

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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SEVENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

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HOUSE

NO. 600

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*House of Representatives, March 9, 1915.*

*Ordered, That five hundred copies be printed and that the same be referred to the Committee on Labor.*

*Committee on Reference.*

*Presented by Mr. Jordan of Baileyville.*

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STATE OF MAINE

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

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AN ACT for the Safeguarding of Employes in Factories, Mills  
and Workshops against Danger from Fire.

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

Section 1. Every factory, workshop, mill or place where  
2 the manufacture of goods of any kind is carried on shall  
3 hereafter, under the supervision and direction of the Com-  
4 missioner of Labor, be provided with ample and proper  
5 means and ways of egress or escape in emergency arising  
6 from fire or otherwise, sufficient for the use of all persons  
7 therein, and as well, shall be protected as far as practicable  
8 against the origin and spread of fire.

Sect. 2. The Commissioner of Labor as State Factory Inspector shall have power to order in all such buildings the construction of additional inside stairways and outside fire escapes of such construction and location as he may deem proper, and the alteration and repair of existing stairways and fire escapes; of doors and windows for egress, and their method of opening; that suitable numbers of extinguishers be kept and maintained; that hose be kept on each floor attached to a suitable water supply and capable of reaching any part of said floor; that egresses shall at all times be unobstructed by anything whatever, whether stationary or movable; that outside or inside doors shall not be locked or fastened during hours of labor so as to prevent free egress; and any other construction, alteration, equipment, or requirement which in his judgment is necessary to furnish proper and adequate protection to the inmates of such buildings.

Sect. 3. If the Commissioner of Labor as State Factory Inspector, or any authorized agent of the Department of Labor, shall find upon inspection that in his opinion such buildings are not provided with ample and proper means and ways of egress or escape in emergency arising from fire or otherwise, he shall notify in writing the owner, proprietor, or agent of such workshops or factories to make, within thirty days, the alterations, or additions, or obtain equipment, or do anything by him deemed necessary for the safety and protection of the employes; and if such alterations

11 or additions are not made, equipment obtained, or other re-  
12 quirements complied with, within thirty days from the date  
13 of such written notice, or within such time as said altera-  
14 tions or additions can be made, equipment obtained, or other  
15 requirements complied with, with proper diligence upon the  
16 part of such proprietors, owners or agents, said proprietors,  
17 owners or agents so notified shall be deemed guilty of a mis-  
18 demeanor, and upon complaint of the Commissioner of La-  
19 bor as State Factory Inspector, or any authorized agent of  
20 the Department of Labor before a court of competent ju-  
21 risdiction, and upon conviction thereof, shall be fined in a  
22 sum not less than twenty-five dollars, nor more than two  
23 hundred dollars, or by imprisonment not more than thirty  
24 days, or by both such fine and imprisonment.

Sect. 4. Nothing in this act shall be held to abrogate the  
2 duty of municipal officers or board of fire engineers to make  
3 inspection of such buildings as provided in Chapter twenty-  
4 eight of the Revised Statutes, sections thirty-seven to forty-  
5 five inclusive, and acts amendatory thereof; but after inspec-  
6 tion of such buildings as designated in section one of this  
7 act, before issuing their certificate, if they find proper safe-  
8 guards and precautions for escape from fire, or before issu-  
9 ing written notice to the occupant or owner of alteration,  
10 additions or repairs which they will require, if they find  
11 them improper,—shall first submit to the Commissioner of  
12 Labor a description of the building inspected, stating size,  
13 and material of which constructed; average number of em-

14 ployes on each floor; and existing methods of escape from  
15 fire which they deem adequate, in the one instance, and a  
16 similar description of building, persons employed, existing  
17 methods of escape from fire, and their recommendations as  
18 to alterations, additions, or repairs, in the other; and obtain  
19 his approval of same in writing before issuing said certifi-  
20 cate or notice.

Such certificate or notice issued without such approval is  
22 invalid, and municipal officers or boards of fire engineers  
23 issuing such certificate or notice without such approval shall  
24 each be fined the sum of ten dollars, upon complaint by the  
25 Commissioner of Labor as State Factory Inspector, or any  
26 authorized agent of the Department of Labor, before a court  
27 of competent jurisdiction.

Sect. 5. No building two stories or more in height which  
2 is designed to be used in whole or in part as a factory, work-  
3 shop, mill or place where the manufacture of goods of any  
4 kind is carried on, erected after the first day of August,  
5 1915; nor any such building not then in present use for such  
6 purposes be adopted for such purposes; nor any additions  
7 be constructed two stories or more in height after said date,  
8 —until the plans and specifications as to stairways, ele-  
9 vators, shafts, fire escapes, doors and windows, and other  
10 provisions for the protection of employes from fire be first  
11 submitted by the person causing its erection or adoption, or  
12 by the architect thereof, to the Commissioner of Labor, and  
13 approved in writing by him. With such plans and specifica-

14 tions shall be submitted an estimated number of employes  
15 to be engaged on each story or floor of the proposed build-  
16 ing, its size, number of stories, and material of which con-  
17 structed.

