

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

## **Resolve, Establishing the Blue Ribbon Commission To Study Landlord and Tenant Issues**

**Emergency preamble. Whereas,** acts and resolves of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

**Whereas,** the Blue Ribbon Commission To Study Landlord and Tenant Issues is created in this resolve and must issue its findings and report by December 2, 2009; and

**Whereas,** the study must be initiated before the 90-day period expires in order that the study may be completed and a report submitted in time for submission to the next legislative session; and

**Whereas,** in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now, therefore, be it

**Sec. 1 Commission established. Resolved:** That the Blue Ribbon Commission To Study Landlord and Tenant Issues, referred to in this resolve as "the commission," is established; and be it further

**Sec. 2 Commission membership. Resolved:** That the commission consists of 13 members appointed as follows:

1. Six members appointed by the President of the Senate as follows:
  - A. Three members of the Senate;
  - B. One member from an organization that provides free legal services to low-income persons in the State;
  - C. One member from an organization representing landlords; and
  - D. One member from an organization representing housing managers;
2. Six members appointed by the Speaker of the House as follows:
  - A. Four members of the House of Representatives;
  - B. One member representing the Maine State Housing Authority; and
  - C. One member representing the District Court system; and
3. The Attorney General or the Attorney General's designee; and be it further

**Sec. 3 Chairs. Resolved:** That the first-named Senate member is the Senate chair and the first-named House of Representatives member is the House chair of the commission; and be it further

**Sec. 4 Appointments; convening of commission. Resolved:** That all appointments must be made no later than 30 days following the effective date of this resolve. The appointing authorities shall notify the Executive Director of the Legislative Council once all appointments have been completed. Within 15 days after appointment of all members, the chairs shall call and convene the first meeting of the commission, which must be no later than August 1, 2009; and be it further

**Sec. 5 Duties. Resolved:** That the commission shall:

1. Study the feasibility of obtaining heating fuel assistance and insulation assistance for landlords who serve low-income tenants in certain economically distressed areas;
2. Study how to keep housing units in proper repair;
3. Study how to keep tenants in their apartments in the event of a foreclosure; and
4. Study any other issues pertaining to landlord and tenant issues that it determines to be relevant; and be it further

**Sec. 6 Staff assistance. Resolved:** That the Legislative Council shall provide necessary staffing services to the commission; and be it further

**Sec. 7 Report. Resolved:** That, no later than December 2, 2009, the commission shall submit a report that includes its findings and recommendations, including suggested legislation, for presentation to the Second Regular Session of the 124th Legislature. The Joint Standing Committee on Legal and Veterans Affairs is authorized to introduce a bill related to the subject matter of the report to the Second Regular Session of the 124th Legislature upon receipt of the report.

**Emergency clause.** In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this legislation takes effect when approved.

## SUMMARY

This resolve establishes a blue ribbon commission to conduct a study and make recommendations on landlord and tenant issues and specifically address the feasibility of obtaining heating fuel assistance and insulation assistance for landlords who serve low-income tenants in certain economically distressed areas, how to keep housing units in proper repair, how to keep tenants in their apartments in the event of a foreclosure and other landlord and tenant issues that the commission determines to be relevant. The commission shall make a report and recommendations to the Joint Standing Committee on Legal and Veterans Affairs, which is authorized to introduce a bill on this matter.