**An Act To Provide That the Minimum Wage Increases by the Cost of Living Every 3 Years**

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

**Sec.** **1. 26 MRSA §664, sub-§1,** as amended by IB 2015, c. 2, §1, is further amended to read:

**1.** **Minimum wage.**  The minimum hourly wage is $7.50 per hour. Starting January 1, 2017, the minimum hourly wage is $9.00 per hour; starting January 1, 2018, the minimum hourly wage is $10.00 per hour; starting January 1, 2019, the minimum hourly wage is $11.00 per hour; and starting January 1, 2020, the minimum hourly wage is $12.00 per hour. ~~On~~ Starting January 1, 2021 and ~~each January 1st~~ every 3 years thereafter, on January 1st the minimum hourly wage then in effect must be increased by the increase, if any, in the cost of living. The increase in the cost of living must be measured by the total percentage increase, if any, as of ~~August of the previous year over the level as of August~~ ~~of the year preceding that year~~ January 4 years prior to the date of increase to January of the year prior to the date of increase in the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers, CPI-W, for the Northeast Region, or its successor index, as published by the United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics or its successor agency, with the amount of the minimum wage increase rounded to the nearest multiple of 5¢. If the highest federal minimum wage is increased in excess of the minimum wage in effect under this section, the minimum wage under this section is increased to the same amount, effective on the same date as the increase in the federal minimum wage, and must be increased in accordance with this section thereafter.

**SUMMARY**

This bill changes the annual cost-of-living increase in the minimum hourly wage from annual to triennial. Current law provides that the minimum hourly wage is adjusted for the cost of living annually.