

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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117th MAINE LEGISLATURE

SECOND REGULAR SESSION-1996

Legislative Document

No. 1808

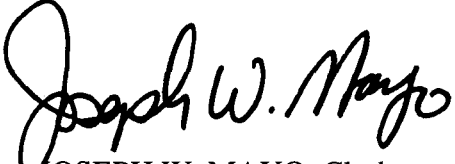
H.P. 1321

House of Representatives, February 22, 1996

**An Act to Increase the Reimbursement Levels for Forest Fire
Suppression Costs.**

(AFTER DEADLINE)

Approved for introduction by a majority of the Legislative Council pursuant to Joint Rule 27.
Reference to the Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry suggested and
ordered printed.


JOSEPH W. MAYO, Clerk

Presented by Representative CARR of Hermon.
Cosponsored by Representative TUTTLE of Sanford and
Representatives: BERRY of Livermore, CLARK of Millinocket, CROSS of Dover-Foxcroft,
HICHBORN of Lagrange, POVICH of Ellsworth, STROUT of Corinth, Senators:
CIANCHETTE of Somerset, FERGUSON of Oxford.

2
3 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

4 **Sec. 1. 12 MRSA §9204**, as repealed and replaced by PL 1991,
5 c. 780, Pt. MM, §1, is repealed and the following enacted in its
6 place:

7 **§9204. Payment of costs; state reimbursement**

8
9 Municipalities shall pay for controlling and extinguishing
10 forest fires up to 1/2 of 1% of their state valuation and the
11 State shall reimburse the municipalities for 1/2 of the costs
12 incurred by the forest fire warden in charge. Reimbursement is
13 not allowed for use or loss of municipally owned equipment within
14 the town in which the fire occurred. A municipality going to the
15 aid of another, even to protect itself, when requested by the
16 state forest ranger in charge, is entitled to be paid for
17 suppression of fire costs by the municipality aided if the total
18 suppression cost of the fire in that municipality is not over 1/2
19 of 1% of its state valuation.

20
21 **Sec. 2. 12 MRSA §9205**, as amended by PL 1991, c. 780, Pt. MM,
22 §2, is repealed and the following enacted in its place:

23 **§9205. Payment of costs beyond 1/2 of 1% of state valuation**

24
25 The State shall pay all forest fire suppression costs in
26 municipalities in an amount greater than 1/2 of 1% of the state
27 valuation of the municipality in which the fire occurred. A
28 municipality, in order to pay labor quickly, may pay beyond 1/2
29 of 1% of the state valuation and submit for full reimbursement or
30 forward the unpaid bills, approved by the state forest ranger in
31 charge, for payment.

32
33
34 **STATEMENT OF FACT**

35
36 Under current law, municipalities are entitled to
37 reimbursement for incurred forest fire suppression costs that
38 exceed .25% of their state valuation. Anything above this
39 threshold is reimbursed by the State.

40
41 This bill changes the law by repealing the threshold amount
42 and requiring the State to reimburse municipalities for 50% of
43 the costs incurred by the municipalities, regardless of the
44 amount of the costs of fire suppression. The State must continue
45 to pay for or reimburse the municipality for forest fire
46 suppression costs above .25% of the state valuation of the
47 municipality.

48
49 The effect of the changes made by this bill would be felt
50 only by those municipalities that currently incur fire
51 suppression costs that do not reach the .25% valuation
52 threshold. This bill returns the law to the language that
53 existed prior to changes that were made in 1991.
54