



# 131st MAINE LEGISLATURE

## FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2023

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Legislative Document

No. 468

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H.P. 285

House of Representatives, February 7, 2023

### An Act Regarding Regional Law Libraries

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Submitted by the Judicial Department pursuant to Joint Rule 204.  
Reference to the Committee on Judiciary suggested and ordered printed.

*Robert B. Hunt*  
ROBERT B. HUNT  
Clerk

Presented by Representative MORIARTY of Cumberland.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 4 MRSA §192**, as amended by PL 2013, c. 533, §2, is repealed.

3 **Sec. 2. 4 MRSA §193**, as amended by PL 2013, c. 533, §3, is repealed.

4 **Sec. 3. 4 MRSA §193-A** is enacted to read:

5 **§193-A. Regional law libraries**

6 The Administrative Office of the Courts shall allocate and disburse to a law library in  
7 Portland and to a law library in Bangor funds, in an amount determined by the State Court  
8 Administrator, that the law libraries may use to purchase legal resources and library  
9 equipment and supplies and to fund all or a portion of the costs of any necessary personnel.  
10 Both law libraries must receive the same amount of funds, which may be disbursed semi-  
11 annually or more often, as the Administrative Office of the Courts determines.

12 The law libraries in Portland and Bangor must make their resources available to other  
13 libraries in the State and to the public.

14 If the State Court Administrator determines that there is no board of directors of a law  
15 library as required by section 196; that the board of directors of either law library is not  
16 fulfilling its duties under this section or section 196; or that the board of directors is  
17 otherwise not properly operating a law library that is available to the public, the State Court  
18 Administrator may withhold the funds that the law library would have otherwise received.

19 **Sec. 4. 4 MRSA §195**, as amended by PL 2001, c. 250, §3, is repealed.

20 **Sec. 5. 4 MRSA §196**, as amended by PL 2013, c. 533, §5, is further amended to  
21 read:

22 **§196. Duties, county committee Boards of directors**

23 ~~The County Law Library Committee~~ A board of directors of each law library that  
24 receives funds pursuant to section 193-A shall establish local operating policies, such as,  
25 but not limited to, hours, circulation policies and photocopy privileges. Each county  
26 committee board shall exercise supervision over the expenditures of private and nonstate  
27 funds, including endowments, and may use those funds to upgrade its county law library.  
28 ~~Each county committee shall determine space requirements.~~

29 The board of directors of a county bar association may serve as the board of directors  
30 of a law library if the law library has no dedicated board of directors.

31 **Sec. 6. 4 MRSA §197**, as amended by PL 2013, c. 533, §6, is further amended to  
32 read:

33 **§197. Duties of treasurer and clerk**

34 ~~The treasurer of each County Law Library Committee~~ law library that receives funds  
35 pursuant to section 193-A, under the direction of the County Law Library Committee law  
36 library's board of directors under section 196, shall apply all private and nonstate moneys  
37 received, and all bequests and gifts, to form and operate a the law library. The clerk of the  
38 law library shall keep an exact record of all the proceedings of the committee board of  
39 directors.

1 The treasurer shall, annually, before the last Wednesday in July, deposit in the office  
2 of the State Court Administrator a statement of the funds received and expended by the  
3 ~~treasurer~~ law library during the preceding fiscal year.

4 **Sec. 7. 30-A MRSA §121, sub-§1, ¶A**, as enacted by PL 1987, c. 737, Pt. A, §2  
5 and Pt. C, §106 and amended by PL 1989, c. 6; c. 9, §2; and c. 104, Pt. C, §§8 and 10, is  
6 further amended to read:

7 A. Courthouses pursuant to Title 4, section 115, with a suitable room in ~~each~~ a  
8 courthouse in Cumberland County for the ~~county~~ law library;

9 **SUMMARY**

10 This bill amends the laws governing the system of law libraries administered by the  
11 Administrative Office of the Courts. It requires the Administrative Office of the Courts to  
12 allocate and disburse funds to a law library in Portland and a law library in Bangor for the  
13 purchase of resources, equipment and supplies and to fund the costs of necessary personnel.  
14 It requires the board of directors of each of the 2 law libraries to establish operating policies  
15 and to exercise supervision over the expenditures of funds.