

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# 125th MAINE LEGISLATURE

## FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2011

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Legislative Document

No. 1437

S.P. 444

In Senate, April 7, 2011

### An Act To Implement Recommendations on Reinventing Government

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

*Joseph G. Carleton Jr.*

JOSEPH G. CARLETON, JR.  
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator WOODBURY of Cumberland.  
Cosponsored by Representative VOLK of Scarborough and  
Senators: HILL of York, HOBBS of York, KATZ of Kennebec, LANGLEY of Hancock,  
RECTOR of Knox, Representatives: CAIN of Orono, HAYES of Buckfield, PRESCOTT of  
Topsham.

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

2 **CONCEPT DRAFT**

3 **SUMMARY**

4 This bill is a concept draft pursuant to Joint Rule 208.

5 This bill proposes to establish a process by which more profound changes in  
6 governance and public policy in Maine can be advanced and implemented. It is intended  
7 to accomplish the more fundamental system reforms that elude the traditional legislative  
8 process.

9 This bill proposes a review of work produced over the past 5 years and more by  
10 numerous study groups that have convened to assess Maine's policy environment,  
11 government systems and public sector costs, with the objective of creating a more  
12 prosperous Maine economy. The reports that have emerged from these efforts have been  
13 widely praised and overlap substantially in their recommendations, yet the pathways from  
14 concept to implementation have been often elusive and ineffective. In the mainstream  
15 legislative process, it is too easy for the aggregated influence of more narrowly defined  
16 interests to impede the advancement of broader societal aims.

17 Among the more comprehensive studies and reports produced in recent years are the  
18 Brookings Institution report, Charting Maine's Future; Time for Change, the Final Report  
19 of the Joint Select Committee on Future Maine Prosperity; Measures of Growth in Focus  
20 2011 by the Maine Economic Growth Council; the 2-part series on Making Maine Work  
21 by the Maine Development Foundation and Maine State Chamber of Commerce; and  
22 Reinventing Maine Government by Envision Maine. Other organizations and policy  
23 experts that have advanced concepts for large-scale policy reform are associated with the  
24 Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center at the University of Maine, the Muskie School of  
25 Public Service at the University of Southern Maine, the Maine Heritage Policy Center,  
26 the Maine Center for Economic Policy, the Alliance for Maine's Future, Grow Smart  
27 Maine, the Maine Public Spending Research Group and others.

28 This bill is not intended as a replication of these past analytic efforts, though it  
29 includes a careful review and evaluation of past work. Instead, the emphasis of the bill is  
30 on translating past work into specific implementable changes in governance and policy  
31 and laying out a process that accomplishes those changes.

32 The bill proposes the appointment of a high-profile Commission on Reinventing  
33 Maine Government. The commission would be composed of established statesmen and  
34 stateswomen who have earned broad respect for their leadership, vision and commitment  
35 to Maine, who reflect a range of views and experience and who are sufficiently removed  
36 from government to have no direct interest in any particular set of changes. Each  
37 appointment to the commission should contribute to the group's credibility among Maine  
38 citizens and knowledge of how large organizations or governments function.

1           While the commission will review the many reports produced by past study groups to  
2 identify the substantive areas where legislative language might be crafted, the mission  
3 and product of the commission is not a new report, or even a compilation of previous  
4 reports. The goal of the commission will be to produce practical and specific legislation  
5 that would accomplish large-scale reform in governance and government structure and  
6 policy. Those recommendations may encompass the organizational structures of  
7 government, the diverse programs and responsibilities of government, the revenue  
8 sources and spending composition of government and other related areas of public policy.

9           The legislation recommended by the commission would be treated by the Legislature  
10 in the same manner as a citizen-initiated referendum. Thus the Legislature could either  
11 pass the recommended legislation, as presented, or send the legislation directly to  
12 referendum. Because of the magnitude of change envisioned by the bill, the referendum  
13 approach is encouraged as a way to solidify and deepen the public credibility and  
14 acceptance of the reforms.