

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document

No. 390

S. P. 148

In Senate, February 10, 1977

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

MAY M. ROSS, Secretary

Presented by Senator Pierce of Kennebec.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED
SEVENTY-SEVEN

RESOLVE, to Evaluate Substate Districts in Maine.

Whereas, in Maine there are 20 major departments and agencies which provide licensing and regulatory functions, direct services to people and businesses and administrative functions; and

Whereas, these departments and agencies provide such services in a range of substate divisions from one to 38 and whose combined service areas exceed 100; and

Whereas, in Maine, federal agencies support some 12 different substate districts, including Regional Planning Commissions, Economic Development Districts, Resource Conservation and Development District, Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Agricultural Stabilization Districts, Community Action Agencies, Water Quality Management Districts, Air Pollution Control Districts, Areawide Health Planning Agencies, Regional Health Agencies, Law Enforcement Planning and Assistance Districts and Manpower Planning Districts; and

Whereas, in 1972, an executive order was authorized under Title 30, section 4521 establishing 8 planning and development districts serviced by 11 regional planning agencies; and

Whereas, in Maine there are 16 counties and 494 towns and plantations offering a variety of services and functions; and

Whereas, the governmental service delivery system is sometimes confusing, fragmented and uncoordinated and difficult for Maine residents to use and understand; and

Whereas, the need exists to evaluate this complex maze of government regulatory functions, planning agencies and service organizations to reduce overlap and duplication and to make services more readily available to Maine citizens; now, therefore, be it

Commission on Regional and District Organizations; created. RESOLVED: That a Commission on Regional and District Organizations be formed, comprised of 12 members appointed by the Governor from citizens familiar with governmental service delivery systems, federal and state agency programs. The Governor shall also appoint the chairperson of the committee.

The purpose of this committee is to:

1. Inventory the total governmental service delivery system in Maine in terms of substate service areas and service functions;
2. Evaluate the degree of implementation of the 1972 executive order establishing planning and development districts;
3. Indicate the relative merits and problems associated with the reduction of service delivery areas; and
4. Recommend what changes can and should be made in substate districts, agencies and counties in order to more efficiently deliver government services and to make the delivery system and decision making process more accessible to Maine residents; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the study, with necessary recommendations, shall be completed within 10 months after the effective date of this resolve and shall be presented to the 2nd regular session of the 108th Legislature. The committee may use the technical and staff resources of the State Planning Office and other appropriate agencies as well as the legislative staff.

STATEMENT OF FACT

The purpose of this resolve is to form a Commission on Regional and District Organizations to inventory Maine's substate governmental service delivery and decision making system. The committee is to make recommendations as to how the State can best organize services rendered by regional, county and substate governmental organizations. The current substate system is complex, fragmented and difficult for Maine citizens to understand. The continued increase in districts supported by federal and state organizations is cumbersome and lacks coordination. The need exists to have an impartial group of citizens to examine this layer of governmental activity and to provide objective recommendations as to how this system can best be organized to increase governmental efficiency and to reduce agency overlap and duplication.