

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

The following document is provided by the
LAW AND LEGISLATIVE DIGITAL LIBRARY
at the Maine State Law and Legislative Reference Library
<http://legislature.maine.gov/lawlib>



Reproduced from scanned originals with text recognition applied
(searchable text may contain some errors and/or omissions)

(EMERGENCY)
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

ONE HUNDRED AND FOURTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document

No. 1784

S. P. 604

In Senate, January 6, 1970

Committee on State Government suggested.

HARRY N. STARBRANCH, Secretary

Presented by Senator Logan of York.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED
AND SEVENTY

**AN ACT Creating a Commission to Study Means of Increasing
the Effectiveness and Capability of the Maine Legislature.**

Preamble. Whereas, the legislative branch of State Government is the basic policy making branch and is, in a real sense, the people's branch in that it is the principal instrument for the exercise by the people of their constitutional right to govern themselves; and

Whereas, if State Government is to continue to be an effective instrument of self government and to properly fulfill its role as a full partner in our state-federal system of government and thereby retard the growth of the power of Federal Government at the expense of state and local government, it is essential that the legislative branch of State Government be able to respond to the needs of the people and to cope with problems that confront State Government in a rapidly changing and increasingly complex society; and

Whereas, the declared policy of the Legislature of Maine is to improve its legislative process to the end that it may truly become, in the fullest sense, an equal and coordinate branch of the government of this State; and

Whereas, the Maine Legislature is facing ever-increasing problems in fulfilling its responsibilities to the people of the State of Maine; and

Whereas, because the activities of Maine State Government have a direct effect on the lives and property of all the people of their State, there is need for greater public understanding of the legislative process and of changes that may be necessary to improve and strengthen the Maine Legislature in the

discharge of its constitutional duties and there is need for citizen participation in the improvement of our state legislature ; now, therefore,

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

Sec. 1. Commission created. There is created a commission to be composed of the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, 3 republican and 3 democratic senators and 4 republican and 4 democratic representatives.

The legislative members shall be chosen by party caucuses of the respective branches of the Legislature. The caucuses shall be held before adjournment of the first special session of the 104th Legislature. The commission shall also be composed of 9 citizens, all of whom shall be registered voters, selected by majority vote of the legislative members and may be representatives of education, labor, business, news media and civic groups and may also include present or former public officials.

1. The purpose of the commission is to make such studies and evaluations of the operation and organization of the legislative branch of the government of the State of Maine as it considers necessary, including but not limited to :

A. An evaluation of the performance of its powers and duties.

B. A study of the procedures of the respective houses.

In making the studies and evaluations, the commission may organize subcommittees to report separately any findings and recommendations.

2. Study existing uses and recommend more efficient uses of manpower, equipment, facilities and appropriations in the organization and operation of the legislative branch of government.

3. Study the organization and operation of legislative service agencies and recommend such changes as will increase the efficiency of such agencies.

4. Study existing practices for the copying, printing, binding and distribution of bills, journals, session laws, and recommend such changes as may be necessary to promote greater efficiency and economy in the acquisition of such products or services.

5. Adopt a written report of its studies setting forth any recommendations, and publish such report prior to any special session of the 104th Legislature or the 105th regular legislative session.

All recommendations shall be accompanied by bills, where necessary, and copies of such bills shall be made a part of the said report.

The commission is empowered to accept contributions, shall choose its own chairman, and may hire staff and retain consultants. The commission may pay salaries and expenses as deemed necessary within the appropriation granted. The term of the commission shall expire December 31, 1970.

Sec. 2. Appropriation. There is appropriated from the Legislative Appropriation the sum of \$30,000 to carry out the purposes of this Act. Any unexpended balance shall not lapse but shall be carried forward until the purpose of this Act has been completed.