



130th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2021

Legislative Document

No. 773

H.P. 578

House of Representatives, March 5, 2021

An Act To Assist Public School Students and Families Who Are Homeless

Reference to the Committee on Labor and Housing suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "R B. Hunt".

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative BRENNAN of Portland.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 20-A MRSA §4014** is enacted to read:

3 **§4014. Referral for housing assistance**

4 Upon identifying a public school student as a homeless child or youth as defined in the
5 federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvements Act of 2001, 42
6 United States Code, Section 11431 et seq., a local educational agency liaison for children
7 and youth experiencing homelessness pursuant to the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless
8 Education Assistance Improvements Act of 2001, 42 United States Code, Section 11431 et
9 seq. shall make a referral to the Maine State Housing Authority for temporary housing
10 assistance for the student and the student's family under Title 30-A, section 4762.

11 **Sec. 2. 30-A MRSA §4762, sub-§3**, as enacted by PL 1993, c. 175, §9, is amended
12 to read:

13 **3. Provisions governing assistance.** The program must be administered subject to
14 the provisions in this section. Priority must be given to persons who demonstrate a need
15 for assistance and the ability to repay a loan and to homeless students and the families of
16 homeless students referred to the authority under Title 20-A, section 4014. For the purpose
17 of this subsection, "homeless student" means a public school student identified as a
18 homeless child or youth as defined in the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Education
19 Assistance Improvements Act of 2001, 42 United States Code, Section 11431 et seq. by a
20 local educational agency liaison for children and youth experiencing homelessness
21 pursuant to the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvements
22 Act of 2001, 42 United States Code, Section 11431 et seq.

23 A. The state authority, by rules adopted in accordance with the Maine Administrative
24 Procedure Act, shall establish priorities of assistance. These priorities must be based
25 on the household income of the applicant, the demonstrated need for assistance, the
26 ability to repay a loan, the needs of a homeless student and the family of the homeless
27 student and other criteria established by the state authority.

28 B. Grants may be provided only when:

- 29 (1) The grant is essential to securing a decent, safe and sanitary rental unit for the
30 applicant;
- 31 (2) The income of the applicant is insufficient to repay any loan or portion of a
32 loan;
- 33 (3) All available resource alternatives have been exhausted; and
- 34 (4) The applicant has satisfied all other program priorities and requirements as
35 established by the state authority.

36 C. Loans from the fund may be made for a period based on the applicant's ability to
37 repay the loan, not to exceed 12 months. Interest may be charged on loans based on
38 the applicant's ability to repay the loan, not to exceed 3%. When an applicant can not
39 repay the loan in full within the 12-month period, the state authority may extend the
40 repayment period if the state authority determines that the loan can be repaid during
41 the extension period. The state authority may defer or waive the payment of interest

1 or principal on any loan or portion of a loan for which that payment is an undue
2 hardship.

3 D. Assistance under the program must be provided on an ongoing basis to the extent
4 that money is available in the fund.

5 **SUMMARY**

6 This bill requires that the Maine State Housing Authority give priority for temporary
7 housing assistance to homeless students and their families who are identified and referred
8 to the authority by a local educational agency liaison for children and youth experiencing
9 homelessness under the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance
10 Improvements Act of 2001.