

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document

No. 519

H. P. 406

House of Representatives, February 2, 1971

Referred to Committee on Transportation. Sent up for concurrence and ordered printed.

BERTHA W. JOHNSON, Clerk

Presented by Mr. Shute of Stockton Springs.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED
SEVENTY-ONE

**AN ACT Providing Resident State Troopers in Municipalities Having No
Organized Police Forces.**

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

Sec. 1. R. S., T. 25, § 1507, additional. Title 25 of the Revised Statutes is amended by adding a new section 1507 to read as follows:

§ 1507. Resident state troopers

The Chief of the State Police may assign not more than 20 members from the regular state police force as resident state troopers in addition to the regular state police force to be employed and empowered as state troopers in any municipality, or 2 or more adjoining municipalities lacking an organized police force, and such officers may be detailed by said chief as resident state troopers for regular assignment to such municipalities, provided each of such towns shall pay an equitable share of the cost of compensation, maintenance and other expenses of such detail, such share to be determined by the Chief of the State Police with the approval of the Commissioner of Finance and Administration. Such municipality or municipalities and the Chief of the State Police are authorized to enter into agreements and contracts for such police services, with the approval of the Commissioner of Finance and Administration and the Attorney General, for 2-year periods.

The Chief of the State Police shall exercise such supervision and direction over any resident state trooper so appointed as he deems necessary according to the rules and regulations of the State Police. Each resident state trooper shall have the same powers as officers of the state police force and shall be entitled to the same rights and benefits and subject to the same rules and regulations as members of the State Police Department.

In order to implement the provisions and purposes of this section, all municipalities or groups of municipalities may commit local tax funds and are authorized to receive funds from the State, county or Federal Government or any public or private organization which may now or in the future provide funds for this purpose.

Sec. 2. Appropriation. There is appropriated to the State Police the sum of \$170,625 from the General Highway Fund and the sum of \$56,875 from the General Fund to carry out the purposes of this Act. The breakdown shall be as follows:

	1971-72	1972-73
MAINE STATE POLICE		
Personal Services	(20) \$ 97,500	(20) \$130,000

STATEMENT OF FACT

The resident State Trooper concept of law enforcement is designed for towns just large enough to require more than normal state police patrol but not capable financially of supporting full-time police protection of their own.

Maine has many such towns at this time serviced by regular patrols of the Maine State Police which of course would not constitute the same service as a full-time resident officer. At last count there were 99 municipalities in Maine with organized police departments. There were 90 towns within the State with a population of 1,000 persons or more which do not have any full-time police protection.

The established normal law enforcement ratio is at least one officer for every 1,000 population.

Maine has a comparatively low crime index of 1,035.7 per 100,000 inhabitants, with only 6 states with a lower index. However, the rural character of many areas of the State has brought about a concern for more concentrated protection in a number of the towns which cannot afford a police department of their own.

The resident trooper concept was initiated in Connecticut in 1947 and since that time, the legislature in that state has set a statutory limit of approximately 60 resident troopers. Since 1947 only one town has dropped out of the program and subsequently hired the resident trooper on retirement, as its own police chief.

Basically the concept involves a mutual agreement between a town having no police department and the State, to provide the full-time services of a state trooper. The cost of the services of this trooper, who would live within the specified town and be responsible for all law enforcement in that town, would be shared by the town and the State on a 50-50 basis and, it is understood, be eligible for funding under a federal law enforcement program.

A standardized policy would govern all resident troopers. They must, of necessity, remain under the supervisory and directional authority of the Chief of the Maine State Police.

To insure the fullest possible protection, resident troopers cannot leave their towns for any length of time without securing permission from the proper Maine State Police authority and notifying the leading officer of the town government.

Resident state troopers possess the same basic rights and are subject to the same rules and regulations as regular troopers. In addition, they also may call at any time on the full investigative, statistical and crime laboratory services of the Maine State Police.

Since supervision and control are constant concerns, resident troopers must keep in close contact with their immediate commanders and are subject to routine inspection.

Resident troopers may be employed outside of their towns only in extreme emergencies by a State Police authority designated in the agreement made between the State and the town. In all such cases, the trooper will be relieved as soon as possible to return to his resident duties.

Resident troopers shall give full consideration to the requests, suggestions and wishes of the leading authority in the town insofar as they are reasonable and do not run contrary to Maine State Police policy.

Resident troopers are not expected to work around the clock. Night calls, that is after 2300 hours or 2400 hours and calls received on the resident trooper's days off, will be handled by the regular patrols of the Maine State Police Troop in which the resident trooper's town is situated.

Resident trooper duty will be voluntary on the part of the individual trooper. All men assigned to this duty will be experienced troopers with at least 5 years service. Each man so assigned will have had the benefit of the high caliber recruit and in-service training provided by the Maine State Police.

Enabling legislation, specifying a maximum limit on personnel to be assigned as resident troopers, would be necessary before such a program could be implemented.