

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# 126th MAINE LEGISLATURE

## SECOND REGULAR SESSION-2014

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Legislative Document

No. 1703

S.P. 668

In Senate, January 8, 2014

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### **An Act To Increase College Affordability and the Rate of Degree Completion**

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Approved for introduction by a majority of the Legislative Council pursuant to Joint Rule 203.

Reference to the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D M Grant'.

DAREK M. GRANT  
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by President ALFOND of Cumberland.

Cosponsored by Representative WILLETTE of Mapleton and

Senators: BOYLE of Cumberland, BURNS of Washington, CAIN of Penobscot, COLLINS of York, CRAVEN of Androscoggin, FLOOD of Kennebec, GERZOFSKY of Cumberland, GRATWICK of Penobscot, HASKELL of Cumberland, JACKSON of Aroostook, JOHNSON of Lincoln, KATZ of Kennebec, LACHOWICZ of Kennebec, LANGLEY of Hancock, MAZUREK of Knox, MILLETT of Cumberland, PATRICK of Oxford, SAVIELLO of Franklin, VALENTINO of York, VITELLI of Sagadahoc, Representatives: BEAVERS of South Berwick, BERRY of Bowdoinham, CAREY of Lewiston, CHIPMAN of Portland, DEVIN of Newcastle, DILL of Old Town, EVANGELOS of Friendship, Speaker EVES of North Berwick, FARNSWORTH of Portland, FREDETTE of Newport, GOODE of Bangor, GRAHAM of North Yarmouth, GRANT of Gardiner, HAMANN of South Portland, HERBIG of Belfast, HICKMAN of Winthrop, HOBBS of Saco, JOHNSON of Greenville, MARKS of Pittston, McCABE of Skowhegan, MOONEN of Portland, MORIARTY of Cumberland, MORRISON of South Portland, NELSON of Falmouth, POULIOT of Augusta, PRINGLE of Windham, RANKIN of Hiram, ROCHELO of Biddeford, RYKERSON of Kittery, SANBORN of Gorham, SAUCIER of Presque Isle, WILSON of Augusta.

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 would implement a comprehensive strategy to keep the cost of public  
6 postsecondary education in the State affordable, thereby increasing the graduation rate  
7 from state public institutions of higher education. The comprehensive strategy may  
8 include, but is not limited to:

9 1. Adoption of Oregon's "Pay Forward, Pay Back" pilot project's model of funding  
10 public postsecondary education, under which a student enrolled in a public institution of  
11 higher education, in lieu of paying tuition or fees, contracts to pay to the State a certain  
12 percentage of the student's annual income upon graduation for a specified number of  
13 years;

14 2. Scholarships to provide incentives for degree completion with agreements to  
15 remain in the State after graduation for specified periods. Under this program, a full  
16 scholarship for the 4th and final year of school at a public institution of higher education  
17 will be provided to students who agree to work in the State for a certain period of time  
18 following graduation;

19 3. Tuition guarantees that ensure that students will pay the same tuition for 4 years  
20 while attending one of the State's public institutions of higher education;

21 4. Low interest rates for student loans issued by the State for students meeting  
22 certain criteria, such as financial need, academic merit, graduating within 4 years or  
23 agreeing to work in public service for a certain period after graduation;

24 5. Adoption of performance-based higher education funding that links the level of  
25 funding of a state public institution of higher education to a metric such as the graduation  
26 rate of that state public institution of higher education;

27 6. Transition from the provision of tax credits for higher education to the provision of  
28 state grants and other forms of financial aid for higher education;

29 7. Increased funding to the State of Maine Grant Program;

30 8. Facilitation of expedient graduation through establishment of dual enrollment  
31 programs and so-called 3 plus 1 programs, in which students attend community colleges  
32 for 3 years and transfer for the final year to a 4-year program at another of the State's  
33 public institutions of higher education; and

34 9. Expansion of online learning opportunities, including the use of online course  
35 providers to develop online courses.