

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

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Legislative Document

No. 842

H. P. 700

House of Representatives, March 9, 1977

On Motion of Mr. Talbot of Portland referred to the Committee on State Government. Sent up for concurrence and 1,800 ordered printed.

EDWIN H. PERT, Clerk

Presented by Mrs. Nelson of Portland.

Cosponsor: Mrs. Trafton of Auburn.

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STATE OF MAINE

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IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED  
SEVENTY-SEVEN

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**AN ACT Concerning Displaced Homemakers.**

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

Sec. 1. 1 MRSA c. 29 is enacted to read:

**CHAPTER 29**

**TERMINATION OF STATUTORY PROVISIONS**

§ 2501. Repeal of statutory provisions

The following statutory provisions are repealed on the dates set forth in this section.

26. Title 26.

A. Title 26, chapter 21 shall be repealed on January 1, 1980.

§ 2502. Committee reports

Any legislative committee having jurisdiction over a statutory provision listed in section 2501 shall prepare and submit to the Legislature, within 30 legislative days after the convening of the last regular session prior to the date set out in section 2501 for repeal of that provision, a report evaluating the advisability of retaining the statutory provision.

§ 2503. Contents of report

A report prepared pursuant to section 2502 shall include:

1. Past effectiveness. An evaluation of the past effectiveness of the statutory provision;

2. **Future need.** An evaluation of the future need for the statutory provision;
3. **Alternative methods.** An examination of alternative methods of attaining the purpose of the provision;
4. **Cost of retention.** An estimate of the cost of retaining the provision; and
5. **Recommendation.** A recommendation of the committee as to the amendment, repeal, replacement or retention of the provision.

Sec. 2. 26 MRSA c. 21 is enacted to read:

**CHAPTER 21  
DISPLACED HOMEMAKERS ACT**

§ 1601. Displaced homemaker

As used in this chapter, "displaced homemaker" means an individual who:

1. **Former worker in home.** Has worked in the home for a substantial number of years providing unpaid household services for family members;
2. **No gainful employment.** Is not gainfully employed or is not in a position offering reasonable opportunities for advancement;
3. **Difficulty in getting employment.** Has had or would have difficulty in securing employment; and;
4. **Former dependency.** Has been dependent on the income of another family member, but is no longer supported by such income, or has been dependent on federal assistance, but is no longer eligible for such assistance, or is supported as the parent of minor children by government assistance or spousal support, but whose children are within one year of reaching their majority.

§ 1602. Establishment of a multipurpose service program; grants; delegation

The Commissioner of Manpower Affairs, hereinafter in this chapter called the "commissioner," in conjunction with the Displaced Homemakers Advisory Council as provided for in section 1604, shall establish as a 2-year pilot project a multipurpose service program for displaced homemakers, which shall include the services enumerated in section 1606.

§ 1603. Commissioner; powers

The commissioner, with the approval of the Displaced Homemakers Advisory Council, is authorized to enter into contracts with, and make grants to, entities which have been selected by the council, for the purpose of establishing a multipurpose service program under this chapter.

The commissioner may delegate any or all of the authority granted him by this chapter to other personnel within the Department of Manpower Affairs.

**§ 1604. Displaced Homemakers Advisory Council**

1. **Membership.** The Displaced Homemakers Advisory Council, hereinafter in this chapter called the "council," shall be composed of the following individuals:

A. The Commissioner of Manpower Affairs, or the commissioner's designee;

B. A Legislator to be jointly appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President of the Senate; and

C. Nine individuals who have experience with the problems of displaced homemakers, career counseling or adult vocational education. These members shall be appointed as follows: Three by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, 3 by the President of the Senate and 3 by the Governor. The initial chairman shall be the legislative member. After the first year, the chairman shall be selected by the council.

2. **Responsibility.** The Displaced Homemakers Advisory Council shall have the overall responsibility for establishing, monitoring and evaluating the multipurpose service pilot project in cooperation with the commissioner. The council shall be authorized to hold public hearings anywhere in the State. This responsibility includes the initial solicitation of proposals from entities interested in administering the pilot project and the selection of the sponsoring group with reference to these and other factors:

A. The degree and types of needs of displaced homemakers in a geographical area with consideration given to both rural and urban problems;

B. The availability of supplemental services within the community;

C. The availability of administrative resources such as office space and equipment which could be utilized by the project; and

D. Level of support from within the community for the project.

3. **Regulations.** The council, in consultation with the staff of the sponsoring agency, shall establish regulations concerning the eligibility of persons for the services of the project and for such other matters as the council deems necessary.

4. **Budget approval.** The council shall approve the proposed pilot project budget of any sponsoring agency in order to ensure that the expenditure of funds conforms to the purposes of this chapter.

