. The eligibility criteria for free customized education and training programs and other policies and terms governing the Maine Quality Centers are established by the Maine Technical College System Board of Trustees;

2. Workforce preparation. To offer education and training opportunities for unemployed Maine people to allow them to prepare for future jobs in new or expanding businesses in the State, and for underemployed Maine people seeking to upgrade their education, skills and credentials in order to facilitate career advancement and enhance job security; and

3. Partnerships. To establish and maintain long-term partnerships with prospective and established businesses with the goal of creating and maintaining a skilled, adaptable and competitive workforce.

§12727. Maine Quality Centers

1. State and regional delivery. The Maine Quality Centers will be located at the Maine Technical College System Office and the technical colleges. Staff of the Maine Quality Centers will work in close coordination with the Department of Economic and Community Development, the Office of the Governor and other state and local education and economic development agencies.

2. Recruitment and screening. Recruitment of trainees and preliminary screening and testing for programs developed through the Maine Quality Centers must be conducted by the technical colleges in conjunction with the Maine Job Service, state job training providers, human service offices and other referring agencies.

3. Eligibility for enrollment. To be considered eligible for programs developed under this chapter, applicants must meet technical college and program admissions standards. Students who have enrolled in such programs must maintain satisfactory

2 academic performance and meet all requirements in order to
3 continue enrollment in the program.

4 4. Cost to trainees. Education and training programs
5 developed through the Maine Quality Centers must be offered to
6 trainees free of charge.

8 5. Certification of competencies. Upon completion of a
9 program, trainees are issued certification from the technical
10 college providing the training that delineates the education or
11 skill competencies obtained through the program.

12 6. Training guarantee. If the employer of the trainee
13 finds that the trainee fails to meet any of the competencies
14 listed on the certification, the technical college providing the
15 training must retrain the employee at no cost to the employer or
16 trainee.

18 7. Placement of trainees. Placement of trainees in jobs
19 with the employer for which a program has been provided is not
20 guaranteed. Final determination of hire rests with the employer.

22 **§12728. Coordination with education providers**

24 If an education or training requirement can not be delivered
25 directly by a technical college, staff of the Maine Quality
26 Centers shall work with other education and training providers to
27 develop and deliver the program.

30 **Sec. 3. 30-A MRSA §5683, as enacted by PL 1989, c. 534, Pt.**
31 **F, is repealed.**

34 **STATEMENT OF FACT**

36 This bill repeals the existing Property Tax Relief Program
37 and establishes the Economic Stimulus and Property Tax Relief
38 Fund and the Maine Quality Centers under the Maine Technical
39 College System to meet the workforce education and training needs
40 of prospective and established state businesses, in close
41 coordination with the State's economic development efforts. The
42 centers will work closely with economic development agencies to
43 establish and maintain relationships with business and industry
44 with the goal of meeting their workforce needs. The centers will
45 provide incentives for businesses to create new jobs in the State
46 by offering customized education and training, as well as
47 recruitment and screening of trainees, free of charge for both
48 the employer and the trainees. The Board of Trustees of the

2 Maine Technical College System, which includes representation
4 from education, business, government and organized labor, will
6 develop the eligibility criteria and other policies governing the
8 Maine Quality Centers programs.

10 This document has not yet been reviewed to determine the
12 need for cross-reference, stylistic and other technical
amendments to conform existing law to current drafting standards.