

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document

No. 1110

S. P. 374

In Senate, March 2, 1971

Referred to Committee on County Government. Sent down for concurrence and ordered printed.

HARRY N. STARBRANCH, Secretary

Presented by Senator Carswell of Cumberland.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED
SEVENTY-ONE

AN ACT Relating to Reports of Departments, Commissions and Institutions.

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

R. S., T. 1, § 501, amended. The last sentence of section 501 of Title 1 of the Revised Statutes is amended to read as follows:

At least 10 copies of all other publications, including periodicals, bulletins, pamphlets, leaflets and special reports issued by any department, commission or institution of the State, or by any legislative committee, shall be delivered to the State Librarian, and copies shall be delivered to any member of the Legislature upon his request.

STATEMENT OF FACT

The intent of this Act is to provide legislators with copies of any report or study undertaken with public funds, upon a request. The Baumgarten Report, a study of the administration of the Augusta State Hospital, done in 1968, was kept secret, available only to the Department of Mental Health and Corrections. Had the legislators been made aware of this information in the report, action could have been taken to remedy the serious deficiencies which have caused the hospital to decline to a state of crisis which has serious implications for the health and well-being of its patients. Circumstances have also had serious implications for the employees and staff of the hospital.

The State Library was refused a copy of the report when it first came into print. Senator Carswell was refused a copy and had to have a legislative order printed and submitted in order to place the information contained in

the Baumgarten Report into hands of persons who would work to effect changes for better administration and better patient care.

Such reports are public information and the departments of State Government have no authority to keep them secret.