

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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128th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2017

Legislative Document

No. 465

S.P. 160

In Senate, February 9, 2017

An Act To Assist Veterans in Their Applications for Service-related Benefits

Reference to the Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Heather J.R. Priest".

HEATHER J.R. PRIEST
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator LIBBY of Androscoggin.
Cosponsored by Representative GOLDEN of Lewiston.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 37-B MRSA §501, first ¶**, as amended by PL 2015, c. 465, Pt. A, §2, is
3 further amended to read:

4 The Bureau of Maine Veterans' Services, referred to in this chapter as the "bureau," is
5 established and shall provide informational services, program assistance, memorial
6 facilities and financial aid to veterans in the State and their dependents in order to ensure
7 that they receive all entitlements due under the law, are relieved to the extent possible of
8 financial hardship, receive every opportunity for self-improvement through higher
9 education and are afforded proper recognition for their service and sacrifice to the Nation.
10 The bureau shall serve as the primary source of information for veterans in the State
11 regarding all services, benefits and honors administered by the State and, to the maximum
12 extent possible, services and benefits provided by the United States Department of
13 Veterans Affairs, veterans' service organizations and other organizations dedicated to
14 serving veterans. The bureau shall provide all veterans in the State the opportunity to
15 have their claims represented by the bureau acting under a power of attorney when filing
16 for service-related benefits to the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, veterans'
17 service organizations and other organizations dedicated to serving veterans.

18 **SUMMARY**

19 This bill requires the Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management,
20 Bureau of Maine Veterans' Services to provide all veterans in the State the opportunity to
21 have their claims represented by the bureau acting under a power of attorney when filing
22 for service-related benefits to the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, veterans'
23 service organizations and other organizations dedicated to serving veterans.