

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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130th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2021

Legislative Document

No. 551

H.P. 396

House of Representatives, February 24, 2021

An Act To Accelerate Weatherization Efforts in the State

Received by the Clerk of the House on February 22, 2021. Referred to the Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology pursuant to Joint Rule 308.2 and ordered printed pursuant to Joint Rule 401.

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

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative KESSLER of South Portland.
Cosponsored by Senator POULIOT of Kennebec.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 35-A MRSA §10102, sub-§6-A** is enacted to read:

3 **6-A. Low-income.** "Low-income" means, when used to describe an individual or
4 member of a household, participating in any local, state or federal program that is based on
5 income eligibility.

6 **Sec. 2. 35-A MRSA §10104, sub-§4, ¶F,** as amended by PL 2019, c. 313, §5 and
7 c. 476, §4, is further amended by repealing subparagraph (2) and enacting the following in
8 its place:

9 (2) Weatherizing 17,500 homes and businesses by 2025 and 35,000 homes and
10 businesses by 2030, including at least 1,000 units of housing for low-income
11 individuals or households per year from 2022 to 2030; and

12 **Sec. 3. 35-A MRSA §10109, sub-§4, ¶A,** as amended by PL 2019, c. 69, §1, is
13 further amended to read:

14 A. Trust funds must be allocated for measures, investments, loans, technical assistance
15 and arrangements that reduce electricity consumption, increase energy efficiency or
16 reduce greenhouse gas emissions and lower energy costs at commercial or industrial
17 facilities and for investment in measures that lower residential heating energy demand
18 and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The measures that lower residential heating
19 demand must be fuel-neutral and may include, but are not limited to, energy efficiency
20 improvements to residential buildings and upgrades to efficient heating systems that
21 will reduce residential energy costs and greenhouse gas emissions, as determined by
22 the board. The trust shall ensure that measures to reduce the cost of residential heating
23 are available for low-income households ~~as defined by the trust~~. When promoting
24 electricity cost and consumption reduction, the trust may consider measures at
25 commercial and industrial facilities that also lower peak capacity demand. Subject to
26 the apportionment pursuant to this subsection, the trust shall fund conservation
27 programs that give priority to measures with the highest benefit-to-cost ratio, as long
28 as cost-effective collateral efficiency opportunities are not lost, and that:

29 (1) Reliably reduce greenhouse gas production and heating energy costs by fossil
30 fuel combustion in the State at the lowest cost in funds from the trust fund per unit
31 of emissions; or

32 (2) Reliably increase the efficiency with which energy in the State is consumed at
33 the lowest cost in funds from the trust fund per unit of energy saved.

34 **Sec. 4. 35-A MRSA §10110, sub-§2, ¶A,** as amended by PL 2019, c. 365, §3, is
35 further amended to read:

36 A. The trust shall consider, without limitation, conservation programs that:

37 (1) Increase consumer awareness of cost-effective options for conserving energy;

38 (2) Create more favorable market conditions for the increased use of energy-
39 efficient products and services;

40 (3) Promote sustainable economic development and reduce environmental
41 damage;

1 (4) Reduce the price of electricity over time for all consumers by achieving
2 reductions in demand for electricity during peak use periods, including by the
3 implementation of beneficial electrification; ~~and~~

4 (5) Reduce total energy costs for electricity consumers in the State by increasing
5 the efficiency with which electricity is consumed; ~~and~~

6 (6) Reduce total energy consumption by electricity consumers in the State through
7 provision of cost-effective energy efficiency and weatherization measures in
8 accordance with section 10119, subsection 2, paragraph A, subparagraph (1).

9 **Sec. 5. 35-A MRSA §10110, sub-§2, ¶B**, as amended by PL 2015, c. 494, Pt. A,
10 §39, is further amended by amending subparagraph (1) to read:

11 (1) Target at least 10% of funds for electricity conservation collected under former
12 subsection 4 or subsection 4-A or \$2,600,000, whichever is greater, to programs
13 for low-income residential consumers, ~~as defined by the board by rule;~~

14 **Sec. 6. 35-A MRSA §10111, sub-§1, ¶B**, as enacted by PL 2009, c. 372, Pt. B,
15 §3, is amended by amending subparagraph (1) to read:

16 (1) A reasonable percentage of the available funds is directed to programs for low-
17 income residential consumers, ~~as defined by the trust.~~ The trust shall establish the
18 percentage based on an assessment of the opportunity for cost-effective
19 conservation measures for such consumers, including an assessment of the number
20 of low-income residential consumers that may be eligible for such programs;

21 **Sec. 7. 35-A MRSA §10119, sub-§2, ¶A**, as amended by PL 2019, c. 306, §6, is
22 further amended by repealing subparagraph (1) and enacting the following in its place:

23 (1) To weatherize 17,500 homes and businesses by 2025 and 35,000 homes and
24 businesses by 2030, including at least 1,000 units of housing for low-income
25 individuals or households per year from 2022 to 2030; and

26 SUMMARY

27 This bill allows Efficiency Maine Trust funds for conservation programs that help
28 reduce energy costs for electricity consumers to be used toward weatherization efforts to
29 achieve the weatherization of 17,500 homes and businesses by 2025 and 35,000 homes and
30 businesses by 2030, including at least 1,000 units of housing for low-income individuals
31 or households per year. It also defines the term "low-income" in the laws governing the
32 trust.