

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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128th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2017

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No. 1324

H.P. 918

House of Representatives, April 4, 2017

An Act To Support Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Maine's Economic Future

Reference to the Committee on Labor, Commerce, Research and Economic Development suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert B. Hunt".

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative GROHMAN of Biddeford.
Cosponsored by Senator MASON of Androscoggin and
Representative: POULIOT of Augusta.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 5 MRSA §15301, sub-§§1-A to 1-C** are enacted to read:

3 **1-A. Accelerator.** "Accelerator" means a program that supports entrepreneurs by
4 providing training, business assistance and mentors in a time-limited training program.

5 **1-B. Entrepreneurial support system.** "Entrepreneurial support system" means a
6 network of organizations and programs in the State that facilitate entrepreneurial growth
7 including capital providers, chambers of commerce, local governments, economic
8 development organizations, universities, incubators and accelerators.

9 **1-C. Incubator.** "Incubator" means a program that supports entrepreneurs by
10 providing training, business assistance and mentors and office, manufacturing or
11 laboratory space.

12 **Sec. 2. 5 MRSA §15301, sub-§2-A** is enacted to read:

13 **2-A. Technology transfer.** "Technology transfer" means the disclosure, protection
14 and licensing of intellectual property including patents, trademarks, copyrights and trade
15 secrets.

16 **Sec. 3. 5 MRSA §15303, sub-§6, ¶D,** as enacted by PL 1999, c. 401, Pt. AAA,
17 §3, is amended to read:

18 D. Shall coordinate its priorities with the applied research and development efforts of
19 the University of Maine System insofar as those efforts are in the targeted
20 technologies and encourage, when possible and appropriate, companies and research
21 laboratories receiving funds from the institute to establish joint ventures with the
22 university system; ~~and~~

23 **Sec. 4. 5 MRSA §15303, sub-§6, ¶E,** as enacted by PL 1999, c. 401, Pt. AAA,
24 §3, is amended to read:

25 E. Shall cooperate with the Department of Economic and Community Development,
26 ~~the Maine Science and Technology Foundation,~~ the Maine Manufacturing Extension
27 ~~Program Partnership,~~ the University of Maine System and others in their efforts to
28 ensure that a complementary system of support services, including, as needed and
29 appropriate, incubators, business assistance, technology transfer, market research,
30 patent research and similar services, is in place and available to companies and
31 research laboratories receiving funds from the institute;

32 **Sec. 5. 5 MRSA §15303, sub-§6, ¶¶F to J** are enacted to read:

33 **F.** May administer a technology center pursuant to section 15322;

34 **G.** May establish a program to promote and encourage the establishment,
35 maintenance and operation of incubators and accelerators in the entrepreneurial
36 support system by awarding grants and other forms of financial assistance to
37 companies, nonprofit entities, economic development agencies, educational
38 institutions, government agencies or other entities for programs that promote an

1 entrepreneurial business environment or train or educate entrepreneurs. Support for a
2 program under this paragraph must be awarded on a competitive basis, with
3 effectiveness and effect on Maine's economy as the primary criteria. The
4 administrative costs of a program under this paragraph are not management and
5 related operating costs of the institute under section 15305;

6 H. May establish a program, in cooperation with the University of Maine System, to
7 provide summer internship opportunities for college students in the entrepreneurial
8 support system. Students must be selected on a competitive basis and be placed with
9 companies, nonprofit entities, economic development agencies, educational
10 institutions, government agencies or other entities in targeted technologies. The
11 administrative costs of a program under this paragraph are not management and
12 related operating costs of the institute under section 15305.

13 I. May establish a program, in collaboration with the Maine Innovation Economy
14 Advisory Board under Title 10, section 949, to support the technology transfer
15 activities of the University of Maine System, other postsecondary educational
16 institutions in the State and nonprofit research institutes eligible for funding under an
17 asset technology fund established and administered by the institute, to increase the
18 level of patenting at the University of Maine System, other postsecondary institutions
19 in the State and nonprofit research institutes and to promote the licensing of the
20 patents, especially to new and existing companies with operations in the State.
21 Support under this paragraph may include expenses associated with patenting and
22 licensing. The administrative costs of a program under this paragraph are not
23 management and related operating costs of the institute under section 15305; and

24 J. May establish a program in collaboration with the University of Maine School of
25 Law to support the commercialization and manufacturing of innovations in the State
26 by providing education and assistance with the patent process of the United States
27 Patent and Trademark Office to companies, inventors and entrepreneurs in the State.
28 The administrative costs of a program under this paragraph are not management and
29 related operating costs of the institute under section 15305.

30 **Sec. 6. 5 MRSA §15322, sub-§2, ¶B**, as enacted by PL 2011, c. 691, Pt. C, §4, is
31 amended to read:

32 B. The Department of Economic and Community Development shall determine
33 assistance criteria and desired program outcomes and establish an application process
34 so that technology centers possessing personnel with applicable skills can be chosen
35 to best deliver services to technology-based entrepreneurs within a respective area
36 unless the technology centers are administered by the Maine Technology Institute
37 pursuant to section 15303, subsection 6, paragraph F.

38 **SUMMARY**

39 This bill expands the powers of the Maine Technology Institute by allowing the
40 institute to establish programs that support organizations and programs in the State that
41 facilitate entrepreneurial growth and internships with Maine's innovative businesses and
42 protect intellectual property by the State's research institutions, companies and
43 entrepreneurs. This bill also allows the Maine Technology Institute to administer

1 technology centers that support early-stage development of technology-based businesses
2 that are currently administered by the Department of Economic and Community
3 Development.