

PLEASE NOTE: Legislative Information **cannot** perform research, provide legal advice, or interpret Maine law. For legal assistance, please contact a qualified attorney.

## **An Act To Reform Essential Programs and Services**

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

**Sec. 1. 20-A MRS §15690-A** is enacted to read:

### **§ 15690-A. Cost components; benchmarks; local vote**

**1. Summary of essential programs and services.** The department shall develop a clear and logically organized description of how all cost components of essential programs and services are calculated pursuant to this chapter. The department shall post this description on its publicly accessible website.

**2. Benchmarks.** The department shall develop a methodology that allows each major component of a school administrative unit's budget to be readily compared with the comparable component of the unit's required contribution established under section 15688, subsection 3-A.

**3. Local vote.** In addition to or as part of the local approval requirements of this chapter, a school administrative unit shall, in accordance with rules adopted by the department, provide an opportunity for voters within the unit to vote separately on each major component of the unit's budget as it compares with the comparable component of the unit's required contribution established under section 15688, subsection 3-A. Rules adopted by the department under this subsection are major substantive rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

## **SUMMARY**

This bill accomplishes the following:

1. It directs the Department of Education to develop and post on its publicly accessible website a clear and logically organized description of how the cost of the components of essential programs and services is calculated;

2. It directs the department to develop a methodology that allows each major component of a school administrative unit's budget to be readily compared with the comparable component of the unit's required contribution established under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A, section 15688, subsection 3-A; and

3. It requires a school administrative unit, in accordance with rules adopted by the Department of Education, to provide an opportunity for voters within the unit to vote separately on each major component of the unit's budget as it compares with the comparable component of the unit's required contribution established under Title 20-A, section 15688, subsection 3-A.