

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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117th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-1995

Legislative Document

No. 943

H.P. 692

House of Representatives, March 21, 1995

An Act to Create an Honorary Position of Maine State Poet Laureate.

Reference to the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joseph W. Mayo".

JOSEPH W. MAYO, Clerk

Presented by Representative ADAMS of Portland.
Cosponsored by Representatives: AHEARNE of Madawaska, CAMERON of Rumford, CLOUTIER of South Portland, DAGGETT of Augusta, GREEN of Monmouth, JONES of Bar Harbor, JOSEPH of Waterville, KILKELLY of Wiscasset, MORRISON of Bangor, TOWNSEND of Portland, TRUE of Fryeburg, Senator: PARADIS of Aroostook.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 5 MRSA §12004-I, sub-§5-A** is enacted to read:

4 **5-A.** State Poet Not 27 MRSA
6 Culture Laureate Authorized §421
8 Selection
 Advisory
 Panel

10 **Sec. 2. 27 MRSA c. 15** is amended by repealing the chapter
12 headnote and enacting the following in its place:

14 **CHAPTER 15**

16 **THE ARTS**

18 **SUBCHAPTER I**

20 **MAINE ARTS COMMISSION**

22 **Sec. 3. 27 MRSA c. 15, sub-c. II** is enacted to read:

24 **SUBCHAPTER II**

26 **STATE POET LAUREATE**

28 **§421. Honorary office created**

30 The honorary office of State Poet Laureate is created.

32 1. Appointment. On March 31st of each year, the Governor
34 shall appoint an individual to serve as State Poet Laureate,
 selected from the names presented by the advisory panel created
 in subsection 3.

36 2. Term. The State Poet Laureate shall serve a one-year
38 term from March 31st to March 31st of the following year. An
40 individual may serve as State Poet Laureate for no more than 3
 consecutive terms, but may be reappointed after a year's break
 from service.

42 3. Advisory panel. The State Poet Laureate Selection
44 Advisory Panel as established in Title 5, section 12004-I,
46 subsection 5-A, referred to in this subchapter as the "panel," is
 created in accordance with the following provisions.

48 A. The panel is composed of the chairs of the English
 departments of each of the campuses of the University of

2 Maine System and the director of the Maine State Library and
3 the Director of the Maine Arts Commission who serve as
4 cochairs.

5 B. By March 1st of each year, the panel shall select one or
6 more names to recommend to the Governor from which the
7 Governor shall appoint the State Poet Laureate.

8 C. If a vacancy occurs within the term of the State Poet
9 Laureate, the panel shall meet as soon as possible to select
10 a nominee for appointment by the Governor to fill the
11 remainder of the term.

12 D. Members of the panel are not entitled to per diem or
13 compensation for expenses.

14 4. Eligibility. The individual appointed State Poet
15 Laureate must be a resident of the State and must have published
16 poems of recognized merit.

17 5. Duties. The duties of the State Poet Laureate are as
18 follows:

19 A. To provide free consultation on poetry to state
20 educational institutions; and

21 B. To write annually at least one poem addressing the
22 beauty, history, heritage or character of the State or the
23 spirit of its people, to be presented to the Governor and
24 the presiding officers of the Legislature on March 15th,
25 Maine Statehood Day.

26 6. Copyright. The copyright to the poems described in
27 subsection 5, paragraph B must be held by the people of the
28 State. The director of the Maine State Library shall maintain
29 the copyright.

30 **§422. Public employment permitted**

31 Acceptance of the honor of serving as State Poet Laureate
32 does not constitute state employment and does not preclude an
33 individual from election, appointment or service as an employee
34 or official in state or local government.

35 **Sec. 4. Transition provision.** For 1995, the 175th anniversary
36 year of Maine statehood, the State Poet Laureate Selection
37 Advisory Panel shall make recommendations to the Governor and the
38 Governor shall appoint the first State Poet Laureate as soon

2 as possible after the effective date of this Act, the term to run
until March 31, 1996.

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6 STATEMENT OF FACT

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8 This bill creates the honorary office of State Poet Laureate
and describes the appointment process and the duties of the State
10 Poet Laureate. As this is an honorary position, the holder of
the office is permitted to seek, accept or serve as an elected or
appointed state or local government employee while serving as
12 State Poet Laureate.