

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# 119th MAINE LEGISLATURE

## FIRST REGULAR SESSION-1999

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Legislative Document

No. 309

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S.P. 112

In Senate, January 14, 1999

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**An Act Regarding the Funding of Search and Rescue Efforts by the  
Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife.**

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Reference to the Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joy J. O'Brien".

JOY J. O'BRIEN  
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator KILKELLY of Lincoln.  
Cosponsored by Representative DUNLAP of Old Town and  
Senator DAVIS of Piscataquis, Representative: SAVAGE of Buxton.

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

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**Sec. 1. 12 MRSA §7035, sub-§4**, as amended by PL 1997, c. 432, §4, is further amended to read:

**4. Search and rescue.** Whenever the commissioner receives notification that any person has gone into the woodlands or onto the inland waters of the State on a hunting, fishing or other trip and has become lost, stranded or drowned, the commissioner shall exercise the authority to take reasonable steps to ensure the safe and timely recovery of that person; except in cases involving downed or lost aircraft covered by Title 6, section 303.

A. The commissioner may summon any person in the State to assist in those search and rescue attempts. Each person summoned shall must be paid at a rate set by the commissioner with the approval of the Governor and shall be provided with subsistence while engaged in these activities.

C. The commissioner may enter into written agreements with other agencies or corporations, including commercial recreational areas, allowing partial search and rescue responsibility within specified areas.

D. The commissioner may terminate a search and rescue operation by members of his department when, in his the commissioner's opinion, all reasonable efforts have been exhausted.

E. The commissioner may recover all costs directly related to a specific search and rescue operation:

- (1) From the person for whom the search and rescue operation was conducted; or
- (2) If a person knowingly provided false information that leads to a search and rescue operation, from the person who provided that false information.

Any person who has knowledge that another person is lost, stranded or drowned in the woodlands or inland waters of the State shall notify the Warden Service Division of the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife.

The expenses of the department in search and rescue efforts are paid from the General Fund. The joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over inland fisheries and wildlife matters shall report out a bill during each regular session requesting General Fund money for the full cost of search and rescue.

## SUMMARY

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4       This bill requires that search and rescue efforts conducted  
by the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife must be  
specifically budgeted for and paid by the General Fund.