



132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST SPECIAL SESSION-2025

Legislative Document

No. 1655

H.P. 1096

House of Representatives, April 15, 2025

An Act to Allow the Keeping of Chickens on Private Residential Property

Reference to the Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry suggested and ordered printed.

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative POIRIER of Skowhegan.
Cosponsored by Representatives: COLLAMORE of Pittsfield, FAULKINGHAM of Winter Harbor, MORRIS of Turner, WADSWORTH of Hiram.

Kat Taylor Testimony on LD 1655 *An Act to Allow the Keeping of Chickens on Private Residential Property*

April 24, 2025

This document is to serve as accompaniment to my oral testimony.

Will submit written testimony after public hearing if needed.

Respectfully,

Kat Taylor

Argyle Twp.

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

Sec. 1. 7 MRSA §287 is enacted to read:

§287. Raising chickens on private residential land

A county or municipality may not adopt a regulation or ordinance that prohibits a person from raising chickens on private residential land, subject to the following. Notwithstanding subsection 1, a county or municipality may adopt a regulation or ordinance that is stricter than the requirements of this section, but may not restrict a person from raising chickens on private residential land.

1. Number of chickens. A person raising chickens on private residential land may not keep more than 36 chickens or a number determined by county or municipal regulation or ordinance, whichever number is higher.

2. Coop requirements. A person raising chickens on private residential land shall maintain a coop that: Minimum space for coop and run for 36 hens is 504 sq ft + 15' from prop. line

A. Is located at least 15 feet from any property line;

B. Is enclosed with predator-proof mesh wire and provides an opening and a door with a latch; and predators can dig under flooring

C. Provides at least 4 square feet of inside space per chicken. 36 x 4 = 144 sq ft

3. Area provided. A person raising chickens on private residential land shall provide at least 10 square feet of secure outdoor space per chicken. 36 x 10 = 360 sq ft - Fencing? Height?

4. Security. A person raising chickens on private residential land shall keep the chickens secure and shall prevent the chickens from trespassing on the property of others. A person raising chickens on private residential land shall prevent chickens from creating a nuisance or disturbing adjacent property and property owners with noise or odor. A person raising chickens on private residential land shall take action to reduce the attraction of predators and rodents to the area in which the person is raising chickens.

SUMMARY

This bill prohibits a county or municipality from adopting a regulation or ordinance that prohibits a person from raising chickens on private residential land. The bill allows a person to raise not more than 36 chickens or a number of chickens determined by a county or municipal regulation or ordinance, whichever number is higher, and provides requirements for maintaining a coop. The bill also requires a person raising chickens on private residential land to provide at least 10 square feet of secure outdoor space per chicken, to prevent chickens from trespassing on the property of others, creating a nuisance or disturbing adjacent property and property owners and to take action to reduce the attraction of predators and rodents.

36 Chickens is a lot for one household - I have 5 and gave away 6 dozen eggs in April
Will attract Predators ranging from: Bear, coyote, fox, dogs, raccoons, skunks, rats, weasels, raptors
Weasels can fit through an opening larger than 1/2 x 1/2" - will kill entire flock for blood lust
"Disturbing Adjacent Property" - chickens will be heard much farther away than next door
Require 10 sq ft per chicken for "secure outdoor space" - fence height, raptor control?
Vet that does poultry
Permits to track locations, ensure adequate lot size, inspections for compliance, complaint tracking and enforcement
Training to ensure adequate care and commitment before permitting
Offramp for unwanted chickens - Roosters start crowing at 3am all day until night roosting
Local food co-ops or farmers who produce eggs
Community coops