

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document

No. 1629

H. P. 1179

House of Representatives, March 17, 1971

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

BERTHA W. JOHNSON, Clerk

Presented by Mr. Cooney of Webster.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED
SEVENTY-ONE

AN ACT Establishing the Maine Commission on Drug Abuse.

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

R. S., T. 5, Part 10, additional. Title 5 of the Revised Statutes is amended by adding a new Part 10 to read as follows:

PART 10

DRUG ABUSE

CHAPTER 317

COMMISSION ON DRUG ABUSE

§ 3361. Declaration of policy

The Legislature declares that it is the policy of the State to confront the serious problem of drug abuse through the wisest possible use of governmental and private resources. The Legislature further declares that the State can best encourage such use through the establishment of a Maine Commission on Drug Abuse which can coordinate the work of all state agencies dealing with the drug abuse problem and, at the same time, provide support and guidance to the drug abuse efforts of local government and private groups.

§ 3362. Commission

There is established the Maine Commission on Drug Abuse consisting of the Commissioner of Health and Welfare, the Commissioner of Mental Health and Corrections, the Commissioner of Education, the Chairman of the Employment Security Commission, the Chief of the State Police, Attorney

General, State Planning Director, Federal-State Coordinator, Director of the Office of Economic Opportunity, Chairman of the Law Enforcement Planning and Assistance Agency, Chancellor of the University of Maine, Chairman of the Maine State Health Planning Council, Director of the Maine Youth Corps, a representative of the Governor's Youth Task Force and 4 citizens of the State appointed by the Governor. The Governor shall designate the chairman of the commission to serve a term of 2 years, subject to a single reappointment.

§ 3363. Term of service

Each appointed member shall serve a term of 2 years, subject to a single reappointment. Each appointed member shall serve for the term of his appointment and thereafter until his successor is appointed, and, in cases of vacancies occurring before the completion of a term, these vacancies shall be filled for the balance of the unexpired term.

§ 3364. Assistance from other state agencies

The Maine Commission on Drug Abuse, for administrative purposes, shall be lodged in the Executive Department, with authority to request any state department or agency, whether or not represented on the commission, to provide such personnel, financial assistance, facilities and data as will help the commission fulfill its responsibilities. All agencies of State Government are to cooperate fully with the commission in carrying out its responsibilities.

§ 3365. Responsibilities

1. Duties. The responsibilities of the Maine Commission on Drug Abuse shall include the following:

A. The coordination of all state governmental efforts dealing with the problems of drug abuse;

B. Helping communities mobilize their resources to deal with drug abuse;

C. Making grants to state, local and regional governmental agencies, and to private groups, for drug abuse control programs within such appropriations as may be made available to the commission for this purpose from time to time;

D. Seeking and receiving grants in furtherance of its responsibilities from the Federal Government and from private sources;

E. Working with comparable agencies of state government in the other New England states, and with New England regional agencies, in developing a regional approach to the drug problem;

F. Making an annual report to the Governor and the Legislature of its activities. Such report shall contain recommendations for changes in the laws of Maine relating to drug abuse which, in the opinion of the commission, are necessary to the best interests of the State and its people. In preparing such recommendations and reports, the commission may engage expert advisors and assistants who may serve without compensation or, to

the extent that funds may be made available by appropriation, grant, gift or allocation from a state department, the commission may pay for such expert advisors and assistance.

§ 3366. Authority

1. Authority. In carrying out its coordinating responsibilities at the state level, and in providing support and guidance to the drug abuse efforts of local government and private groups, the commission shall have the authority and obligation to:

A. Examine all requests for appropriations or program grants relating to drug abuse made by state agencies and advise the Governor, Budget Bureau and Legislature of its findings and recommendations. It shall be the responsibility of all departments to advise the commission of their budgetary requests relating to drug abuse concurrently with their submission to the Governor. The departments shall, in the implementation of their programs, keep the commission fully informed of their progress and of any changes in policy;

B. Supervise the disbursement of all state funds appropriated for the purpose of helping local and regional government agencies and private groups deal with drug abuse. All such local and regional governmental agencies and all such private groups seeking state assistance shall be required to file applications with the commission. The commission shall establish appropriate rules and regulations for the processing of these applications. No grants of state funds to local or regional governmental agencies or to private groups shall be made without commission approval.

STATEMENT OF FACT

The Interagency Commission on Drug Abuse was created by Governor Curtis' Executive Order in March of 1970. The commission's purpose was to help coordinate the activities of all state departments dealing with various aspects of drug abuse. The drug abuse problem, and the need for continuing coordination, are of such importance that the Interagency Commission, created by Executive Order, should now become a statutory body authorized by the Legislature. This legislation would accomplish that purpose by establishing a Maine Commission on Drug Abuse, whose membership would be extended to representatives from the private sector. These individuals could make important contributions to the drug abuse efforts of State Government and provide, at the same time, coordinating links with drug abuse efforts in the private sector. The legislation requires no appropriation because of plans to obtain staff support from existing state agencies and through the use of federal funds.