

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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130th MAINE LEGISLATURE

SECOND REGULAR SESSION-2022

Legislative Document

No. 1861

S.P. 660

In Senate, January 5, 2022

An Act To Establish the Safe Homes Program

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

Reference to the Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety 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 DESCHAMBAULT of York.
Cosponsored by Representative: PICKETT of Dixfield.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 1 MRSA §150-R** is enacted to read:

3 **§150-R. Safe Homes Awareness Month**

4 The month of September of each year is designated as Safe Homes Awareness Month
5 and the Governor shall annually issue a proclamation to raise awareness among the people
6 of the State of the importance of safety in the home and of the existence of and assistance
7 that is available from the Safe Homes Program established in Title 25, section 7001.

8 **Sec. 2. 25 MRSA Pt. 15** is enacted to read:

9 **PART 15**

10 **SAFE HOMES**

11 **CHAPTER 801**

12 **SAFE HOMES PROGRAM**

13 **§7001. Safe Homes Program**

14 **1. Definitions.** As used in this section, unless the context otherwise indicates, the
15 following terms have the following meanings.

16 A. "Dangerous weapon" has the same meaning as in Title 17-A, section 2, subsection
17 9, paragraph C.

18 B. "Department" means the Department of Public Safety.

19 C. "Designated groups" means public schools, public preschool programs, foster
20 homes, veterans programs, hospitals or other facilities in which newborns are delivered
21 and members of the public.

22 D. "Firearm" has the same meaning as in Title 17-A, section 2, subsection 12-A.

23 E. "Foster home" means a family foster home as defined in Title 22, section 8101,
24 subsection 3.

25 F. "Prescription drug" has the same meaning as in Title 22, section 8731, subsection
26 3-A.

27 G. "Public preschool program" has the same meaning as in Title 20-A, section 1,
28 subsection 23-A.

29 H. "Public school" has the same meaning as in Title 20-A, section 1, subsection 24.

30 **2. Program established.** The Safe Homes Program is established and administered
31 by the department to support the safe storage of prescription drugs, firearms and dangerous
32 weapons in homes by providing educational information and materials and grants in
33 accordance with this section.

34 **3. Educational information and materials.** The department shall support designated
35 groups that provide educational information and materials on the safe storage of

1 prescription drugs, firearms and dangerous weapons in homes. The educational
2 information and materials must include, but are not limited to, information and materials
3 on:

4 A. Veterans programs and other state, community and private resources and programs
5 that are available to assist in achieving the safe storage of prescription drugs, firearms
6 and dangerous weapons in homes; and

7 B. Discounts, incentives and savings programs available from public and private
8 entities, including assistance through the Safe Homes Program Fund established in
9 subsection 5.

10 **4. Grant program.** The department shall develop a grant program to provide funding
11 for the purpose of providing educational information and materials in accordance with
12 subsection 3 and for purchasing firearm safety devices, including, but not limited to, safes,
13 locks and lockboxes designed for securing firearms.

14 A. Grants may be provided under this subsection to designated groups and nonprofit
15 and community organizations serving designated groups.

16 B. The department shall administer the grant program developed pursuant to this
17 subsection through an agreement with a statewide association of sheriffs.

18 C. The department shall adopt rules to implement the grant program. The rules must
19 include procedures for assisting applicants with the application process, accepting
20 applications, approving and disapproving applications and distributing funding,
21 coupons or vouchers to successful applicants. Rules adopted pursuant to this paragraph
22 are routine technical rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

23 **5. Safe Homes Program Fund.** The Safe Homes Program Fund is established as a
24 nonlapsing fund to provide funding to achieve the purposes of this section. The fund
25 consists of any funds received from private and public sources. The fund must be held
26 separate and apart from all other money, funds and accounts. Any balance remaining in
27 the fund at the end of any fiscal year must be carried forward to the next fiscal year.

28 **6. List.** Within available resources, the Commissioner of Public Safety shall maintain
29 a list of state, community and private resources and programs that are available to support
30 the purposes of this section.

31 SUMMARY

32 This bill establishes the Safe Homes Program administered by the Department of
33 Public Safety to support the safe storage of prescription drugs, firearms and dangerous
34 weapons in homes by providing educational information and materials and grants. Under
35 the bill, grants may be provided to public schools, public preschool programs, foster homes,
36 veterans programs, hospitals or other facilities in which newborns are delivered and
37 members of the public and to nonprofit and community organizations serving those groups
38 for the purpose of providing educational information and materials and for purchasing
39 firearm safety devices. The bill also designates September as Safe Homes Awareness
40 Month.