



## **131st MAINE LEGISLATURE**

## FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2023

**Legislative Document** 

No. 41

S.P. 33

In Senate, January 4, 2023

An Act to Increase the Hourly Reimbursement Rate of the Maine Commission on Indigent Legal Services Lawyers to \$150 per Hour

(EMERGENCY)

Reference to the Committee on Judiciary suggested and ordered printed.

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DAREK M. GRANT Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator KEIM of Oxford. Cosponsored by Representative MORIARTY of Cumberland.

1 2	<b>Emergency preamble. Whereas,</b> acts and resolves of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and
3 4 5 6	Whereas, the Maine Commission on Indigent Legal Services exists to provide legal representation to Maine citizens who are entitled to counsel at state expense under the United States Constitution or under the Constitution of Maine or the Maine Revised Statutes; and
7 8	Whereas, at current reimbursement rates the commission cannot recruit and retain a sufficient number of attorneys to represent indigent clients entitled to counsel; and
9 10	Whereas, this has created a shortage of attorneys rostered with the Maine Commission on Indigent Legal Services, which cannot meet the demand for counsel; and
11 12 13 14	Whereas, in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now, therefore,
15	Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:
16 17	<b>Sec. 1.</b> Appropriations and allocations. The following appropriations and allocations are made.
18	INDIGENT LEGAL SERVICES, MAINE COMMISSION ON
19	Maine Commission on Indigent Legal Services Z112
20 21	Initiative: Appropriates ongoing funding to increase attorney reimbursement for indigent legal services from \$80 per hour to \$150 per hour.
22 23 24	GENERAL FUND2023-242024-25All Other\$17,985,730\$17,985,730
25	GENERAL FUND TOTAL \$17,985,730 \$17,985,730
26 27	<b>Emergency clause.</b> In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this legislation takes effect when approved.
28	SUMMARY
29 30 31	This bill provides General Fund appropriations to the Maine Commission on Indigent Legal Services to increase the reimbursement rate for indigent legal services from \$80 per hour to \$150 per hour.