

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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120th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2001

Legislative Document

No. 811

S.P. 243

In Senate, February 15, 2001

An Act to Retain Engineering Expertise in the State.

Reference to the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs 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 CATHCART of Penobscot.
Cosponsored by Speaker SAXL of Portland and
President MICHAUD of Penobscot, Representatives: COWGER of Hallowell, DUNLAP of
Old Town, ROSEN of Bucksport, TESSIER of Fairfield, THOMAS of Orono, WINSOR of
Norway.

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

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Sec. 1. 5 MRSA §12004-I, sub-§18-C is enacted to read:

<u>18-C.</u>	<u>Maine</u>	<u>Expenses</u>	<u>20-A MRSA</u>
<u>Education:</u>	<u>Engineers</u>	<u>Only</u>	<u>§12523</u>
<u>Financial</u>	<u>Recruitment</u>		
<u>Aid</u>	<u>and Retention</u>		
	<u>Advisory</u>		
	<u>Committee</u>		

Sec. 2. 20-A MRSA c. 428-A is enacted to read:

CHAPTER 428-A

MAINE ENGINEERS RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION PROGRAM

§12521. Definitions

As used in this chapter, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms have the following meanings.

1. Authority. "Authority" means the Finance Authority of Maine.

2. Chief executive officer. "Chief executive officer" means the Chief Executive Officer of the Finance Authority of Maine.

3. Eligible degree. "Eligible degree" means a bachelor's degree from a college of engineering within the University of Maine System.

4. Eligible employer. "Eligible employer" means a business in the State that employs engineers and that demonstrates need.

5. Eligible employment position. "Eligible employment position" means a full-time position of employment with an employer located in this State, a requirement of which is a bachelor's degree in an engineering discipline.

6. Program. "Program" means the Maine Engineers Recruitment and Retention Program.

§12522. Maine Engineers Recruitment and Retention Program

The Maine Engineers Recruitment and Retention Program is established to provide assistance to eligible employers seeking to recruit eligible individuals to fill eligible employment positions, by providing financial assistance to employees who

2 fill such positions and to encourage graduates to remain in the
3 State.

4 **§12523. Maine Engineers Recruitment and Retention Advisory**
5 **Committee established**

6 The Maine Engineers Recruitment and Retention Advisory
7 Committee, referred to in this section as the "committee," is
8 established. The committee shall assist the chief executive
9 officer of the authority in determining recipients annually. The
10 committee consists of the following 5 members appointed by the
11 chief executive officer:

12
13 **1. University of Maine System.** One member representing the
14 University of Maine System recommended by the Chancellor of the
15 University of Maine System;

16
17 **2. Maine engineers.** Two members, each representing a
18 statewide organization representing engineers in the State; and

19
20 **3. Public members.** Two members of the public representing
21 a variety of businesses that employ engineers to perform a
22 substantial part of their business.

23 Members serve for terms of 3 years and may be reappointed.

24
25 Members of the advisory committee are compensated in
26 accordance with Title 5, chapter 379.

27
28 **§12524. Loan repayment agreement recipients**

29 Each year eligible employers seeking to fill eligible
30 employment positions may apply on behalf of individuals with an
31 eligible degree seeking eligible employment positions who have
32 outstanding loans from financial institutions to obtain one or
33 more program loan repayment agreements. Applications must be
34 submitted to the authority at a time and in a format to be
35 determined by the authority.

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37 **§12525. Maximum loan repayment; participation**

38 The maximum program loan repayment amount available to each
39 employee is \$2,500 per year, for a maximum of 4 years. No more
40 than 10 program loan repayment agreements may be awarded in any
41 year.

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43 **§12526. Eligibility requirements**

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45 **1. Program loan repayment agreement.** A program loan
46 repayment agreement may be given only to an individual who is

2 employed in this State in an eligible employment position and who
3 has met other eligibility criteria established by rules of the
4 authority.

6 2. Matching funds. An eligible employer must provide
7 matching funds to be used for program loan repayment in an amount
8 equal to the amount of the program loan repayment to be provided
9 by the authority.

10 **§12527. Payment provisions**

12 The authority shall enter into program loan repayment
13 agreements with eligible students, on terms and conditions
14 acceptable to the authority, which at a minimum must require the
15 student and the student's employer to certify annually, before
16 payment of any installment by the authority under the program
17 loan agreement, that the student has been employed in an eligible
18 employment position for the preceding 12-month period. Payment
19 of any installment by the authority must be made directly for
20 credit to the student's account at the financial institution
21 certified by the student as responsible for administration of
22 that person's student loans.

24 **§12528. Nonlapsing revolving fund**

26 1. Creation of fund. The Maine Engineers Recruitment and
27 Retention Program Fund, referred to in this section as the
28 "fund," is created as a nonlapsing, interest-earning, revolving
29 fund to carry out the purposes of this chapter. The fund must be
30 deposited with, maintained and administered by the authority.
31 Any unexpended balance in the fund carries over for continued use
32 under this chapter. The authority may receive, invest and expend
33 on behalf of the fund money from gifts, grants, bequests, loans
34 and donations in addition to money appropriated or allocated by
35 the State. Money received by the authority on behalf of the
36 fund, except interest income, must be used for the purposes of
37 this chapter; interest income may be used for the purposes of
38 this chapter or to pay administrative costs incurred by the
39 authority, as determined appropriate by the authority.

40 2. Administrative expenses. Costs and expenses of
41 maintaining, servicing and administering the fund and
42 administering the program may be paid out of amounts in the fund.

44 **§12529. Rules**

46 The authority shall adopt rules to implement this chapter.
47 Rules adopted by the authority pursuant to this chapter are
48 routine technical rules pursuant to Title 5, chapter 375,
49 subchapter II-A.
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SUMMARY

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6 This bill establishes the Maine Engineers Recruitment and
Retention Program to provide financial assistance and incentives
8 to any graduate of a college of engineering within the University
of Maine System to become an employee in an engineering position
10 in the State. The program provides loan repayment to up to 10
eligible engineers working in Maine businesses. The employers
12 who apply for the loan repayment funds must match all funds
received by their employees. The program is administered by the
14 Finance Authority of Maine with assistance in determining
recipients from an advisory committee.