

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

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N I N E T Y - S E C O N D      L E G I S L A T U R E

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**Legislative Document**

**No. 1218**

H. P. 1504

House of Representatives, July 10, 1946

Referred to Committee on Judiciary. Sent up for concurrence and 1,500 copies ordered printed.

HARVEY R. PEASE, Clerk

Presented by Mr. Allen of Portland.

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**STATE OF MAINE**

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IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED  
FORTY-SIX

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**AN ACT Relating to Control of Rentals.**

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**Emergency preamble.** Whereas, by the expiration on June 30, 1946 of the federal law, rents fixed under said act by the office of price administration for dwelling houses, apartments, flats and rooms in rooming houses and hotels became free from the control thereof by the office of price administration; and

Whereas, an emergency has been created by the lapse of said act due to the acute shortage of dwelling houses, housing accommodations and hotel accommodations, which emergency has been created by war, the effects of war and the aftermath of hostilities, and congestion by returning veterans and their families; and

Whereas, rentals have been increased and occupants have been threatened to be removed from their present abodes unless they agree to pay such increase in rent; and

Whereas, it is necessary to prevent exactions of unjust, unreasonable and oppressive rents and to forestall profiteering, speculations and manipulative practices to obtain such increase or removal of tenants by owners of housing and rooming accommodations; and

Whereas, in the judgment of the legislature these facts create an emergency within the meaning of section 16, part third, article IV of the constitution of Maine as enacted by article XXXI, and require the following legislation as immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety ; now, therefore,

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

**Sec. 1. Rent control board.** There is hereby created a rent control board consisting of 3 members, who shall be appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the council, who shall serve for the duration of this act. The attorney-general shall be a member. The other 2 members shall be a real estate appraiser or agent and a person who shall represent the public interests of tenants. The board shall meet at Augusta twice monthly. The attorney-general shall receive no compensation. The other 2 members shall receive compensation at the rate of \$10 per day and reasonable expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.

**Sec. 2. Control.** All persons, partnerships, associations and corporations, either as owners or in control of dwelling houses, apartment houses, flats, rooms, rooming houses and hotel rooms, are hereby prohibited from demanding or receiving for rents or accommodations therein rentals more than 10% in excess of that paid or charged on June 30, 1946. New dwelling houses, apartment houses, flats, rooms, rooming houses and hotel rooms which are rented for the first time after the effective date of this act shall be subject to the prevailing rental rates in their respective cities and towns.

**Sec. 3. Powers of board.** The board shall have power to make rules and regulations for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this act. Violations of the provisions of this act shall be brought to the attention of the board, which shall have the power to investigate all complaints and its decisions shall be final.

**Sec. 4. Penalty.** Whoever violates the provisions of this act shall be punished by a fine of not less than \$500, or by imprisonment for not less than 6 months, or by both such fine and imprisonment.

**Sec. 5. Limitation.** No violations of the provisions of this act between June 30, 1946 and the effective date of this act shall be prosecuted.

**Sec. 6. Duration.** The provisions of this act shall extend only until June 30, 1947.

**Sec. 7. Appropriation.** There is hereby appropriated from the unap-

propriated surplus of the general fund the sum of \$5,000 to carry out the provisions of this act.

**Emergency clause.** In view of the emergency cited in the preamble this act shall take effect when approved.