

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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1 FIRST REGULAR SESSION
2

3 ONE HUNDRED AND ELEVENTH LEGISLATURE
4

5 Legislative Document

No. 1182

6
7 H.P. 903

House of Representatives, March 14, 1983

8 Referred to the Committee on Health and Institutional Services. Sent up
9 for concurrence and ordered printed.

10 EDWIN H. PERT, Clerk

Presented by Representative Connolly of Portland.
Cosponsor: Senator Brown of Washington.

11
12 STATE OF MAINE
13

14 IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD
15 NINETEEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-THREE
16

17 AN ACT to Establish Inmate Representation.
18

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

21 34 MRSA c. 62-B is enacted to read:

22 CHAPTER 62-B

23 INMATES' COUNCILS

24 §541. Inmates' councils; establishment

25 The warden or supervisor of each adult correc-
26 tional institution, not including county jails, shall
27 inform inmates of their right to establish an
28 inmates' council. This information shall be given to
29 all inmates and to a family member or a representa-
30 tive designated by the inmate upon the inmate's
31 admission to the institution. This information shall
32 also be posted prominently in the institution.

1 The warden or supervisor shall assist inmates in
2 establishing a council, if the inmates choose to
3 establish one. If there is no council, at least once
4 each year inmates shall be given the opportunity to
5 establish one. A majority vote shall prevail.

6 The council shall adopt bylaws, if there are not
7 any already in existence. The bylaws shall, in addi-
8 tion to other matters, specify the size of the coun-
9 cil, the method of representation and the length of
10 the terms of the members. The council may meet as
11 often as specified in the bylaws, but at least quar-
12 terly, except if the security of the institution re-
13 quires otherwise. No employee or designated outside
14 representative may be a voting member of the council.

15 The council may choose an individual outside of
16 the institution to serve as its outside representa-
17 tive. The outside representative may sit on the
18 council, but shall not be a voting member.

19 The council shall notify the Commissioner of Cor-
20 rections when the council is established or reestab-
21 lished.

22 §542. Responsibilities of the council

23 The council has, but is not limited to, the fol-
24 lowing responsibilities:

25 1. Make recommendations. To review and make
26 recommendations to strengthen the institution's poli-
27 cies and procedures relating to inmates' rights;

28 2. Establish procedures to inform. To establish
29 procedures for informing all inmates about their
30 rights;

31 3. Serve as a forum. To serve as a forum for
32 obtaining and disseminating information for solici-
33 ting and adopting recommendations for the
34 institution's programming and improvement, and for
35 early identification and recommendations for orderly
36 resolution, of inmates' problems;

37 4. Inform warden of concerns. To inform the
38 warden or supervisor about the opinions and concerns
39 of the inmates; and

