

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD
TWO THOUSAND AND SIXTEEN

H.P. 1056 - L.D. 1549

**An Act To Amend the Laws Governing Oversight of and Responsibility for
the Kim Wallace Adaptive Equipment Loan Program Fund**

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

Sec. 1. 10 MRSA §372, sub-§1, as amended by PL 2005, c. 191, §1, is further amended to read:

1. Creation of fund. There is established the Kim Wallace Adaptive Equipment Loan Program Fund, which must be used to provide funding for loans to qualified borrowers within the State in order to acquire adaptive equipment designed to assist the borrower in becoming independent and for other purposes as allowed under section 376. The fund must be deposited with, and maintained ~~and administered~~ by the Finance Authority of Maine or other state agency and contain appropriations provided for that purpose, interest accrued on the fund balance, funds received by the board to be applied to the fund and funds received in repayment of loans. This fund is a nonlapsing revolving fund. All money in the fund must be continuously applied to carry out the purposes of this chapter.

Sec. 2. 10 MRSA §374, as amended by PL 2005, c. 191, §§2 to 4, is further amended to read:

§374. Duties of board

The board ~~shall have~~ has the following powers and duties.

1. Receipt of money and property. The board may accept and receive gifts, grants, bequests or devises from any source, including funds from the Federal Government or any of its political subdivisions.

2. Contracts. The board may, with the approval of the Governor, enter into any necessary contracts and agreements with appropriate ~~state or community-based groups dealing with disabled persons~~ entities.

3. Administer loan program. The board shall administer the Kim Wallace Adaptive Equipment Loan Program Fund established by this chapter and may contract with ~~the Finance Authority of Maine and state or community based groups dealing with disabled persons~~ appropriate entities for such assistance in administering the program as the board may require. The board may employ persons, including private legal counsel and financial experts, on either a temporary or permanent basis, in order to carry out any of its powers and duties. Employees of the board are not subject to Title 5, chapter 71 and Title 5, chapter 372, subchapter 2.

4. Rules. The board may adopt rules to carry out the purposes of this chapter. Rules adopted pursuant to this subsection are routine technical rules as defined by Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter ~~H-A~~ 2-A. The rules must ensure that:

A. Individuals and business entities are eligible for loans; and

B. A preference is given for loans to qualifying individual borrowers seeking loans to acquire adaptive equipment for personal, family or household purposes; ~~and~~

~~D. Loan applications may be approved or denied by the board only at a regular or special meeting except as follows:~~

~~(1) Approval of applications for loans may be delegated by the board to a subcommittee of the board containing at least 5 members if an applicant would suffer undue hardship by waiting for the next regular meeting; or~~

~~(2) Approval of applications for loans may be delegated to outside contractors with criteria and terms as provided by the board and approved no less than annually.~~

~~All approved loans must be ratified by the board at the board's next regular or special meeting. All loans recommended for denial by the delegated authority must be acted upon by the board at the board's next regular or special meeting.~~

5. Loan awards. Loan applications may be approved or denied by the board or by an entity with which the board has contracted to provide financial services pursuant to subsection 2, referred to in this subsection as "the financial services provider," and appeals from denials may be made to the board in accordance with this subsection.

A. The board or the financial services provider shall approve all loan applications that meet the following criteria:

(1) The application is consistent with the underwriting guidelines proposed by the financial services provider and approved at least annually by the board; and

(2) The loan will be used for a purpose established in section 376.

B. The financial services provider shall submit a report to the board at least monthly identifying the number of loan applications received and the number of applications approved and denied during the period covered by the report as well as the number of applications for which no decision has yet been rendered.

C. A loan applicant may appeal a denial by the financial services provider to the board by submitting a written notice to the financial services provider within 30 days of the date of the denial. The financial services provider shall notify the board of the

appeal and provide the board with copies of the application at the next regularly scheduled board meeting. The board shall grant the appeal if it finds that the financial services provider inappropriately applied the criteria in paragraph A.

Sec. 3. 10 MRSA §376, first ¶, as amended by PL 2003, c. 99, §2, is further amended to read:

The board or an entity with which the board has contracted to provide financial services pursuant to section 374, subsection 2 may award loans to qualifying borrowers for the following purposes:

Sec. 4. 10 MRSA §377, first ¶, as enacted by PL 2003, c. 99, §3, is amended to read:

The board or an entity with which the board has contracted to provide financial services pursuant to section 374, subsection 2 may award loans for the purpose of assisting persons with disabilities to purchase used vehicles necessary to obtain or retain employment or employment training, subject to the following limitations.