

STATE OF MAINE

—
IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD
TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-SIX

—
S.P. 907 - L.D. 2224

An Act to Reduce Certain Costs Associated with Residential Construction

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

Sec. 1. 10 MRSA §9722, sub-§2, as amended by PL 2025, c. 597, Pt. A, §9, is further amended to read:

2. Membership. The board consists of ~~12~~ 13 members, including the Director of the Efficiency Maine Trust, who serves ex officio and may not vote, and the following ~~11~~ 12 individuals, who are voting members appointed by the Governor:

- A. The State Fire Marshal or a designee or a fire chief, recommended by the Maine Fire Chiefs' Association or its successor organization;
- B. A municipal code enforcement officer employed by a municipality that is not a service center community under Title 30-A, chapter 187, recommended by the Maine Municipal Association or its successor organization;
- C. A municipal code enforcement officer employed by a service center community under Title 30-A, chapter 187, recommended by the Maine Service Centers Coalition or its successor organization;
- D. A residential builder recommended by a statewide or regional association of home builders and remodelers;
- E. A commercial builder recommended by a statewide association of general contractors;
- F. An architect licensed in the State who is accredited by a nationally recognized organization that administers credentialing programs related to environmentally sound building practices and standards, recommended by a statewide chapter of a national institute of architects;
- G. A structural engineer licensed in the State, recommended by a statewide association of structural engineers;
- H. A historic preservation representative, recommended by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, with experience implementing the standards for the

treatment of historic properties set forth in 36 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 68 (2007), who is:

- (1) An architect licensed in the State;
- (2) A structural engineer licensed in the State; or
- (3) A builder;

I. An energy efficiency representative, recommended by the Commissioner of Energy Resources, who has experience or expertise in the design or implementation of energy codes or in the application of energy efficiency measures in residential or commercial construction;

J. A mechanical engineer licensed in the State, recommended by a statewide association of mechanical engineers; ~~and~~

K. A lumber material dealer or supplier, recommended by a statewide association of lumber dealers in the State; and

L. An affordable housing expert, recommended by a statewide association representing affordable housing interests.

A member appointed under this subsection must have at least 5 years' experience in the field that member is nominated to represent and must be employed in that field.

Sec. 2. Technical Building Codes and Standards Board; hoistway fire safety rulemaking; report. By September 1, 2026, the Technical Building Codes and Standards Board, established in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 5, section 12004-G, subsection 5-A, shall initiate rulemaking to remove any requirements in the Maine Uniform Building and Energy Code for smoke and draft protection assemblies for elevator hoistway doors and remove requirements for 2-way emergency video communication systems in elevators. The board shall report to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over housing matters on the outcome of rulemaking required by this section by January 15, 2027. The joint standing committee is authorized to submit legislation based on the board's report to the 133rd Legislature in 2027.

Sec. 3. Office of State Fire Marshal to update standards in accordance with National Fire Protection Association standards update. The Department of Public Safety, Office of the State Fire Marshal shall update the state-adopted National Fire Protection Association standards by adopting the 2025 edition of the National Fire Protection Association 72: National Fire Alarm and Signaling Code.

Sec. 4. Office of State Fire Marshal to convene working group to study costs and life safety impacts of fire sprinklers and limited use limited application elevators; report. The Department of Public Safety, Office of the State Fire Marshal shall convene a working group, referred to in this section as "the working group," to study the housing and life safety impacts of residential fire sprinklers and the accessibility and life safety impacts of permitting limited use limited application elevators in 2-story and 3-story buildings. In conducting its work, the working group shall explore ways to lower the costs associated with the requirement that construction of residential housing include fire sprinkler systems.

1. The State Fire Marshal or the State Fire Marshal's designee shall invite the participation in the working group of the following persons: a representative from the fire sprinkler industry; a municipal fire safety officer; a representative from the housing development industry; and any additional persons considered necessary by the State Fire Marshal to ensure comprehensive stakeholder representation.

2. The working group shall:

A. Conduct a comprehensive review of the existing sprinkler system requirements for residential buildings with 3 or more units and the affiliated costs of the sprinkler systems;

B. Collect and analyze data on the housing and life safety impacts of residential fire sprinkler systems, including, but not limited to, the frequency of the presence of sprinkler systems in reported house fires and the estimated impact on financial loss and life safety impact;

C. Explore innovative incentives to reduce the associated costs of installing sprinkler systems in residential construction;

D. Develop recommendations for legislative and regulatory changes to reduce the costs of installing required residential sprinkler systems;

E. Conduct a comprehensive review of the existing elevator requirements and the affiliated costs for residential buildings with 4 or more units;

F. Collect and analyze data on the accessibility and life safety impacts of limited use limited application elevators in buildings with fewer than 4 stories; and

G. If determined appropriate by working group members, develop recommendations for legislative and regulatory changes to the codes and standards permitting limited use limited application elevators.

3. The Office of the State Fire Marshal shall provide staff assistance to the working group.

4. By January 15, 2027, the Office of the State Fire Marshal shall submit a report on the working group's findings and recommendations, including proposed legislation, to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over housing matters. The joint standing committee is authorized to submit legislation based on the report to the 133rd Legislature in 2027.

Sec. 5. Department of Professional and Financial Regulation, Office of Professional and Occupational Regulation to report on rulemaking. No later than January 15, 2027, the Director of the Office of Professional and Occupational Regulation within the Department of Professional and Financial Regulation shall report to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over housing matters regarding the status of the adoption of rules for the elevator and tramway safety program within the Office of Professional and Occupational Regulation pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 32, section 15205-A, subsection 2. The committee is authorized to report out legislation related to the report required by this section to the 133rd Legislature in 2027.