MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST SPECIAL SESSION-2025

Legislative Document

No. 1380

H.P. 902

House of Representatives, April 1, 2025

Resolve, Establishing the Study Group on Solutions to Address Maine's Behavioral Health Workforce Shortage

Reference to the Committee on Health and Human Services suggested and ordered printed.

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative STOVER of Boothbay.
Cosponsored by Senator MOORE of Washington and

Representatives: COLLAMORE of Pittsfield, CRAFTS of Newcastle, FAIRCLOTH of Bangor, GRAMLICH of Old Orchard Beach, MCCABE of Lewiston, ROEDER of Bangor, STROUT of Harrington.

- **Sec. 1. Study group established. Resolved:** That the Study Group on Solutions to Address Maine's Behavioral Health Workforce Shortage, referred to in this resolve as "the study group," is established.
- **Sec. 2. Study group membership. Resolved:** That, notwithstanding Joint Rule 353, the study group consists of 14 members as follows:
- 1. Two members of the Senate appointed by the President of the Senate, including a member from each of the 2 parties holding the largest number of seats in the Legislature;
- 2. Two members of the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker of the House, including a member from each of the 2 parties holding the largest number of seats in the Legislature;
 - 3. Five members appointed by the President of the Senate as follows:
- A. One member representing the National Alliance on Mental Illness Maine;
 - B. One member representing the Consumer Council System of Maine;
- 14 C. One member representing the Alliance for Addiction and Mental Health Services, Maine;
 - D. One member representing the Behavioral Health Community Collaborative; and
 - E. One member representing the National Association of Social Workers, Maine Chapter;
 - 4. Four members appointed by the Speaker of the House as follows:
- A. One member representing community mental health providers;
- B. One member representing community substance use disorder services providers;
 - C. One member representing hospitals; and

- D. One member representing educational institutions that offer behavioral health degree tracks; and
 - 5. The Commissioner of Health and Human Services or the commissioner's designee.
 - **Sec. 3. Chairs. Resolved:** That the first-named Senate member is the Senate chair and the first-named House of Representatives member is the House chair of the study group.
 - **Sec. 4. Appointments; convening of study group. Resolved:** That all appointments must be made no later than 30 days following the effective date of this resolve. The appointing authorities shall notify the Executive Director of the Legislative Council once all appointments have been completed. After appointment of all members, the chairs shall call and convene the first meeting of the study group. If 30 days or more after the effective date of this resolve a majority of but not all appointments have been made, the chairs may request authority and the Legislative Council may grant authority for the study group to meet and conduct its business.
 - **Sec. 5. Duties. Resolved:** That the study group shall review the State's behavioral health workforce needs and assess the feasibility of strategies and initiatives for recommended changes. As part of its review, the study group shall examine:

- 1. Information on current workforce trends and challenges in the behavioral health field, including, but not limited to, impact on access to behavioral health services for individuals and families;
- 2. The feasibility and impact of establishing a pilot program for community behavioral health teaching agencies in partnership with behavioral health providers, higher education institutions and other technical assistance or training organizations similar to the program established by the State of Washington;
- 3. The feasibility and impact of enhancing the State's loan repayment program for the behavioral health field; and
- 4. The feasibility and impact of introducing a stipend program for behavioral health students and interns.

Based on the information collected pursuant to this section, the study group shall propose a set of recommended initiatives to enhance the behavioral health workforce in the State.

- **Sec. 6. Staff assistance. Resolved:** That the Legislative Council shall provide necessary staffing services to the study group, except that Legislative Council staff support is not authorized when the Legislature is in regular or special session.
- **Sec. 7. Report. Resolved:** That, no later than December 3, 2025, the study group shall submit a report that includes its findings and recommendations based on the review in section 5, including suggested legislation, for presentation to the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services. The Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services is authorized to report out legislation related to the report to the Second Regular Session of the 132nd Legislature.

24 SUMMARY

This resolve establishes the Study Group on Solutions to Address Maine's Behavioral Health Workforce Shortage, which is directed to review the State's behavioral health workforce needs and assess the feasibility of strategies and initiatives for recommended changes. The study group is required to submit a report and suggested legislation by December 3, 2025 to the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services, which is authorized to report out legislation based on the report to the Second Regular Session of the 132nd Legislature.