

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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SIXTY-FIRST LEGISLATURE.

HOUSE.

No. 34.

STATE OF MAINE.

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD ONE THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED AND
EIGHTY-THREE.

AN ACT to provide for greater security against fire
in buildings used for public purposes.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives
in Legislature assembled, as follows :*

SECTION 1. Every church, theatre, hall, or other
2 building or structure intended to be used tempora-
3 rily or permanently for any public purpose, and
4 every school house or school room, public or pri-
5 vate, built since the seventeenth day of April,
6 eighteen hundred and eighty-one, or hereafter
7 constructed, shall have all inner doors, intended
8 to be used for egress therefrom, open outwards.

SECT. 2. All outer doors of buildings or struc-
2 tures of the kind mentioned in the preceding sec-
3 tion shall be kept open when such buildings or

4 structures are used by the public, unless such doors
5 open outwards; except that fly doors opening both
6 ways may be kept closed.

SECT. 3. Every public house where guests are
2 lodged, and every shop, mill, factory, and other
3 building in which any trade, manufacture, or busi-
4 ness is carried on, which requires the presence of
5 workmen or other persons in any part thereof
6 above the first story, and all halls and other rooms
7 used for public assembly or for public amusement,
8 shall at all times be provided with suitable and
9 sufficient fire escapes, outside stairs or ladders from
10 each story above the level of the ground easily
11 accessible to all inmates in case of fire or of an
12 alarm of fire; the sufficiency thereof to be deter-
13 mined as provided in the following section.

SECT. 4. In towns or parts of towns where there
2 is no organized fire department, it shall be the duty
3 of the municipal officers annually to make careful
4 inspection of the precautions and safeguards pro-
5 vided in compliance with the foregoing require-
6 ments, and to pass upon their sufficiency in respect
7 to arrangement and number, and upon their state
8 of repair; and to direct and order such alterations,
9 additions and repairs as they may adjudge neces-

10 sary. In towns, cities and villages which have an
11 organized fire department, the duties aforesaid shall
12 be discharged by the board of fire engineers.

SECT. 5. Such municipal officers or fire engi-
2 neers shall give written notice to the occupant of
3 such building, room, hall or other place hereinbe-
4 fore specified, also to the owner thereof, if known,
5 of their determination as to the sufficiency of said
6 precautions and safeguards, specifying in said no-
7 tice any alteration, addition or repair which they
8 deem necessary, and require. Sixty days shall
9 be allowed after such notice and order, for com-
10 pliance with the same.

SECT. 6. Any owner or occupant who neglects
2 or refuses within the time so allowed to comply
3 with such order, shall forfeit and pay a fine of fifty
4 dollars, and an additional sum of five dollars a day
5 for every day's continuance of such neglect or
6 refusal; and the building, or part of building so
7 occupied shall be deemed to be a common nuisance,
8 without any other proof thereof than proof of its
9 use; and the keeper shall be subject to the penal-
10 ties provided in case of other nuisances. And
11 said officers may forbid the use of such building
12 for any public purpose until their order has been
13 complied with. And if the owner or occupant

14 of said building shall let or use the same in viola-
15 tion of such order, said owner or occupant shall
16 forfeit not less than twenty, nor more than fifty
17 dollars for each offence.

SECT. 7. Whenever the municipal officers or
2 engineers, upon inspection, find that proper safe-
3 guards and precautions for escape in case of fire,
4 or of alarm, have been provided, it shall be their
5 duty to give to the occupant of such building a
6 certificate, under their hands, of such fact; and
7 such certificate shall be valid only for one year
8 from its date. It shall be the duty of such officers
9 to return to the clerk's office of their town or city,
10 monthly, a list of such certificates by them issued,
11 which the clerk shall record in a book kept for
12 that purpose.

SECT. 8. Every person receiving such certificate
2 shall pay to such officers the sum of two dollars
3 therefor, and shall keep such certificate posted in
4 the building affected thereby. Such annual certi-
5 ficate, so posted, is to be taken as *prima facie*
6 evidence of the inspection of such building, and of
7 its provision with the suitable safeguards and pre-
8 cautions hereinbefore mentioned.

SECT. 9. Every occupant of such building who
2 neglects or refuses to procure such certificate, or

3 to have the same posted as aforesaid, shall forfeit
4 and pay a fine of ten dollars for each and every
5 week he so neglects and refuses.

SECT. 10. Every municipal officer or fire engi-
2 neer who shall refuse or neglect to perform the
3 duties imposed upon him by this act, shall forfeit
4 and pay the sum of fifty dollars.

SECT. 11. All fines and forfeitures imposed by
2 this act shall be recovered by and for the town or
3 city where the building is located, by an action on
4 the case, or by indictment.

SECT. 12. Chapter seventy, of the public laws
2 of the year eighteen hundred and seventy-eight,
3 and chapter fifty, of the public laws of the year
4 eighteen hundred and eighty-one, are hereby re-
5 pealed.

STATE OF MAINE.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, }
January 29, 1883. }

Reported by Mr. HALE, from Committee on the Judiciary, and
ordered printed.

ORAMANDAL SMITH, *Clerk.*