

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# 119th MAINE LEGISLATURE

## FIRST REGULAR SESSION-1999

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Legislative Document

No. 299

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H.P. 221

House of Representatives, January 14, 1999

### **An Act to Create a Governance System for Unorganized Towns.**

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Reference to the Committee on State and Local Government suggested and ordered printed.

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

JOSEPH W. MAYO, Clerk

Presented by Representative JOY of Crystal.

Cosponsored by Representatives: MACK of Standish, O'NEAL of Limestone, STEDMAN of Hartland, WHEELER of Bridgewater, Senator: DAVIS of Piscataquis.

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

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## CONCEPT DRAFT SUMMARY

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This bill is a concept draft pursuant to Joint Rule 208. This bill seeks to create a governance system for unorganized towns. The bill makes several changes to the laws governing unorganized towns, the deorganization of municipalities and the Maine Land Use Regulation Commission as follows:

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1. It establishes a council-type government for all unorganized towns in Maine. Membership is to be composed of one representative per populated unorganized town and voting is to be weighted one person-one vote;

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2. This bill allows property owners in unpopulated towns to select a representative to serve on an advisory board to a governing council;

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3. This bill authorizes the unorganized towns to establish their own school governance system;

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4. It requires use of the Maine Land Use Regulation Commission's development plan for 3 years with no changes. Further, it authorizes the election of members to a body to oversee land and economic development. It requires the Maine Land Use Regulation Commission to be phased out over 3 years;

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5. It prohibits land in unorganized towns from being removed from tax rolls regardless of the tax status of the buyer;

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6. This bill authorizes the new governance structure for unorganized towns to enter into contracts with counties, municipalities and the State, as well as Native Americans, for various services;

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7. It requires county services to the unorganized towns to be phased out over 3 years;

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8. This bill does not affect the sovereignty of unorganized territory owned by Native Americans, but does allow cooperative agreements to be developed among Native Americans and the council of the unorganized towns. It also requires Native Americans to establish zoning and land use plans for their lands in the unorganized towns;

2 9. It requires that a name and a seat of government be  
established for the unorganized towns operating through their  
governance structure;

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6 10. It grants all rights and privileges of organized  
municipalities, towns and cities to the unorganized towns  
operating through their governance structure;

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10 11. This bill requires the unorganized towns, operating  
through their governance structure, to draft a charter;

12 12. It allows islands to petition the governance board to  
contract services with neighboring communities;

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16 13. This bill requires plantations to develop their own  
zoning plans; and

18 14. It allows organized municipalities to deorganize in the  
future and, with permission of the Legislature, to join the  
governance system of the unorganized towns.

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