

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD
TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-TWO

S.P. 641 - L.D. 1814

**An Act To Transfer the St. Francis Water District to the Town of St. Francis
and To Repeal the St. Francis Water District Charter**

Emergency preamble. Whereas, acts and resolves of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

Whereas, the St. Francis Water District was created by Private and Special Law 1989, chapter 51; and

Whereas, the St. Francis Water District presently provides water service to St. Francis area residents; and

Whereas, this legislation provides for the transfer of the functions and assets of the St. Francis Water District to the Town of St. Francis, subject to a local referendum vote; and

Whereas, the district and the town are seeking to accomplish the transfer as soon as possible to ensure the health and welfare of persons receiving water service and intend to hold the referendum vote on March 28, 2022; and

Whereas, in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now, therefore,

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

Sec. 1. P&SL 1989, c. 51, as amended, is repealed.

Sec. 2. Town of St. Francis's acquisition of property of St. Francis Water District. The Town of St. Francis shall acquire, under the terms contained in this Act, all, and not less than all, of the plants, properties, assets, franchises, rights and privileges owned by the St. Francis Water District, including, without limitation, all lands, buildings, waters, water rights, springs, wells, reservoirs, tanks, standpipes, mains, pumps, pipes, machinery, fixtures, hydrants, meters, services, tools, equipment and appliances used or useful in supplying water for domestic, sanitary, commercial, industrial and municipal purposes. The consideration to be paid for the plants, properties, assets, franchises, rights and privileges

is the assumption by the Town of St. Francis of all of the outstanding debts, obligations and liabilities of the St. Francis Water District, including, without limitation, the assumption by the Town of St. Francis of any outstanding notes or bonds of the St. Francis Water District that are due on or after the date of the transfer.

Sec. 3. St. Francis Water District required to sell property to Town of St. Francis. The St. Francis Water District, a public municipal corporation organized and existing pursuant to Private and Special Law 1989, chapter 51, as amended by Private and Special Law 2005, chapter 33, under the terms contained in this Act, shall sell, transfer and convey to the Town of St. Francis by appropriate instruments of conveyance all, and not less than all, of its plants, properties, assets, franchises, rights and privileges, including, without limitation, all lands, buildings, waters, water rights, springs, wells, reservoirs, tanks, standpipes, mains, pumps, pipes, machinery, fixtures, hydrants, meters, services, tools, equipment and appliances used or useful in supplying water for domestic, sanitary, commercial, industrial and municipal purposes, in consideration of the assumption by the Town of St. Francis of all of the outstanding debts, obligations and liabilities of the St. Francis Water District, including, without limitation, the assumption of any outstanding notes or bonds of the St. Francis Water District that are due on or after the date of the transfer. The transfer in accordance with this section must occur before January 1, 2024.

Sec. 4. Approval of Public Utilities Commission. The sale and transfer by the St. Francis Water District to the Town of St. Francis of its plants, properties, assets, franchises, rights and privileges; the acquisition of them by the Town of St. Francis and the assumption by the Town of St. Francis of all of the outstanding debts, obligations and liabilities of the St. Francis Water District pursuant to sections 2 and 3; and the subsequent use thereof by the Town of St. Francis within the limits of the town are subject to such approval of the Public Utilities Commission as may be required by applicable provisions of the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 35-A.

Sec. 5. Contracts of St. Francis Water District assumed by Town of St. Francis. All contracts between the St. Francis Water District and any person, firm or corporation relating to supplying water that are in effect on the date of the transfer by the St. Francis Water District to the Town of St. Francis are assumed and must be carried out by the Town of St. Francis.

Sec. 6. Dissolution and termination of St. Francis Water District; pledge of revenues. Prior to January 1, 2024, all debts, obligations and other liabilities of the St. Francis Water District must be paid in full and discharged or the holders or owners of all debts, obligations and other liabilities that have not been paid in full and discharged must have assented to the assumption thereof by the Town of St. Francis and to the novation and substitution of the Town of St. Francis as obligor in place of the St. Francis Water District. The clerk of the St. Francis Water District shall file a certificate to that effect with the Secretary of State, which results in the termination and cessation of the St. Francis Water District. Until the corporate existence of the St. Francis Water District ceases and terminates pursuant to this section, the gross revenues derived by the Town of St. Francis from the sale of water within the area comprising the former limits of the district must be applied first to the payment of expenses reasonably allocable to the operation of the water systems and 2nd to payments of debts, obligations and other liabilities of the St. Francis Water District assumed by the Town of St. Francis pursuant to this Act.

Sec. 7. Referendum; effective date; certificate to Secretary of State. In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this Act takes effect when approved only for the purpose of permitting its submission to the legal voters of the Town of St. Francis at a regular election or at a special election called and held for the purpose not later than December 31, 2022. The election must be called, advertised and conducted according to the law relating to municipal elections, except that the registrar of voters of the Town of St. Francis is not required to prepare nor the clerk to post a new list of voters. For the purpose of registering voters, the registrar of voters must be in session on the regular work day preceding the election. The subject matter of this Act must be reduced to the following question:

"Do you favor the dissolution of the St. Francis Water District and the acquisition of the assets and liabilities of the St. Francis Water District by the Town of St. Francis?"

The result of the vote must be declared by the municipal officers of the Town of St. Francis and due certificate of the vote must be filed by the town clerk with the Secretary of State. If a majority of the legal voters of the town of St. Francis voting at a regular or special election called and held not later than December 31, 2022 vote in favor of the question, the provisions of this Act other than section 1 take effect for all purposes upon certification of that vote, and section 1 of this Act takes effect for all purposes 90 days after the adjournment of the Second Regular Session of the 131st Legislature.

Emergency clause. In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this legislation takes effect when approved, except as otherwise indicated.