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## **An Act To Conform the Authority of the Department of Environmental Protection to Federal Law**

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

**Whereas,** a recent letter from the Attorney General has brought into question the eligibility of members of the Board of Environmental Protection to legally serve; and

**Whereas,** this uncertainty has a negative impact on the work of State Government; and

**Whereas,** the economic health of the State of Maine will suffer if this uncertainty is not remedied with all due speed; 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. 38 MRSA §341-A, sub-§3, ¶B,** as amended by PL 1997, c. 794, Pt. A, §2, is further amended to read:

B. When the State receives authority to issue permits under the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, 33 United States Code 1982, Section 1251 et seq., as amended, a person may not serve as commissioner whoThe commissioner may not participate in the review of or act on an application for a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit or the modification, renewal or appeal of a permit under Section 402 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, 33 United States Code, Section 1342 if the commissioner receives, or during the previous 2 years prior to appointment has received, a significant portion of income directly or indirectly from license or National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit holders or applicants for a license or permit under the Federal Water Pollution Control Act. If the commissioner's authority is restricted under this paragraph, the commissioner shall delegate duties related to the restricted matter to employees of the department who do not receive or have not received during the previous 2 years a significant portion of income directly or indirectly from National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit holders or applicants. For the purposes of this section, "a significant portion of income" means 10% or more of gross personal income for a calendar year, except that it means 50% or more if the recipient is over 60 years of age and is receiving that portion under retirement, pension or similar arrangement. Duties that must be delegated include National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permitting, enforcement, establishment of waste load allocations and total maximum daily loads and establishment and implementation of water quality standards but not other Federal Water Pollution Control Act matters such as water quality certification. The restriction imposed by this paragraph may not be interpreted to be more restrictive than federal law or the regulations of the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

**Sec. 2. 38 MRSA §341-C, sub-§8,** as amended by PL 1997, c. 794, Pt. A, §3, is further amended to read:

**8. Federal standards.** ~~When the State receives authority to grant permits under the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, 33 United States Code 1982, Section 1251 et seq., as amended, a person may not serve as a~~ board member who may not participate in the review of or act on an application for a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit or the modification, renewal or appeal of a permit under Section 402 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, 33 United States Code, Section 1342 if the board member receives, or during the previous 2 years prior to appointment has received, a significant portion of income directly or indirectly from license or permit holders or applicants for a license or permit under the Federal Water Pollution Control Act National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System. For the purposes of this section, "a significant portion of income" means 10% or more of gross personal income for a calendar year, except that it means 50% or more if the recipient is over 60 years of age and is receiving that portion under retirement, pension or similar arrangement. Board members whose participation is restricted under this paragraph shall recuse themselves and may not participate in any National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System matter as long as the restriction applies. The recusal must be from all National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permitting, enforcement, establishment of waste load allocations and total maximum daily loads and establishment and implementation of water quality standards but not other Federal Water Pollution Control Act matters such as water quality certification. The restriction imposed by this subsection may not be interpreted to be more restrictive than federal law or the regulations of the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

**Emergency clause.** In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this legislation takes effect when approved.

## SUMMARY

This bill removes a statutory restriction on a person's serving as Commissioner of Environmental Protection if the person has received a significant portion of income directly or indirectly from license or permit holders or applicants for a license or permit under the Federal Water Pollution Control Act. The bill provides that the commissioner, employees of the Department of Environmental Protection and members of the Board of Environmental Protection may participate in National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System matters to the extent permitted under federal law and permits a commissioner who is restricted from participation to delegate duties to a department employee who is not restricted from participation.