

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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(EMERGENCY)

ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document

No. 751

H. P. 572

House of Representatives, February 8, 1973

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

E. LOUISE LINCOLN, Clerk

Presented by Mr. Connolly of Portland.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED
SEVENTY-THREE

AN ACT Creating a Special Human Services' Commission.

Emergency preamble. Whereas, Acts of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

Whereas, the said 90-day period will not terminate until after the beginning of the next fiscal year; and

Whereas, United States Congressional action (Public law 92-512 Revenue Sharing and the ceiling on Title IV-A funding) restricts the use of federal funds for human services resulting in the curtailment of certain services for the elderly and for children; and

Whereas, in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now, therefore,

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

Sec. 1. Creation and constitution of Human Services' Commission. There is created a special Human Services' Commission to consist of 10 members. Five of the members shall be members of the Legislature to be appointed by majority vote of the Joint Committee on Human Resources. The 5 remaining members shall be appointed by the Governor as follows: Two representatives of human service programs serving the elderly; 2 representatives of human service programs serving children and one representative from a state-wide low income organization.

Sec. 2. Duties, responsibilities and powers of the commission. The duties, responsibilities and powers of the Human Services' Commission shall include, but not necessarily be limited to:

1. Conduct hearings and receive testimony on the financial status of all human service programs currently operating in Maine with federal or state funds;

2. Conduct hearings and receive testimony relative to the need and the effectiveness of said human service programs;

3. Determine role of State of Maine in assisting said human service programs;

4. Introduce legislation, if it is deemed necessary, into this session of the Legislature to assist said human service programs;

5. Conduct hearings, receive testimony and issue its findings for as long a period of time as it may deem necessary;

6. In conducting its business, the commission shall consider the effect of action already taken by, or action pending before, the United States Congress and the President of the United States affecting the aforementioned human service programs;

7. Address the question of availability of seed moneys and matching funds for human service programs;

8. Investigate and make findings relative to the present and potential roles of county and municipal governments in assisting human service programs.

The commission shall be disbanded by a majority vote of its members or by Legislative action.

The leadership of the Legislature shall assign any of its staff it may deem necessary to assist the commission in the performance of its work.

Sec. 3. Appropriation. There shall be appropriated from the General Fund to the commission a sum not to exceed \$5,000 to reimburse members for any expenses incurred in the performance of its work.

Emergency clause. In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this Act shall take effect when approved.

STATEMENT OF FACT

Recent legislation enacted by the United States Congress restricting the use of federal funds for human service programs has affected a multitude of programs and services provided to the elderly and children as well as low income individuals and families not currently falling under Health and Welfare eligibility guidelines. This action has also served to focus attention on

the role that the Federal, State and local governments can assume in addressing the needs of a large part of the Maine citizenry.

This bill would create a special commission to conduct a complete and thorough and critical investigation of all human service programs now operating in the State. The purpose of the investigation would be to determine the scope of the State's responsibility in assisting any such programs in the future.