

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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FIRST REGULAR SESSION

ONE HUNDRED AND NINTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document

No. 437

H. P. 338

House of Representatives, February 8, 1979

Referred to the Committee on Health and Institutional Services. Sent up for concurrence and ordered printed.

EDWIN H. PERT, Clerk

Presented by Mrs. Prescott of Hampden.

Cosponsor: Mr. Theriault of Rumford.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED
SEVENTY-NINE

AN ACT to Increase the Size of the Human Services Fraud Investigation Unit.

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

Sec. 1. 22 MRSA § 13, sub-§ 1, as enacted by PL 1975, c. 715, § 3, is amended to read:

1. Establishment; composition. The Commissioner of Human Services is authorized to create within the department a Human Services Fraud Investigation Unit, hereinafter referred to in this section as the "unit." The commissioner is ~~authorized to~~ **shall** employ and assign to the unit ~~such employees as he deems appropriate~~ **no less than a director, 5 investigators and 2 secretaries, and any other persons he considers appropriate and necessary to carry out the purposes of this section. Every person employed under this subsection, except the director, shall be subject to the Personnel Law.**

Sec. 2. Appropriation. The following funds shall be appropriated from the General Fund to carry out the purposes of this Act.

	1979-80	1980-81
HUMAN SERVICES, DEPARTMENT OF		
Human Services Fraud Investigation Unit		
Positions	(4)	(4)
Personal Services	\$46,413	\$49,148
All Other	15,100	15,100
Capital Expenditures	1,000	
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Total	\$62,513	\$64,248

STATEMENT OF FACT

The purpose of this bill is to add 3 investigators and a secretary to the staff of the Human Services Fraud Investigation Unit. The unit now has a director, 2 investigators and a secretary. Even so, there is a current backlog of more than 1,000 complaints of aid to families with dependent children recipient fraud which cannot be investigated in a timely manner because the unit is understaffed. The department believes that the addition of personnel provided for in this bill will be adequate to meet the present need for welfare fraud investigation.

It is estimated that enactment of this bill will cost approximately \$126,750 during this biennium. However, it can reasonably be expected that the addition of 4 persons to the unit will save, through recoupment and deterrence, significantly more than \$160,000 in welfare moneys during this biennium.