

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

The following document is provided by the
LAW AND LEGISLATIVE DIGITAL LIBRARY
at the Maine State Law and Legislative Reference Library
<http://legislature.maine.gov/lawlib>



Reproduced from electronic originals
(may include minor formatting differences from printed original)

LAWS
OF THE
STATE OF MAINE

AS PASSED BY THE

ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-FIRST LEGISLATURE

SECOND REGULAR SESSION
January 3, 2024 to May 10, 2024

THE GENERAL EFFECTIVE DATE FOR
SECOND REGULAR SESSION
NON-EMERGENCY LAWS IS
AUGUST 9, 2024

PUBLISHED BY THE REVISOR OF STATUTES
IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE MAINE REVISED STATUTES ANNOTATED,
TITLE 3, SECTION 163-A, SUBSECTION 4.

Augusta, Maine
2024

Sec. 13. Effective date. This Act takes effect January 1, 2025.

Effective January 1, 2025.

CHAPTER 595

H.P. 1467 - L.D. 2281

An Act to Reconvene a Driver Education Working Group to Evaluate Hardships to Underserved Populations and Low-income Families

Emergency preamble. Whereas, acts and resolves of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

Whereas, Resolve 2023, chapter 94 established a working group to study the issue of access to driver education for underserved populations and low-income families; and

Whereas, due to the adjournment date of the First Special Session of the 131st Legislature, the working group had insufficient time to complete its duties; and

Whereas, it is imperative that the working group established by this legislation have ample time to complete its duties; and

Whereas, in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of Maine 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. Working group. The Department of the Secretary of State, Bureau of Motor Vehicles shall convene a working group to study potential solutions regarding the cost of and access to driver education for underserved populations and low-income families.

Sec. 2. Working group membership. Notwithstanding Joint Rule 353, the working group membership is as follows:

1. One member of the Senate who serves on the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation, appointed by the President of the Senate;
2. One member of the House of Representatives who serves on the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation, appointed by the Speaker of the House;
3. One member representing the driver education school industry, appointed by the Secretary of State;

4. One member representing a State Police traffic division, appointed by the Chief of the State Police;

5. One or more members representing affected groups, including, but not limited to, low-income families, immigrant or refugee communities, tribal communities and foster children, appointed by the Secretary of State;

6. An employee of the Bureau of Motor Vehicles who is responsible for the oversight of driver education, appointed by the Secretary of State;

7. The Commissioner of Education or the commissioner's designee;

8. The Commissioner of Health and Human Services or the commissioner's designee;

9. The Commissioner of Labor or the commissioner's designee;

10. The Deputy Secretary of State having oversight over the Bureau of Motor Vehicles or the deputy secretary's designee;

11. The Secretary of State or the secretary's designee; and

12. One member representing the Bureau of Highway Safety, appointed by the Commissioner of Public Safety.

To the greatest extent practicable, the appointing authorities shall reappoint the persons they appointed to the working group established pursuant to Resolve 2023, chapter 94.

A legislative member who is not reelected may continue to serve on the working group for the duration of the working group. If a member elects not to continue serving on the working group, a person must be appointed to the working group in the same manner as the vacating member was appointed.

Sec. 3. Compensation. Notwithstanding the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 3, section 2 or any provision of law to the contrary, members of the working group may not be compensated for their work on the working group.

Sec. 4. Duties. The working group shall:

1. Identify and document the current status of the availability of the State's driver education program;
2. Examine and identify potential methods of providing driver education at a lower cost for underserved populations and low-income families;
3. Identify possible funding mechanisms to pay for part or all of driver education for low-income families; and
4. Make recommendations based on the findings of the working group.

Sec. 5. Staff assistance. Notwithstanding Joint Rule 353, the Department of the Secretary of State, Bureau of Motor Vehicles shall provide necessary staffing services to the working group, and Legislative Council staff support is not authorized.

Sec. 6. Report. Notwithstanding Joint Rule 353, no later than February 3, 2025, the working group shall submit a report that includes its findings and recommendations for presentation to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over transportation matters. The committee is authorized to submit legislation related to the report to the 132nd Legislature in 2025.

Emergency clause. In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this legislation takes effect when approved.

Effective April 9, 2024.

CHAPTER 596

S.P. 972 - L.D. 2254

An Act to Clarify Permissible Election and Lobbying Expenditures by Consumer-owned Utilities and the Casco Bay Island Transit District

Emergency preamble. Whereas, acts and resolves of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

Whereas, legislation was enacted during the First Special Session of the 131st Legislature amending the laws governing political expenditures, lobbying expenditures, trade association contributions and educational expenditures made by a public utility or an affiliated interest; and

Whereas, the new provisions of law include exemptions for consumer-owned water utilities related to educational expenditures and trade association contributions but not for lobbying expenditures or certain local referendum election expenditures; and

Whereas, the Public Utilities Commission is currently engaging in rulemaking that will include interpreting the new laws; however, rulemaking will not be completed before adjournment of the Second Regular Session of the 131st Legislature; and

Whereas, the Public Utilities Commission, through the rule-making process, could interpret the new laws to effectively prohibit or significantly limit a consumer-owned utility from engaging in lobbying activities or activities necessary to finance legally required trustee elections or referendum elections and notify the public about those elections; and

Whereas, in the judgment of the Legislature, it is important to clarify these new laws with respect to consumer-owned utilities during the Second Regular Session of the 131st Legislature and for the changes to take effect earlier than 90 days after the date of adjournment; and

Whereas, in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of Maine 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. 35-A MRSA §302, sub-§2, ¶A, as enacted by PL 2023, c. 286, §1, is amended to read:

A. Contributions or gifts to political candidates, political parties, political or legislative committees or any committee or organization working to influence referendum petitions or elections. Nothing in this paragraph prohibits a consumer-owned water utility, a consumer-owned transmission and distribution utility or the Casco Bay Island Transit District, created by Private and Special Law 1981, chapter 22, from undertaking expenditures related to notifying the public of or conducting trustee elections or local referendum elections directly related to or legally required for the operation of a consumer-owned water utility, consumer-owned transmission and distribution utility or the Casco Bay Island Transit District;

Sec. 2. 35-A MRSA §302, sub-§2, ¶C, as enacted by PL 2023, c. 286, §1, is amended to read:

C. Expenditures for lobbying or grassroots lobbying. This paragraph does not apply to a consumer-owned water utility, a consumer-owned transmission and distribution utility or the Casco Bay Island Transit District, created by Private and Special Law 1981, chapter 22; and

Emergency clause. In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this legislation takes effect when approved.

Effective April 9, 2024.

CHAPTER 597

H.P. 197 - L.D. 299

An Act to Correct Language Related to Medicaid Coverage for Children

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