

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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(EMERGENCY)  
FIRST REGULAR SESSION

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ONE HUNDRED AND NINTH LEGISLATURE

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**Legislative Document**

**No. 580**

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S. P. 207

In Senate, February 15, 1979

Referred to the Committee on Health and Institutional Services. Sent down for concurrence and ordered printed.

Presented by Senator Najarian of Cumberland.

MAY M. ROSS, Secretary of the Senate

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STATE OF MAINE

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IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED  
SEVENTY-NINE

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**AN ACT to Permit Juvenile Offenders who are Deaf or Mute, or Both, to be  
Committed to the Maine Youth Center.**

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

Whereas, at the present time there is a statutory prohibition against committing deaf or mute juvenile offenders to the Maine Youth Center; and

Whereas, this prohibition forces commitment of deaf or mute juvenile offenders to other institutions, such as mental health institutes, which are incapable of properly supervising these juvenile offenders; and

Whereas, the Maine Youth Center can provide proper supervision for these juvenile offenders; and

Whereas, it is imperative that commitment of these juvenile offenders to the Maine Youth Center be permitted as soon as possible to enable proper supervision to begin; 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:

**15 MRSA § 2714, 2nd sentence**, as repealed and replaced by PL 1975, c. 538, § 9, is amended to read:

All commitments of such children shall be until the age of 21, and discharge from the center shall be in accordance with section 2718; but no child shall be committed who is ~~deaf, mute~~ blind or a proper subject for the Augusta Mental Health Institute, the Bangor Mental Health Institute or the Pineland Center.

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

#### STATEMENT OF FACT

At the present time, juvenile offenders who are deaf or mute cannot be committed by statute to the Maine Youth Center. As a result, they are in some cases referred to mental health institutes which cannot provide them proper supervision.

This bill permits commitment of juvenile offenders who are deaf or mute, or both, to the Maine Youth Center which can provide proper supervision.