

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document

No. 579

H. P. 473

House of Representatives, February 23, 1977

On motion of Mr. Goodwin of South Berwick, referred to Committee on Health and Institutional Services. Sent up for concurrence and ordered printed.

EDWIN H. PERT, Clerk

Presented by Mr. Blodgett of Waldoboro.

Cosponsor: Ms. Clark of Freeport.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED
SEVENTY-SEVEN

**AN ACT Appropriating Funds to the Maine Chapter of the Arthritis
Foundation.**

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

Maine Chapter, Arthritis Foundation; appropriation. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Maine Chapter of the Arthritis Foundation the sum of \$30,000 for the fiscal year 1977-78 to be used to conduct studies and develop primary data for the purposes of documenting specific arthritis problems in the State and to provide consultation and program information to the health profession, health professional education institutions and volunteer agencies.

An accounting of the use of such funds shall be submitted to the 108th Legislature by January 31, 1978 and July 29, 1978 by the Maine Chapter of the Arthritis Foundation.

STATEMENT OF FACT

1. Arthritis and related musculoskeletal diseases constitute major health problems in the United States that directly affect more than 20,000,000 Americans of all ages at a cost in medical expenses of approximately \$2,500,000,000 a year. To more than 68,000 Maine arthritis sufferers this means a cost of nearly \$8,500,000 annually.

2. The complications of arthritis lead to many other serious health problems and other severe physical impairments in persons of all ages.

3. The citizens of the State of Maine should have a full understanding of arthritis and related musculoskeletal diseases and should be encouraged to seek early diagnosis and treatment to prevent or mitigate physical disability.

4. The attainment of advanced methods of diagnosis and treatment of arthritis and quality trained health professionals in arthritis deserve the highest priority.

5. There is a critical shortage of medical facilities and properly trained health professionals and allied health professionals in the State for arthritis research, prevention, treatment, care and rehabilitation programs.

This bill will establish in an **organized manner**, a priority system to channel a flow of outside resources that will include both money and services; to **coordinate** the present services within the State, both public and private; and to define the priorities and needs of arthritics of the State and other Maine citizens afflicted with chronic illnesses.