



# 132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

## FIRST SPECIAL SESSION-2025

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Legislative Document

No. 1725

H.P. 1152

House of Representatives, April 17, 2025

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### **An Act Regarding the Membership of and Requirements for County Jail Boards of Visitors**

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Reference to the Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety suggested and ordered printed.

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

ROBERT B. HUNT  
Clerk

Presented by Representative NUTTING of Oakland.  
Cosponsored by Senator CYRWAY of Kennebec and  
Representatives: ARATA of New Gloucester, DUCHARME of Madison.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 30-A MRSA §1651, sub-§2**, as amended by PL 2023, c. 383, §1, is further  
3 amended to read:

4 **2. Appointment.** The sheriff for each county shall appoint a board of 7 5 or more  
5 visitors for each jail or other county correctional facility under the sheriff's supervision.

6 A. Members of the boards of visitors serve for terms of 3 years.

7 B. Members of the boards of visitors are eligible for reappointment at the expiration  
8 of their terms. The boards of visitors must be representative of a broad range of  
9 professionals, family members and citizens interested in the well-being of prisoners,  
10 including representatives of advocacy groups for human and civil rights, medical and  
11 psychiatric professionals, persons who have served in corrections settings and other  
12 interested citizens. ~~One member of each board of visitors must be a person with~~  
13 ~~knowledge of issues related to the incarceration of women. One member of each board~~  
14 ~~of visitors must be a woman who has been incarcerated in the State and who has prior~~  
15 ~~child welfare experience with the Department of Health and Human Services, Office~~  
16 ~~of Child and Family Services. One member of each board of visitors must have~~  
17 ~~experience in the field of mental or behavioral health.~~

18 C. A member of the Legislature or an employee of a sheriff's department may not serve  
19 on a board of visitors.

20 D. The sheriffs of 2 or more counties, at their discretion, may appoint a joint board of  
21 visitors of 7 5 or more members.

22 **Sec. 2. 30-A MRSA §1651, sub-§4, ¶C**, as enacted by PL 2023, c. 383, §1, is  
23 amended to read:

24 C. Each board of visitors shall review the management of the jail or other county  
25 correctional facility to which it is assigned to determine whether that management is  
26 consistent with the philosophy, mission and policy goals of the sheriff's office and  
27 facility. On or before February 15th of each calendar year, each board of visitors shall  
28 prepare an annual report including its recommendations and shall provide copies of its  
29 report to the jail administrator, the county correctional facility administrator, the county  
30 sheriff and the county commissioners ~~and the joint standing committee of the~~  
31 ~~Legislature having jurisdiction over criminal justice and public safety matters. The~~  
32 ~~sheriff shall provide copies with the sheriff's response to the reports to the joint standing~~  
33 ~~committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over criminal justice and public safety~~  
34 ~~matters within one month of receiving the annual reports.~~

35 **Sec. 3. 30-A MRSA §1651, sub-§4, ¶D**, as enacted by PL 2023, c. 383, §1, is  
36 repealed.

### 37 SUMMARY

38 This bill changes the number of members on boards of visitors of jails from 7 to 5 or  
39 more. It removes requirements that board members meet specific criteria. It requires a  
40 board of visitors to provide a copy of its annual report to the county sheriff. It removes the  
41 requirement that a board of visitors provide a copy of its annual report to the joint standing  
42 committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over criminal justice and public safety

1 matters and it removes the requirement that the sheriff provide copies with the sheriff's  
2 response to the reports to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction  
3 over criminal justice and public safety matters. It also removes the requirement that a board  
4 of visitors appear before the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction  
5 over criminal justice and public safety matters upon request.