



131st MAINE LEGISLATURE

LD 1256

LR 1985(01)

An Act to Increase Access to Oral Health Care by Expanding the Maine Dental Education Loan Program

Preliminary Fiscal Impact Statement for Original Bill

Sponsor: Rep. Mastraccio of Sanford

Committee: Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Business

Fiscal Note Required: Yes

Preliminary Fiscal Impact Statement

Increases number of eligible loan recipients - Maine Dental Education Loan Program

Fiscal Detail and Notes

Under current law, the Maine Dental Education Loan Program, administered by the Finance Authority of Maine (FAME), provides up to 3 loans or loan repayment agreements annually for doctors of dental medicine. A recipient may receive a loan of up to \$20,000 per year for a total of \$80,000 or \$25,000 per year for a total of \$100,000, depending on if the first loan was received before or after January 1, 2020. The law also provides that additional loans or loan repayment agreements may be awarded if funding is available. The program receives Fund for a Healthy Maine allocations of \$237,740 per year. Public Law 2023, chapter 17 authorizes funding for the program through the 2024-2025 biennium. According to FAME, the current funding level supports loans for 4 new dentists per year along with the renewal loans for existing program participants.

This bill expands the eligibility of the Maine Dental Education Loan Program to include dental hygienists, dental therapists, expanded function dental assistants and dental assistants and authorizes up to an additional 6 loans or loan repayment agreements annually for this group of dental professionals. Assuming no additional funding beyond the current allocation of \$237,740 per year, loans granted to dental hygienists, therapists and assistants will reduce the amount of funding available to support loans to new dentists.