

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 Provide Grants to Public Educational and Municipal Entities for Feasibility Studies of Renewable Energy Projects**

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

**Sec. 1. 35-A MRSA §3211-D** is enacted to read:

### **§ 3211-D. Renewable energy projects; feasibility studies**

**1. Definitions.** As used in this section, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms have the following meanings.

A. "Public property" means land, structures, facilities and other real property under the ownership or control of a public educational or municipal entity.

B. "Public educational and municipal entities" includes the University of Maine System, the Maine Maritime Academy, the Maine Community College System, municipalities, quasi-municipal corporations or districts, as defined in Title 30-A, section 2351 and school administrative units as defined in Title 20-A, section 1.

C. "Renewable energy project" means the installation and operation of an energy-generating facility that produces energy from a renewable resource.

D. "Renewable resource" has the same meaning as in section 3210, subsection 2, paragraph C.

**2. Grant program.** The commission shall by rule establish and administer a program to provide grants to public educational and municipal entities to conduct feasibility studies for renewable energy projects to be developed on public property. Feasibility studies funded by the program must evaluate the costs and benefits of proposed renewable energy projects, including, but not limited to, the expected energy generation output and the potential to mitigate energy costs over the life of the project. Feasibility studies may include technical and engineering analysis and site visits to evaluate the capacity for generation output based on site-specific factors and system design.

**3. Funding.** The commission may apply to the Energy and Carbon Savings Trust established in section 10008, subsection 2 for funding for the grant program established in subsection 2.

**4. Rules.** The commission shall adopt rules to administer the program. Rules adopted pursuant to this subsection are routine technical rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

**Sec. 2. 35-A MRSA §10008, sub-§6, ¶M** is enacted to read:

M. Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, the commission may apply to the trust for funding from the trust fund to provide grants for feasibility studies of renewable energy projects pursuant to section 3211-D and, upon application of the commission, the trust may provide funding for that purpose.

## **SUMMARY**

This bill requires the Public Utilities Commission to establish and administer a program to provide grants to public educational and municipal entities to conduct feasibility studies for the installation and operation of renewable energy projects on public property. The bill authorizes the commission to apply for funding from the Energy and Carbon Savings Trust Fund to fund the grant program.