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**An Act To Equalize the Tax Burden for Education across Municipalities
of the Lower Kennebec River Region Authorized To Form a Regional
School Unit Pursuant to Private and Special Law 2007, Chapter 25**

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

Sec. 1. P&SL 2007, c. 25, §11-A is enacted to read:

Sec. 11-A. Equalized tax burdens. In any year in which a municipality in the district anticipates a year-to-year reduction in local tax burden for schools, it shall raise an amount equal to 1/2 of those anticipated tax reductions and make that amount available for redistribution to municipalities in the district that anticipate year-to-year local tax increases for education. Such funds must be distributed based 1/3 on valuation, 1/3 on student population and 1/3 on resident population among those qualifying municipalities that anticipate increases until each of those municipalities anticipates no change from the prior year or until funds are exhausted. Municipalities receiving funds under this mechanism shall apply all of those funds to their contribution to the district, thereby reducing or eliminating the overall tax increase for schools to their citizens.

In no case may more funds from tax reductions be captured for redistribution according to this section than are needed to eliminate tax increases for schools in all the other municipalities of the district.

Sec. 2. P&SL 2007, c. 25, §18-A is enacted to read:

Sec. 18-A. School choice; municipality joining after district formation. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the district, in order to offer consistent options to all of its students, may opt to limit school choice for students of municipalities that join the district after its initial date of consolidation, even if the municipality offered choice prior to the municipality's joining the district. The board of directors for the district may authorize grandfathering or any other legal method to ease the transition of the students and families of such later-joining municipalities.

SUMMARY

This bill enacts a mechanism to equalize the tax burden for education across municipalities authorized to regionalize in the lower Kennebec River area pursuant to Private and Special Law 2007, chapter 25. The bill also authorizes limiting choice for students from municipalities that join the district after the initial date of consolidation.