Sect. 6. All such buildings as designated in section five  
2 shall be equipped with two or more inside stairways placed  
3 as far as possible at opposite ends of the building, and one  
4 or more outside fire escapes, if in the opinion of the Com-  
5 missioner necessary; the number, location and construction  
6 of additional stairways and fire escapes to be determined  
7 and approved by the Commissioner of Labor.

All stairways and elevator shafts in such buildings shall  
9 be enclosed in walls of fireproof or fire resisting materials  
10 which shall run from the basement floor to and through the  
11 roof. The stairways shall be constructed as nearly as pos-  
12 sible of fireproof or fire resisting materials, and all entrances  
13 thereto shall be protected by doors of fireproof or fire re-  
14 sisting materials, except where such opening is in the ex-  
15 terior wall of the building.

Sect. 7. All fire escapes on such buildings as are desig-  
2 nated in section five shall be constructed according to plans  
3 and specifications approved by the Commissioner of Labor  
4 and shall consist of outside iron balconies and stairways at  
5 each floor above the first, connecting said balconies to the  
6 ground except where fire escape is over a highway or priv-  
7 ate driveway, when a balanced stairway shall connect the  
8 lowest balcony to the ground. The balcony on the top floor

9 shall be provided with a gooseneck ladder from said balcony  
10 to and above the roof when ordered by the Commissioner  
11 of Labor. The balconies shall be not less than fifty-two  
12 inches wide in the clear, when one balcony is placed directly  
13 above the other, and three feet when the fire escape is con-  
14 structed on the straight run plan, taking in at each story  
15 above the ground floor at least one door of each part of the  
16 building separated by inside walls. They shall not be more  
17 than one foot below door sills. There shall be a landing not  
18 less than twenty-six inches square at the head and foot of  
19 each stairway; the stairway well hole on each platform shall  
20 be of a size sufficient to provide a clear headway, and shall  
21 be protected by a railing similar to that provided for bal-  
22 ance of platform. All entrances to fire escape platforms shall  
23 be made by means of doors which must be cut down to the  
24 level of the floors, except when some other construction is  
25 recommended by the Commissioner of Labor. The doors  
26 shall open in a manner designated by said Commissioner.  
27 All doors or windows opening onto a fire escape or directly  
28 under a fire escape shall be metal covered and all glass used  
29 therein shall be wire glass.

All balcony rails shall in no case be less than three feet  
31 above the floor of the balcony and shall extend around the  
32 entire platform and shall in all cases go through the wall  
33 of the building at each end and be properly secured by nuts  
34 with washers at least four inches square and three-eighths  
35 of an inch thick. The bottom rail shall in no case be more

36 than eight inches from or above the balcony floor. Balcony  
37 floors shall be wrought iron slats not less than two inches  
38 by three-eighths of an inch placed on edge not more than  
39 one inch apart. The platform of balconies shall be con-  
40 structed to safely sustain a load of not less than eighty  
41 pounds per square foot. The stairways shall be constructed  
42 and erected to sustain all parts and carry a safe load of not  
43 less than one hundred pounds per square foot. Brackets  
44 shall be placed not more than four feet apart and shall ex-  
45 tend across full width of balcony, and on new buildings  
46 shall be set as walls are being built.

Sect. 8. All buildings as designated in section five, after  
2 their completion in accordance with said plans and specifi-  
3 cations of construction as approved by the Commissioner,  
4 shall from time to time be inspected, and shall at all times  
5 be subject to all sections of this act applicable to existing  
6 factories, workshops and mills.

Sect. 9. Whoever erects or constructs a building as desig-  
2 nated in section five, or an architect or other person who  
3 draws plans or specifications, or superintendents the erec-  
4 tion or construction of such a building, or whoever adopts  
5 a present building for manufacturing purposes, in violation  
6 of the provisions of section five to section eight of this act  
7 inclusive, shall be punished by a fine of not less than fifty  
8 nor more than four hundred dollars.

Sect. 10. All fines or penalties provided for by the terms  
2 of this act may be recovered or enforced by complaint or



3 indictment, and in all prosecutions under this act and  
4 amendments and additions thereto, trial justices and judges  
5 of the municipal and police courts within their counties shall  
6 have by complaint original and concurrent jurisdiction with  
7 the supreme, judicial and superior courts.