

PLEASE NOTE: Legislative Information **cannot** perform research, provide legal advice, or interpret Maine law. For legal assistance, please contact a qualified attorney.

An Act To Increase Efficiency through Regionalization

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

Sec. 1. 30-A MRSA §706-A, sub-§1, ¶B, as amended by PL 2007, c. 653, Pt. A, §10, is further amended to read:

B. "County assessment" means:

(1) For the tax year of any county that began prior to January 1, 2009, total annual county appropriations reduced by all resources available to fund those appropriations other than the county tax; or

(2) For the tax year of any county that begins on or after January 1, 2009, total annual county appropriations for noncorrectional-related services as established in section 701, reduced by all resources available to fund those appropriations other than the county tax and by an appropriation subject to a waiver under subsection 8-A.

Sec. 2. 30-A MRSA §706-A, sub-§8-A is enacted to read:

8-A. Exempt funds. An appropriation in a county budget with the purpose of facilitating an agreement with one or more municipalities or counties to study, initiate or consolidate a regional service is exempt from the calculation of the county assessment limit under subsection 2 if a waiver from the county assessment limit is granted by the Department of Administrative and Financial Services. A waiver from the county assessment limit under this subsection may be granted for up to 10 years if the following requirements are met:

A. The county demonstrates the regional need for the agreement under this subsection, substantiates the potential savings of the regional service and documents the basis for the number of years for which the waiver is requested;

B. The Department of Administrative and Financial Services determines that the regional service demonstrates an efficient delivery of local and regional governmental services and is a qualifying project under section 6201, subsection 8 and the appropriation is an eligible cost under section 6201, subsection 5; and

C. The Department of Administrative and Financial Services determines that the regional service will be funded through savings achieved or fees collected for the service and, if the service is a consolidation of existing services provided by 2 or more governmental entities, provides for a more efficient delivery than the present delivery of those services.

Sec. 3. 30-A MRSA §5721-A, sub-§1, ¶D, as affected by PL 2005, c. 2, Pt. C, §5 and amended by c. 12, Pt. WW, §11 and affected by §§15 and 16, is further amended to read:

D. "Property tax levy" means the total annual municipal appropriations, excluding assessments properly issued by a county of which the municipality is a member and amounts governed by and appropriated in accordance with Title 20-A, chapter 606-B, and amounts appropriated to pay assessments properly issued by a school administrative unit or tuition for students or amounts attributable to a tax increment financing district agreement or similar special tax district, reduced by all resources available to fund those appropriations other than the property tax and by an appropriation subject to a waiver of the property tax levy under subsection 9-A.

Sec. 4. 30-A MRSA §5721-A, sub-§9-A is enacted to read:

9-A. Exempt funds. An appropriation in a municipal budget with the purpose of facilitating an agreement with one or more municipalities or counties to study, initiate or consolidate a regional service is exempt from the calculation of the property tax levy under subsection 2 if a waiver from the property tax levy is granted by the Department of Administrative and Financial Services. A waiver from the property tax levy under this subsection may be granted for up to 10 years if the following requirements are met:

A. The municipality demonstrates the regional need for the agreement under this subsection, substantiates the potential savings of the regional service and documents the basis for the number of years for which the waiver is requested;

B. The Department of Administrative and Financial Services determines that the regional service demonstrates an efficient delivery of local and regional governmental services and is a qualifying project under section 6201, subsection 8 and the appropriation is an eligible cost under section 6201, subsection 5; and

C. The Department of Administrative and Financial Services determines that the regional service will be funded through savings achieved from or fees collected for the service and, if the service is a consolidation of existing services provided by 2 or more governmental entities, provides for a more efficient delivery than the present delivery of those services.

SUMMARY

This bill allows appropriations of municipalities to be exempt from the property tax levy and appropriations of counties to be exempt from the county assessment limit if the appropriations are to study, initiate or consolidate a regional service for up to 10 years if the Department of Administrative and Financial Services determines that the services are needed and will be more efficient than present services, will save taxpayers money and will be paid for through the savings of consolidation or fees for the service.