

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# SEVENTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE

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HOUSE.

No. 740

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## STATE OF MAINE.

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IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD ONE THOUSAND NINE  
HUNDRED AND NINE.

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AN ACT to amend Sections 52, 58 and 59 of Chapter 7 of the Revised Statutes, relating to Forest Commissioner and Protection of Forests.

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

Section 1. Section 52 of Chapter 7 of the Revised Statutes is hereby amended by striking out all of said section, 3 and insert instead thereof the following:

'Sect. 52. The selectmen of towns shall be forest fire 5 wardens therein, and the services of such selectmen acting 6 as said fire wardens, shall be paid for at the same rate as 7 is paid for their other official services. It shall be the duty 8 of the fire wardens when a fire is discovered to take such

9 measures as may be necessary for its control and extinguish-  
10 ment. For this purpose they shall have authority to call  
11 upon any persons in the town for assistance, and such per-  
12 sons shall receive such compensation, not exceeding twenty  
13 cents per hour, as said selectmen may determine, the same  
14 to be paid by the town. But no town shall be holden to  
15 pay for extinguishing forest fires in any year an amount  
16 greater than two per cent. upon its valuation for purposes of  
17 taxation. If any person so ordered to assist and not ex-  
18 cused from said service by said forest fire wardens on ac-  
19 count of sickness, disability, or some important business or  
20 engagement, shall neglect to comply with any such order he  
21 shall forfeit the sum of ten dollars, to be recovered in ac-  
22 tion of debt in the name and to the use of the town, by the  
23 treasurer thereof. If any person shall suffer damage from  
24 fire in consequence of the negligence or neglect of the select-  
25 men of any town to perform the duties required by this act,  
26 such person shall have an action on the case to recover from  
27 the town where the fire occurs to the amount of his dam-  
28 ages so sustained not to exceed two per cent. of the valua-  
29 tion of said town. This act shall also apply to cities. The  
30 chief engineer of the fire department of cities shall be forest  
31 fire wardens and shall have the same powers and duties in  
32 carrying out the provisions of this act as selectmen of  
33 towns.

Sect. 2. Section 58 of Chapter 7 of the Revised Statutes  
2 is hereby amended by striking out the words in the first and  
3 second lines, "and county commissioners, the latter with  
4 respect to unorganized places," so that said section when  
5 amended shall read:

'Sect. 58. Municipal officers in towns shall proceed im-  
7 mediately to a strict inquiry into the cause and origin of  
8 fires within wood lands; and in all cases where such fires  
9 are found to have originated from the unlawful act of any  
10 person, to cause the offender to be prosecuted without  
11 delay.'

Sect. 3. Section 59 of Chapter 7 of the Revised Statutes  
2 is hereby amended by striking out the words in the second,  
3 third and fourth lines, "and the county commissioners where  
4 a forest fire of more than two acres has occurred in any of  
5 the unincorporated places in any county within a year," so  
6 that said section when amended shall read:

'Sect. 59. The selectmen of towns in which a forest fire  
8 of more than one acre in extent has occurred, within a month  
9 shall report to the forest commissioner the extent of area  
10 burned over, to the best of their information, together with  
11 the probable amount of property destroyed, specifying the  
12 value of timber as near as may be, and the amount of cord  
13 wood, logs, bark or other forest product, fencing, bridges  
14 and buildings that have been burned. They shall also re-  
15 port the cause of these fires if they can be ascertained, and

16 the measures employed and found effective in checking their  
17 progress. Blanks for the reports required in this act shall  
18 be furnished by said forest commissioner at the expense of  
19 the State.'

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STATE OF MAINE.

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

Augusta, March 20, 1909.

Reported by Mr. COLBY from Committee on Forest Preservation and Water Supply and ordered printed under joint rules.

E. M. THOMPSON, *Clerk.*