

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document

No. 1491

S. P. 468

In Senate, March 17, 1971

Referred to Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs. Sent down for concurrence and ordered printed.

HARRY N. STARBRANCH, Secretary

Presented by Senator Bernard of Androscoggin.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED
SEVENTY-ONE

AN ACT to Establish the Maine Commission on Children.

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

Sec. 1. Commission. There is hereby created a "Maine Commission on Children." The commission shall consist of a member of the State Senate appointed by the Governor, a member of the House of Representatives appointed by the Governor and representatives from the following departments or commissions: Department of Education, Department of Health and Welfare, Department of Mental Health and Corrections, Department of Labor and Industry, Maine Employment Security Commission, Division of Economic Opportunity of the Executive Department, Arts and Humanities Commission, Environmental Improvement Commission, Department of Indian Affairs and the Law Enforcement Planning and Assistance Agency.

In addition, there shall be 18 members appointed from the general public by the Governor. Of the 18 members so appointed, 7 must be between the ages of 16 and 25. A chairman of the commission shall be elected at the first meeting and annually thereafter.

Sec. 2. Terms. Of the 18 members appointed by the Governor, 4 shall serve for terms of one year, 4 for terms of 2 years, 5 for terms of 3 years and 5 for terms of 4 years. All appointed members shall be eligible for reappointment and shall serve until their successors have been appointed and qualified. Vacancies occurring prior to the expiration of a term shall be filled by the Governor for the remainder of the unexpired term.

The terms of youth members shall expire at the time of their 25th birthday. Vacancies occurring prior to the expiration of a normal term shall be filled by the Governor for the remainder of the unexpired term.

Sec. 3. Meetings. The Commission on Children shall meet at least 12 times annually on call of the chairman or on the written request of any 13 members. A majority of the members of the commission shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

Sec. 4. Staff assistance, advisory committees, expenses of members. The commission may employ such staff as necessary to fulfill the purposes of this Act.

The commission may appoint such subcommittees or advisory committees as are necessary to advise on specific matters relating to children.

Members of the commission shall serve without compensation, but shall be reimbursed for necessary and actual expenses incurred in attending commission meetings and in performance of their duties as governed by rules and regulations covering all state departments.

Sec. 5. Duties of commission.

1. The duties of the commission shall be coordinated and implemented in cooperation with the existing Governor's Youth Task Force, Maine Youth Corps and their coordinator.

A. To serve as an advocate for any child or youth in the State, who, because of his immaturity, legal disability dependency, lack of parental support or lack of status in the community, needs a dedicated champion for the protection of his liberty or health when he is deprived of his home, schooling, medical care, property, rights, entitlements or benefits, or is subjected to involuntary treatment that may be detrimental to his general welfare;

B. To promote and develop comprehensive programs of education, health, recreation, welfare, public safety and correctional services for children;

C. To conduct continuing programs of public information to inform the public as to problems of children in Maine;

D. To assist and encourage governmental and private agencies to coordinate their efforts on behalf of children;

E. To cooperate with the Federal Government and the governments of other states and cities in programs relating to children;

F. To conduct programs of research as to the needs of children in order to facilitate more comprehensive and better related social planning and action;

G. To cooperate with those state departments and commissions which are concerned with the needs and services to children;

H. To furnish the Governor and Legislature a biennial report, together with recommendations.

Sec. 6. Acceptance and disposition of gifts and grants. The commission shall be empowered to accept gifts and grants at its discretion. Such funds

shall go into a trust and agency fund to be disbursed in furtherance of the purposes of this Act.

Sec. 7. Appropriation. There is appropriated to the Maine Commission on Children from the Unappropriated Surplus of the General Fund the sum of \$22,400 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1972 and \$24,400 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1973, to carry out the purposes of this Act. The breakdown shall be as follows:

	1971-72	1972-73
MAINE COMMISSION ON CHILDREN		
Personal Services (2) for 9 months	\$11,900	\$14,700
1 - Referral Service Coordinator		
1 - Stenographer		
All Other	9,500	9,500
Including matching funds for the Title IV A Funds for Planning and Development of Community Coordinated Child Care (4-C) Or- ganizations		
Capital Expenditures	1,000	200
	\$22,400	\$24,400

STATEMENT OF FACT

1. The intent of this bill is to establish a permanent Commission on Children to coordinate existing programs now serving the needs of all children at all levels of government.
2. To expedite consolidation and coordination of time, energy and money expended by public administrators, personnel resources and private agencies on behalf of children.
3. To function as an effective "ADVOCATE" of preventative, comprehensive plans and programs.
4. \$10,000 of the requested appropriation will be used as seed money for matching Federal Funds (three to one) under Title IVA of the Social Security Act.