

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# 124th MAINE LEGISLATURE

## FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2009

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Legislative Document

No. 313

H.P. 249

House of Representatives, February 2, 2009

### An Act To Add a Fuel Oil Benefit to the Circuitbreaker Program

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Reference to the Committee on Taxation suggested and ordered printed.

*Millicent M. MacFarland*  
MILLICENT M. MacFARLAND  
Clerk

Presented by Representative TUTTLE of Sanford.  
Cosponsored by Senator BARTLETT of Cumberland and  
Representatives: ADAMS of Portland, BERRY of Bowdoinham, BUTTERFIELD of Bangor,  
Speaker PINGREE of North Haven, PIOTTI of Unity, TREAT of Hallowell, TRINWARD of  
Waterville, Senator: BRYANT of Oxford.

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

2           **Sec. 1. 36 MRSA §6201, sub-§1**, as amended by PL 2007, c. 700, Pt. A, §1, is  
3 further amended to read:

4           **1. Benefit base.** "Benefit base" means property taxes accrued or rent constituting  
5 property taxes accrued plus 50% of heating fuel costs. In the case of a claimant paying  
6 both rent and property taxes for a homestead, "benefit base" means both property taxes  
7 accrued and rent constituting property taxes accrued. The benefit base may not exceed  
8 \$3,350 for single-member households and \$4,400 for households with 2 or more  
9 members.

10           **Sec. 2. 36 MRSA §6201, sub-§4-A** is enacted to read:

11           **4-A. Heating fuel costs.** "Heating fuel costs" means the amount billed to a claimant  
12 during the calendar year preceding that in which a claim is filed for the cost of petroleum-  
13 based fuel used predominantly for:

14           A. Heating or cooling a homestead; and

15           B. Heating water for residential use by residents of a homestead.

16           **Sec. 3. 36 MRSA §6201-A**, as amended by PL 2005, c. 618, §18, is further  
17 amended to read:

18           **§6201-A. Short title**

19           This chapter may be known and may be cited as the "Maine Residents Property Tax  
20 and Heating Fuel Program" and may be referred to as "the Circuitbreaker Program."

21           **Sec. 4. 36 MRSA §6210, 2nd ¶**, as amended by PL 2005, c. 218, §59, is further  
22 amended to read:

23           The assessor shall include a checkoff to request an application for the Maine  
24 Residents Property Tax and Heating Fuel Program on the individual income tax form.  
25 The assessor shall also provide a paperless option for filing an application for the ~~Maine~~  
26 ~~Residents Property Tax Program~~ program.

27           **Sec. 5. 36 MRSA §6218**, as enacted by PL 1989, c. 534, Pt. A, §10, is amended to  
28 read:

29           **§6218. Readability; application; instructions**

30           The application form and instructions used by applicants for assistance under the  
31 Maine Residents Property Tax and Heating Fuel Program and its successor, if any, shall  
32 have a readability score, as determined by a recognized instrument for measuring adult  
33 literacy levels, equivalent to no higher than a 6th grade reading level.

34           **Sec. 6. 36 MRSA §6219**, as amended by PL 1997, c. 526, §14, is further amended  
35 to read:

