

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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130th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST SPECIAL SESSION-2021

Legislative Document

No. 1733

S.P. 577

In Senate, June 3, 2021

An Act To Provide Allocations for the Distribution of State Fiscal Recovery Funds

(EMERGENCY)

Reference to the Committee on Appropriations and Financial 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 Senator BREEN of Cumberland. (GOVERNOR'S BILL)

1 **Emergency preamble.** Whereas, acts and resolves of the Legislature do not
2 become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

3 **Whereas,** the federal American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, Public Law 117-2,
4 establishes the State Fiscal Recovery Fund; and

5 **Whereas,** the State Fiscal Recovery Fund will be used to provide funds to the State
6 to respond to the public health emergency caused by coronavirus disease 2019, commonly
7 referred to as COVID-19, and to its negative economic effects, including by providing
8 assistance to households and small and nonprofit businesses; aid to affected industries, such
9 as tourism, travel and hospitality; and assistance to workers performing essential work
10 during the COVID-19 pandemic; and

11 **Whereas,** in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within
12 the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as
13 immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now,
14 therefore,

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

16 **Sec. 1. Department of Administrative and Financial Services to submit**
17 **legislation allocating state fiscal recovery funds.** The Department of Administrative
18 and Financial Services shall propose a bill to the Joint Standing Committee on
19 Appropriations and Financial Affairs during the First Special Session of the 130th
20 Legislature that allocates funds received from the State Fiscal Recovery Fund established
21 in the federal American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, Public Law 117-2. The legislation must
22 accomplish the following goals.

23 **1. Immediate recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.** The funding must provide
24 new and renewed support for businesses in the State, particularly small businesses, to
25 ensure their doors stay open and their workers are safe and on the job and the economy is
26 secure in the short term. In order to meet this goal, the legislation must:

- 27 A. Establish and provide funding for a program of grants and loan guarantees to
28 businesses;
- 29 B. Invest in heritage industries such as historic sites, buildings and museums for the
30 purpose of encouraging tourism;
- 31 C. Lower health care costs for small businesses;
- 32 D. Replenish the State's account in the Unemployment Trust Fund;
- 33 E. Sustain new businesses and entrepreneurs; and
- 34 F. Encourage diversity in business ownership and management.

35 **2. Long-term economic growth.** Based on the recommendations of the Governor's
36 Economic Recovery Committee and those in the Maine Economic Development Strategy
37 2020-2029 from the Department of Economic and Community Development that call for
38 robust investment in research and development, skills training and new worker attraction
39 to spur new businesses and attract new residents to the State, the bill must provide funding
40 to encourage long-term economic growth. This must be accomplished by:

- 1 A. Making strategic investments for future prosperity by stimulating innovation and
2 creating and implementing a health workforce initiative, a program for clean energy
3 partnerships and a domestic trade program;
- 4 B. Expanding and strengthening the State's workforce by:
- 5 (1) Attracting and retaining workers;
- 6 (2) Expanding the Maine Career Advantage program;
- 7 (3) Creating a program to welcome remote workers;
- 8 (4) Providing training for workers through career and technical education programs
9 and the University of Maine System;
- 10 (5) Advancing equity in the workplace; and
- 11 (6) Connecting workers to job opportunities; and
- 12 C. Increasing the efficiency of licensing by the State.
- 13 **3. Infrastructure revitalization.** The bill must provide funding to support systems
14 that ensure residents are able to live a decent, healthy and productive life in the State, retain
15 current residents and attract others to move to the State to live here, raise their families and
16 contribute to the economy. This must be accomplished in the following manner:
- 17 A. Improving family infrastructure through:
- 18 (1) The establishment of the Maine Connectivity Authority to provide broadband
19 access in the entire State;
- 20 (2) The construction of more affordable housing;
- 21 (3) Encouragement of energy efficiency; and
- 22 (4) Expanding the availability of child care and early childhood programs;
- 23 B. Investing in transportation improvement by:
- 24 (1) Repairing the State's roads and bridges as detailed in the 2021 Capital Work
25 Plan;
- 26 (2) Protecting infrastructure from climate change;
- 27 (3) Implementing a workforce transportation pilot program; and
- 28 (4) Expanding the availability of municipal and other public electric vehicle
29 charging stations;
- 30 C. Investing in outdoor recreation and marine resources by:
- 31 (1) Upgrading state parks;
- 32 (2) Improving fisheries and wildlife infrastructure; and
- 33 (3) Improving and monitoring fishing industry infrastructure;
- 34 D. Supporting essential drinking and wastewater projects to ensure the safety of
35 drinking water and repairing wastewater infrastructure;
- 36 E. Facilitating energy needs through grants; and

1 F. Modernizing and protecting state technology through upgrades to government
2 systems, including access and cybersecurity.

3 **Sec. 2. Report.** Upon receipt of the legislation described in section 1, the Joint
4 Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs may report out a bill to the
5 130th Legislature based on the legislation.

6 **Emergency clause.** In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this legislation
7 takes effect when approved.

8 **SUMMARY**

9 This bill requires the Department of Administrative and Financial Services to submit
10 legislation to the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs that,
11 using funding from the State Fiscal Recovery Fund as established by the federal American
12 Rescue Plan Act of 2021, accomplishes the following goals:

- 13 1. Immediate recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic;
- 14 2. Long-term economic growth; and
- 15 3. Infrastructure revitalization.

16 The joint standing committee is authorized to report out a bill, based on the legislation
17 submitted by the department, to the 130th Legislature.