

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

An Act To Clarify Worker Payment for Clothing and Equipment

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

Sec. 1. 26 MRSA §629, 2nd ¶, as enacted by PL 1981, c. 285, is amended to read:

For purposes of this subchapter, the word "debt" means a benefit to the employee. "Debt" does not include items incurred by the employee in the course of the employee's work or dealing with the customers on ~~his~~the employer's behalf, such as cash shortages, inventory shortages, dishonored checks, dishonored credit cards, damages to the employer's property in any form or any merchandise purchased by a customer. Uniforms, personal protective equipment or other tools of the trade that are considered to be primarily for the benefit or convenience of the employer may not be considered a "debt." For purposes of this paragraph, "uniforms" includes shirts or other items of clothing bearing the company name or logo. The employer may not mandate that an employee pay for the cleaning and maintenance of a uniform, but may have a written agreement whereby the employee chooses to have a payroll deduction for the cost of cleaning and maintenance.

SUMMARY

This bill provides that an employer may not charge an employee for uniforms, personal protective equipment or other tools of the trade that are considered to be primarily for the benefit or convenience of the employer.