



# 126th MAINE LEGISLATURE

## SECOND REGULAR SESSION-2014

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Legislative Document

No. 1658

S.P. 652

In Senate, December 23, 2013

### **An Act To Expand and Improve Employment Opportunities in the State**

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Approved for introduction by a majority of the Legislative Council pursuant to Joint Rule 203.

Received by the Secretary of the Senate on December 23, 2013. Referred to the Committee on Labor, Commerce, Research and Economic Development pursuant to Joint Rule 308.2 and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D M Grant'.

DAREK M. GRANT  
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator VITELLI of Sagadahoc.  
Cosponsored by Representative BERRY of Bowdoinham and  
Senators: JACKSON of Aroostook, LANGLEY of Hancock, PATRICK of Oxford,  
VALENTINO of York, Representatives: BEAVERS of South Berwick, GILBERT of Jay,  
GRANT of Gardiner, MAKER of Calais.

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

2 **CONCEPT DRAFT**

3 **SUMMARY**

4 This bill is a concept draft pursuant to Joint Rule 208.

5 This bill proposes to expand and improve the Maine Apprenticeship Program under  
6 the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 26, section 3202 by expanding and improving outreach  
7 programs to recruit new employers and educate employers regarding apprenticeship, the  
8 occupations that are eligible for apprenticeship and how to participate in or establish an  
9 apprenticeship program. It also proposes to expand and improve outreach programs to  
10 educate providers of services for unemployed workers, new workers, including recent  
11 high school graduates, workers returning to the workforce and veterans regarding  
12 apprenticeship and to educate high school students regarding preapprenticeship  
13 opportunities.

14 It proposes to expand the State's support for laid-off workers by ensuring adequate  
15 staffing in the Department of Labor, Bureau of Employment Services.

16 It also proposes to establish a stakeholder group to examine best practices regarding  
17 layoff aversion and to propose a comprehensive strategy to prevent layoffs. The  
18 stakeholder group would include representatives of labor, business, service providers,  
19 laid-off workers and government agencies and would examine and report on subjects  
20 including, but not limited to:

- 21 1. Best practices from other states with programs to prevent layoffs;
- 22 2. Early warning networks that identify and monitor firms, industries and  
23 communities that may be vulnerable to mass layoffs or business closures;
- 24 3. Strategies for early economic development assistance, including ways to  
25 efficiently match firms in or near distress with economic development agencies that  
26 provide grants, loans or technical assistance such as workforce training, product  
27 development or development of new assembly or production processes;
- 28 4. Buy-out options, including competitor buyout and employee buyout, and a review  
29 of existing law relating to buy-out options to determine whether changes should be made  
30 to facilitate buyouts and prevent layoffs;
- 31 5. Strategies to strengthen sectors of the economy through cooperation between  
32 stakeholders in a specific industry in areas such as workforce development; and
- 33 6. Alternatives to layoffs, including work sharing, worker training, modernization  
34 and equipment upgrades, financial restructuring, succession plans and conversion to new  
35 products.