5. **Funding sources.** The council shall explore, and to the extent available and appropriate, use all possible sources of funding and contributions from federal, state, local and private sources in establishing and supplementing this service program, including in-kind contributions of building space, equipment and qualified personnel for the training programs.

**§ 1605. Design and staff of the multipurpose service program**

1. Design. The multipurpose service program shall be designed to provide displaced homemakers with all types of counseling, training, education and assistance to enable them to become gainfully employed.

2. Staff. The staff of the sponsoring group, to the greatest extent possible, shall be filled by displaced homemakers. Where necessary, potential staff members shall be provided with any on-the-job training that would allow them to qualify for staff positions.

#### § 1606. Services of the multipurpose service program

The multipurpose service program shall include, but not be limited to, notification to displaced homemakers of the program, job counseling, job training, job placement and referral services.

1. Notification of services. The sponsoring agency shall make every effort to notify displaced homemakers of the services available to them under the program.

2. Job counseling. The counseling shall be specifically designed for the person reentering the job market after a substantial number of years as a homemaker. The counseling shall take into account, and build upon, the skills and experiences of a homemaker as well as any prior skills of the individual displaced homemaker.

3. Job training and job placement. The training and placement services shall:

A. Develop, by working with state, federal and local government agencies and private employers, training, education and placement programs for jobs in the public and private sectors;

B. Assist displaced homemakers in gaining admission to existing public and private job training programs, education and opportunities, including educational loan opportunities;

C. Assist in identifying community needs and creating new jobs in the public and private sectors; and

D. Provide loans or grants, not in excess of \$1,000 per recipient to develop appropriate education or training, or both.

4. Referral services. Referrals should include, but not be limited to, programs in the areas of health care, financial management, legal services, educational opportunities and information relating to government services such as social security, veterans benefits, welfare, food stamps and unemployment insurance. Educational referrals shall include information about courses offering credit through secondary or post-secondary education programs, including bilingual programming where appropriate.

#### § 1607. Evaluation of the multipurpose service program

1. Staff evaluation. The Displaced Homemakers Advisory Council shall require the staff of the sponsoring group to evaluate the effectiveness of the various services. This evaluation shall include the number of persons trained, the number of persons placed in employment, follow-up data on

these persons, the number of persons served by the referral program and the cost effectiveness of the various components of the program.

2. Schedule of evaluations. There shall be a 6-month and 12-month evaluation presented to the council by the staff of the group sponsoring the program. A final evaluation of the 2-year project shall be made by the staff, approved by the council and submitted to the Legislature by the terminating date of the pilot program.

§ 1608. Duration of multipurpose service program

The Displaced Homemakers Advisory Council shall implement the multipurpose service program by February 1, 1978.

§ 1609. Legislative review

This chapter is subject to repeal under Title 1, section 2501. The legislative committee having jurisdiction over the review provided for in Title 1, section 2502 shall be the Joint Standing Committee on State Government.

Sec. 3. Appropriation. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Manpower Affairs the sum of \$135,000 for fiscal years 1977-78 and 1978-79 to be used to carry out the provisions of this Act. The breakdown shall be as follows:

	1977-78		1978-79
MANPOWER AFFAIRS, DEPARTMENT OF			
Displaced Homemakers Program			
Personal Services	(3) \$25,000	(3)	\$35,000
All Other	25,000		50,000
	\$50,000		\$85,000

STATEMENT OF FACT

The Legislature finds that there is an increasing number of persons in this State who, having fulfilled a role as homemaker, find themselves "displaced" in their middle years through divorce, death of their spouse or other loss of family income. As a consequence, displaced homemakers are very often without any source of income: they are ineligible for federal welfare assistance if they are not physically disabled and their children are past a certain age; they are ineligible for social security benefits because they are too young; they are ineligible for unemployment insurance because they have been engaged in unpaid labor in the home; they have often lost their rights as beneficiaries under employers' pension and health plans through divorce or death of spouse, despite many years of contribution to the family well-being and they are generally unacceptable to private health insurance plans because of their age.

The Legislature further finds that homemakers are an unrecognized and unpaid part of the national work force who make an invaluable contribution to the welfare and economic stability of the society as a whole and that they are often subject to discrimination in employment because of age, sex and lack of any recent paid work experience. The only seniority they enjoy is of no value in the commercial marketplace.

It is the purpose of this bill to require the Commissioner of Manpower Affairs, in conjunction with the Displaced Homemakers Advisory Council, to establish a 2-year multipurpose service program to provide necessary training, counseling and referral services for displaced homemakers so that they may enjoy the independence and economic security vital to a productive life and to being self-sufficient members of society. The bill also provides an income tax incentive to taxpaying entities that employ "displaced homemakers."