

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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N I N E T Y - N I N T H L E G I S L A T U R E

Legislative Document

No. 60

H. P. 40

House of Representatives, January 15, 1959.

Referred to the Committee on Judiciary, sent up for concurrence and ordered printed.

HARVEY R. PEASE, Clerk

Presented by Mr. Emmons of Kennebunk.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED
FIFTY-NINE

AN ACT Relating to Freedom of Access to Public Records and Proceedings.

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

R. S., c. 1, §§ 36-41, additional. Chapter 1 of the Revised Statutes is amended by adding thereto 6 new sections to be numbered 36 to 41, to read as follows:

'Freedom of Access to Public Records and Proceedings.

Sec. 36. Declaration of public policy; open meetings. The Legislature finds and declares that public proceedings exist to aid in the conduct of the people's business. It is the intent of the Legislature that their actions be taken openly and that their deliberations be conducted openly.

Sec. 37. Definition of public proceedings. The term "public proceedings" as used in sections 36 to 41 shall mean the transaction of governmental functions affecting any or all the citizens of the State by any administrative or legislative body, or agency of the State, or any of its political subdivisions, when such administrative or legislative body, or agency is convened for the purpose of transacting the governmental function with which it is charged under any statute or under any rule or regulation of such administrative or legislative body, or agency.

Sec. 38. Meetings to be open to the public. All public proceedings shall be open and public, and all persons shall be permitted to attend any meeting of these bodies or agencies, except as otherwise provided.

Sec. 39. Executive sessions permitted. Nothing contained in sections 36 to 41 shall be construed to prevent these bodies or agencies from holding executive sessions from which the public is excluded, but no ordinances, resolutions, rules,

regulations, contracts or appointments shall be finally approved at such executive sessions.

Sec. 40. Records available for public inspection. Every citizen of this State shall, during the regular business hours of all such bodies or agencies of the State, or any political subdivision thereof, have the right to inspect the public records of such bodies or agencies and to make memoranda abstracts from the records so inspected, except as may now or hereafter be otherwise specifically provided by law.

Sec. 41. A violation of any of the provisions of sections 36 to 41 or the wrongful exclusion of any person or persons from any meetings for which provision is made shall be punishable by a fine of not more than \$500 or by imprisonment for less than one year.'