

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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L.D. 87

DATE: 5-4-99

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STATE OF MAINE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
119TH LEGISLATURE
FIRST REGULAR SESSION

HOUSE AMENDMENT "A" to H.P. 74, L.D. 87, Bill, "An Act to Require All Voting Places to be Accessible"

Amend the bill in section 1 in that part designated "§630." in subsection 2 by striking out all of the first paragraph (page 1, lines 27 to 30 in L.D.) and inserting in its place the following:

'2. Voting places. ~~Each municipality must provide at least one voting place that is in a building, which is~~ By April 1, 2000, all publicly owned buildings that are used as voting places must be accessible as defined in subsection 1. By July 1, 2001, each municipality shall ensure that all privately owned facilities used by the municipality as voting places are accessible as defined in subsection 1.'

Further amend the bill by inserting after section 1 the following:

'Sec. 2. Accessible voting places; cost saving plan. The Office of the Secretary of State and the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, Bureau of General Services, working jointly, shall review the number of municipalities affected by this Act, examine alternative strategies that would provide accessibility to all voting places for the handicapped community at the lowest possible cost and report any findings to the Joint Standing Committee on Legal and Veterans Affairs no later than January 15, 2000.

These agencies shall consult with and seek input from the municipalities directly affected by this Act.'

HOUSE AMENDMENT

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FISCAL NOTE

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The requirement that all municipal voting places are accessible to persons with physical handicaps or impairments represents a state mandate pursuant to the Constitution of Maine. The additional local costs can not be determined at this time but may be significant. Unless General Fund appropriations are provided to fund at least 90% of the additional costs or a Mandate Preamble is amended to the bill and two-thirds of the members of each House vote to exempt this mandate from the funding requirement, the municipalities may not be required to implement these changes.

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The Office of the Secretary of State and the Bureau of General Services will incur some minor costs to provide a cost-savings plan and report to the Legislature. These costs can be absorbed within each agency's existing budgeted resources.

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SUMMARY

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This amendment requires the Office of the Secretary of State and the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, Bureau of General Services to review the effects of this legislation and develop cost-saving recommendations to reduce costs of the mandate for any municipality affected by this legislation.

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This amendment establishes a deadline for municipalities to have total polling place accessibility. All polling places located in publicly owned buildings must be accessible by April 1, 2000. All other polling places, such as churches, fraternal halls and other private facilities, must be accessible by July 1, 2001 if they are to be used by the municipality as polling places.

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SPONSORED BY: Christina Sater
(Representative BAKER)

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TOWN: Bangor

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