

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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131st MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2023

Legislative Document

No. 1352

H.P. 866

House of Representatives, March 28, 2023

An Act to Remove Barriers to Becoming a Lawyer

Reference to the Committee on Judiciary suggested and ordered printed.

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

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative BOYER of Poland.
Cosponsored by Senator BRAKEY of Androscoggin and
Representatives: ANDREWS of Paris, COLLINGS of Portland, DANA of the Passamaquoddy
Tribe, LOOKNER of Portland, MILLIKEN of Blue Hill, POIRIER of Skowhegan, SUPICA of
Bangor, WILLIAMS of Bar Harbor.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 4 MRSA §803, sub-§2**, as corrected by RR 2021, c. 1, Pt. B, §22, is amended
3 to read:

4 **2. Further qualifications.** Each applicant shall produce to a board of bar examiners
5 satisfactory evidence that the applicant:

6 A. Graduated from a law school accredited by the American Bar Association;

7 B. Graduated from a law school accredited by the United States jurisdiction in which
8 it is located, that the applicant has been admitted to practice by examination in one or
9 more jurisdictions within the United States and has been in active practice there for at
10 least 3 years;

11 C. Graduated from a foreign law school with a legal education that, in the board's
12 opinion, is equivalent to that provided in those law schools accredited by the American
13 Bar Association; or

14 D. Successfully completed 2/3 of the requirements for graduation from a law school
15 accredited by the American Bar Association and then pursued the study of law in the
16 office of an attorney within the State for at least one year; or

17 E. For a minimum of 2 years, studied law in the law office of an attorney, referred to
18 in this paragraph as "the supervising attorney," for at least 18 hours each week during
19 the law office's regular business hours and:

20 (1) The supervising attorney had been admitted to the practice of law and in good
21 standing for a minimum of 5 years prior to the commencement of the 2-year
22 supervision period and remained in good standing throughout the supervision
23 period;

24 (2) Throughout the 2-year supervision period, the supervising attorney personally
25 supervised the applicant for at least 5 hours a week and examined the applicant at
26 least once a month on the materials studied that month;

27 (3) At least once every 6 months during the 2-year supervision period, the
28 supervising attorney submitted a report using a form or format prescribed by the
29 board, if any, describing the number of hours the applicant studied each week
30 during the law office's regular business hours; the number of hours the applicant
31 was supervised by the supervising attorney; specific information on the books and
32 other materials studied; and any other information required by the board; and

33 (4) The supervising attorney did not personally supervise more than 4 applicants
34 at any one time.

35 **SUMMARY**

36 This bill provides that an applicant for admission to the bar who has studied law under
37 the supervision of a licensed attorney for a minimum of 18 hours per week over a 2-year
38 period need not attend law school prior to taking the bar examination.