

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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R. & S.

L.D. 1927

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LABOR

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**STATE OF MAINE
SENATE
119TH LEGISLATURE
SECOND REGULAR SESSION**

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" to S.P. 677, L.D. 1927, Bill, "An Act to Ensure that an Eligible Work Force is Promptly Certified for Trade Act Assistance and Has Full Access to Training and Education Services as Provided by Law"

Amend the bill by striking out everything after the enacting clause and before the summary and inserting in its place the following:

'Sec. 1. 26 MRSA §2054 is enacted to read:

§2054. Worker Training Assistance Fund

1. Fund created. The Worker Training Assistance Fund, referred to in this section as the "fund," is created to ensure that workers are not limited in their ability to participate in training programs under the Act from having incurred intermittent periods of unemployment, prior to enrolling in training, as a result of their employers' actions.

2. Source of funds; administration. The fund is a nonlapsing, dedicated fund administered by the Department of Labor. The fund may accept state and federal funds, public and private grants and any other funds appropriated, allocated or donated to it. Interest on money held in the fund must be credited to the fund.

3. Benefits payable from fund. To the extent money is available in the fund, the Department of Labor shall pay weekly benefits to eligible persons in the amounts and for the periods described in this subsection.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT

R 01

2 A. A person is eligible to receive benefits from the fund
4 if the person was unable to enroll in a training program
6 under the Act after the person's employer was certified
8 under the Act because of a continuing attachment to that
10 employer. The person must have been entitled to trade
12 readjustment allowances and must be enrolled in a training
 program under the Act at the time the person is receiving
 benefits under this section. For purposes of this
 paragraph, a continuing attachment exists if the person has
 partial weeks of work or is laid off for one or more periods
 of less than 8 weeks each.

14 B. The amount of a person's weekly benefit is the amount of
16 the weekly trade readjustment allowance payable to that
 person under the Act.

18 C. The maximum amount of benefits payable to a person is
20 the amount of unemployment benefits the person received
 under chapter 13 during the shorter of the following periods:

22 (1) The period between the certification date of the
24 employer under the Act and the person's separation date
26 from the employer that most recently precedes the
 person's enrollment in training; and

28 (2) The 52-week period immediately preceding the
30 person's separation date from the employer that most
 recently precedes the person's enrollment in training.

32 D. A benefit may be paid only after the person has
34 exhausted all benefits under chapter 13 and under the Act.
36 A benefit may not be paid under this section if the person
 received 26 weeks or more of unemployment benefits under
 chapter 13 while attending a training program under the Act.

38 4. Application of other law. Except when inconsistent with
40 this section, the provisions of chapter 13 relating to
 computation of benefits, eligibility, appeals, penalties and
 administration apply to benefits provided under this section.

42 **Sec. 2. Appropriation.** The following funds are appropriated
44 from the General Fund to carry out the purposes of this Act.

2000-01

46 **LABOR, DEPARTMENT OF**

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT

R. 48

2 **Worker Training Assistance Fund**

4 All Other \$500,000

6 Provides a one-time
8 appropriation to the Worker
10 Training Assistance Fund to
12 provide weekly benefits to
14 persons enrolled in training
16 in certain circumstances.'

18 Further amend the bill by inserting at the end before the
20 summary the following:

22 **FISCAL NOTE**

24 **2000-01**

26 **APPROPRIATIONS/ALLOCATIONS**

28 General Fund \$500,000

30 This bill includes a General Fund appropriation of \$500,000
32 in fiscal year 2000-01 for the Department of Labor to establish
34 the Worker Training Assistance Fund.

36 The additional costs associated with administering the fund
38 and determining eligibility for benefits can be absorbed by the
40 Department of Labor utilizing existing budgeted resources.'

42 **SUMMARY**

44 This amendment replaces the bill. It creates a fund within
46 the Department of Labor to provide weekly benefits to certain
48 workers enrolled in federally funded training programs rather
than paying those benefits out of the Unemployment Compensation
Fund as proposed in the bill. Workers are eligible for benefits
from the fund if they are enrolled in training programs funded by
the United States Trade Act of 1974 but used up some of their
unemployment compensation benefits during intermittent layoffs
before they were able to enroll in the training program. The
benefits payable from this fund ensure that a worker receives at
least 26 weeks of state-funded benefits during the training
program in addition to any federal benefits to which the person
is entitled. The amendment also adds an appropriaton section and
a fiscal note to the bill.