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An Act To Allow a Municipality To Grant a Variance for the Construction of a Parking Structure for a Person with a Permanent Disability

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

Sec. 1. 30-A MRS §4353, sub-§4-A, as amended by PL 1995, c. 212, §1, is repealed and the following enacted in its place:

4-A. Disability variance; vehicle storage. A disability variance may be granted pursuant to this subsection.

A. The board may grant a variance to an owner of a dwelling for the purpose of making that dwelling accessible to a person with a disability who resides in or regularly uses the dwelling. The board shall restrict any variance granted under this paragraph solely to the installation of equipment or the construction of structures necessary for access to or egress from the dwelling by the person with the disability.

The board may impose conditions on the variance granted pursuant to this paragraph, including limiting the variance to the duration of the disability or to the time that the person with the disability lives in the dwelling. For the purposes of this paragraph, the term "structures necessary for access to or egress from the dwelling" is defined to include railing, wall or roof systems necessary for the safety or effectiveness of the structure.

B. If authorized by the zoning ordinance establishing the board, the board may grant a variance to an owner of a dwelling who resides in the dwelling and who is a person with a permanent disability for the construction of a place of storage and parking for a noncommercial vehicle owned by that person and no other purpose. The structure must be attached to the dwelling owned by the person with a permanent disability by a foundation and must have load-bearing walls. The width and length of the structure may not be larger than 1 1/2 times the width and length of the noncommercial vehicle. The owner shall submit proposed plans for the structure with the request for the variance pursuant to this paragraph to the board.

The person with the permanent disability shall prove by a preponderance of the evidence that the person's disability is permanent.

For purposes of this paragraph, "noncommercial vehicle" means a motor vehicle as defined in Title 29-A, section 101, subsection 42 with a gross vehicle weight of no more than 6,000 pounds, bearing a disability registration plate issued pursuant to Title 29-A, section 521 and owned by the person with the permanent disability.

The board may impose conditions on the variance granted pursuant to this subsection.

For purposes of this subsection, "disability" has the same meaning as a physical or mental disability under Title 5, section 4553-A.

SUMMARY

Current law allows a zoning board of appeals to grant a variance to a person with a disability for the construction of equipment or structures necessary for access to or egress from the dwelling.

This bill allows a zoning board, if allowed by the municipal ordinance establishing the zoning board, to grant a variance for the construction of a structure for the storage of a motor vehicle owned by a person with a permanent disability and registered in this State with disability registration plates.