

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document

No. 2418

S. P. 850

In Senate, January 23, 1974

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

HARRY N. STARBRANCH, Secretary

Presented by Senator Katz of Kennebec, **BY REQUEST.**

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED
SEVENTY-FOUR

**AN ACT Discontinuing Operation of Schooling for Children in the
Unorganized Territory Schools.**

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

R. S., T. 20, § 1453, amended. The first sentence of section 1453 of Title 20 of the Revised Statutes is amended to read as follows:

Elementary school privileges for children residing in the unorganized territory may be provided by the commissioner by ~~establishing and maintaining in the unorganized territory such elementary schools, the minimum school year of which shall be 36 weeks, as may seem advisable and~~ by sending such children to elementary schools anywhere within the State as tuition pupils as he may deem expedient.

STATEMENT OF FACT

This bill would implement Recommendation #40, Department of Educational and Cultural Services, Maine Management and Cost Survey Report. Governor Curtis recommends that further study is needed.

The intent of this Act is to prohibit the operation of elementary schools in the unorganized territory by the Commissioner of Educational and Cultural Services. Six schools are now operated with approximately 425 pupils enrolled. It is proposed by Maine Management and Cost Survey that the schools be closed and the pupils transported and tuitioned to schools in organized units.

It was estimated that closing the Unorganized Territory Schools would result in an annual saving of \$190,000. It was assumed that local organized school systems could absorb the 420 pupils without additional cost. A recent check with local school systems indicates that it would be impossible to absorb these pupils without construction of additional classrooms.

In Governor Kenneth M. Curtis' Implementation Report to the 106th Legislature dated January 10, 1974, he advised that it would not be feasible to close the Unorganized Territory Schools at this time as neighboring town school systems could not absorb the pupils without construction of additional classroom space. He recommended that the Commissioner of Educational and Cultural Services annually review enrollments and consolidate unorganized territory schools whenever feasible.