

PLEASE NOTE: Legislative Information **cannot** perform research, provide legal advice, or interpret Maine law. For legal assistance, please contact a qualified attorney.

An Act Relating to the Authority of the Legislative Council over the Fiscal Note Process

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

Sec. 1. 3 MRSA §162, sub-§18, as amended by PL 1997, c. 43, §2, is further amended to read:

18. Out-of-state travel report. To submit to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over appropriations and financial affairs a quarterly report on out-of-state travel activity of the Legislature. The report must be submitted within 15 days after the end of each quarter and must include, for each individual who has been authorized to travel, the destination, purpose and cost by funding source of each trip; and

Sec. 2. 3 MRSA §162, sub-§19, as enacted by PL 1997, c. 43, §3, is amended to read:

19. Legislative information available through the Internet. To make the following information available through the Internet: legislative documents, committee hearing schedules, work session schedules, status of legislation, voting records of Legislators, the laws of Maine, study reports and reports of other study groups established by the Legislature and any other information designated by the Legislative Council; and

Sec. 3. 3 MRSA §162, sub-§20 is enacted to read:

20. Fiscal notes. To oversee and ensure accuracy in the fiscal note process and the development of fiscal notes of legislation sponsored by a member of the Legislature. The Legislative Council shall require the Office of Fiscal and Program Review to provide a sponsor of legislation with:

- A. Review and comment periods relating to the prepared fiscal notes;
- B. The assumptions on which the fiscal note is based;
- C. The specific revenues, savings and costs associated with the legislation;
- D. Opportunities to meet with any agency, person or organization providing information relating to the fiscal notes;
- E. The opportunity for the sponsor to indicate in a fiscal note that the sponsor disagrees with the fiscal note and the reasons for the disagreement; and
- F. The impact of any increased or decreased federal funds associated with legislation, including the impact on employment, salaries and benefits and tax revenues.

SUMMARY

This bill requires the Legislative Council to provide members of the Legislature with a more open process and more information relating to fiscal notes and the fiscal note process. Legislators must be given an opportunity to question fiscal notes before they become official and to meet with a person, agency or organization that contributes information regarding a fiscal note. If the sponsor disagrees with the official fiscal note, the fiscal note must include a note to that effect and the reasons for the sponsor's disagreement.