

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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Date: 3/12/24 Majority L.D. 1710
(Filing No. H-821)

HOUSING

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**STATE OF MAINE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
131ST LEGISLATURE
SECOND REGULAR SESSION**

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" to H.P. 1099, L.D. 1710, "An Act to Establish the Maine Rental Assistance and Guarantee Program and Amend the Laws Regarding Tenants and the Municipal General Assistance Program"

Amend the bill by striking out the title and substituting the following:

'Resolve, to Establish the Commission to Improve Tenant-Landlord Relationships and Maximize the Use of Housing Vouchers'

Amend the bill by striking out everything after the title and inserting the following:

'Sec. 1. Commission established. Resolved: That the Commission to Improve Tenant-Landlord Relationships and Maximize the Use of Housing Vouchers, referred to in this resolve as "the commission," is established. For the purposes of this resolve, "housing voucher" means a tenant-based housing choice voucher issued under the United States Housing Act of 1937, Public Law 75-412, 50 Stat. 888, Section 8, as amended.

Sec. 2. Commission membership. Resolved: That, notwithstanding Joint Rule 353, the commission consists of 14 members appointed as follows:

1. Two members of the Senate, appointed by the President of the Senate, including at least one member of the party holding the largest number of seats in the Legislature and at least one member of the party holding the 2nd largest number of seats in the Legislature;
2. One member representing an organization that advocates for justice issues, including issues related to housing discrimination in the State, appointed by the President of the Senate;
3. One member representing an organization that represents the interests of landlords in the State, appointed by the President of the Senate;
4. One member with experience assisting individuals with accessing rental assistance, including individuals receiving shelter or transitional housing services, appointed by the President of the Senate;

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT

1 5. Three members of the House of Representatives, appointed by the Speaker of the
 2 House, including at least one member of the party holding the largest number of seats in
 3 the Legislature and at least one member of the party holding the 2nd largest number of seats
 4 in the Legislature;

5 6. One member with expertise in legal issues affecting tenants with low incomes,
 6 appointed by the Speaker of the House;

7 7. One member who is a landlord who enters into leases with tenants who rely on
 8 rental assistance, such as housing vouchers and municipal general assistance, appointed by
 9 the Speaker of the House;

10 8. Two members who are renters with experience using housing vouchers or other
 11 rental assistance programs, including municipal general assistance, appointed by the
 12 Speaker of the House;

13 9. One member who resides in income-restricted housing in the State, appointed by
 14 the Speaker of the House; and

15 10. One member representing an organization that provides housing navigation
 16 services to renters using a rental assistance program, such as housing vouchers or municipal
 17 general assistance, to secure housing in the State, appointed by the Speaker of the House.

18 The executive director of the Maine Human Rights Commission and the director of the
 19 Maine State Housing Authority, or their designees, serve as nonvoting members of the
 20 commission.

21 **Sec. 3. Chairs. Resolved:** That the first-named Senate member is the Senate chair
 22 and the first-named House of Representatives member is the House chair of the
 23 commission.

24 **Sec. 4. Appointments; convening of commission. Resolved:** That all
 25 appointments must be made no later than 30 days following the effective date of this
 26 resolve. The appointing authorities shall notify the Executive Director of the Legislative
 27 Council once all appointments have been completed. After appointment of all members,
 28 the chairs shall call and convene the first meeting of the commission. If 30 days or more
 29 after the effective date of this resolve a majority of but not all appointments have been
 30 made, the chairs may request authority and the Legislative Council may grant authority for
 31 the commission to meet and conduct its business.

32 **Sec. 5. Duties. Resolved:** That the commission shall:

33 1. Consider the extent to which recipients of housing vouchers are subject to
 34 discrimination based on the fact they are recipients of housing assistance and the adequacy
 35 of current law to deter or prevent discrimination against renters who use income-based
 36 assistance programs, including, but not limited to, housing vouchers or municipal general
 37 assistance;

38 2. Consider establishing a process for investigating and correcting discrimination
 39 based on income source against recipients of housing assistance;

40 3. Consider establishing a mediation process between tenants and landlords to support
 41 successful tenancy for tenants who use income-based rental assistance;



131st MAINE LEGISLATURE

LD 1710

LR 833(02)

An Act to Establish the Maine Rental Assistance and Guarantee Program and Amend the Laws Regarding Tenants and the Municipal General Assistance Program

Fiscal Note for Bill as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-821)

Committee: Housing

Fiscal Note Required: Yes

Fiscal Note

Legislative Cost/Study

Legislative Cost/Study

The general operating expenses of this study are projected to be \$3,750 in fiscal year 2024-25. The Legislature's budget for the 2024-2025 biennium includes \$14,500 in each of fiscal years 2023-24 and 2024-25 for the costs of legislative studies, as well as \$38,909 of balances carried over from prior years for this purpose. Whether these amounts are sufficient to fund all studies will depend on the number of studies authorized by the Legislative Council and the Legislature. The additional costs of providing staffing assistance to the study during the interim can be absorbed utilizing existing budgeted staff resources.

Fiscal Detail and Notes

Any additional costs to the Maine Human Rights Commission and the Maine State Housing Authority associated with serving on the Commission to Improve Tenant Landlord Relationships and Maximize Use of Housing Vouchers are anticipated to be minor and can be absorbed within existing budgeted resources.