

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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FIRST REGULAR SESSION

ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTEENTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document

NO. 660

H.P. 490 House of Representatives, March 6, 1987
Reference to the Committee on Appropriations and
Financial Affairs suggested and ordered printed.

EDWIN H. PERT, Clerk

Presented by Representative CLARK of Millinocket.

Cosponsored by Representative MICHAUD of East
Millinocket, Speaker MARTIN of Eagle Lake and President PRAY
of Penobscot.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD
NINETEEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-SEVEN

1 AN ACT to Provide Funds to the Department of
2 Mental Health and Mental Retardation
3 to Assist the Millinocket Areas with
4 Mental Health, Home Health and
5 Homemaker Services.
6

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

9 Appropriation. The following funds are appropri-
10 ated from the General Fund to carry out the purposes
11 of this Act.

	<u>1987-88</u>
12 <u>MENTAL HEALTH AND MENTAL RE-</u>	
13 <u>TARDATION, DEPARTMENT OF</u>	
14	
15 All Other	\$90,000

1 Funds to be granted to
2 Community Health and
3 Counseling Services,
4 Inc., a community men-
5 tal health center to
6 provide mental health,
7 home health and
8 homemaker servcies to
9 Millinocket and the
10 surrounding areas.

11 STATEMENT OF FACT

12 The community of Millinocket and the surrounding
13 areas face many stiff challenges for the future in
14 light of national and worldwide trends in the paper
15 products industry. Great Northern Nekoosa, by far
16 the community's major employer for 85 years, must
17 make many changes in order to remain competitive in
18 its field. The impact of these changes will be
19 strongly felt in many areas of community life and
20 will affect most families in one way or another.
21 Some of the major impacts on people's lives include:
22 The need to learn new job skills and consider other
23 places of employment besides the mill, including the
24 possibility of having to relocate into a far away
25 community; the need to upgrade educational skills,
26 which can be quite modest in such areas as ability to
27 read and write; the need to adapt to a significantly
28 lower standard of living, coming from reduced income
29 levels in many families; for many workers in their
30 50's who have taken early retirement, the need to de-
31 velop a new and healthy way of living their lives;
32 and the need to cope with a high level of personal
33 stress, which often will produce serious health prob-
34 lems or have a negative impact on family life, with
35 increased instances of abuse, divorce and suicidal
36 thinking. These impacts can be mainly positive or
37 mostly negative, depending in large part upon how the
38 community plans for and responds to them.

39 This bill appropriates \$90,000 to the Department
40 of Mental Health and Mental Retardation to assist the
41 community in planning for and carrying out its re-
42 sponse to these challenges. The department will

1 grant these funds to Community Health and Counseling
2 Services, Inc., a community mental health center
3 which provides mental health, home health and
4 homemaker services to Millinocket and the surrounding
5 areas.

6 The funds will be utilized to support 2 full-time
7 staff positions and also to provide resources needed
8 to bring in national expertise from individuals in
9 communities who have successfully addressed chal-
10 lenges similar to those the Millinocket area is faci-
11 cing.

12 One staff position will take responsibility for
13 organizing and coordinating a community-wide planning
14 effort. This activity will involve key individuals
15 from such significant elements of the community as
16 business and industry, labor, health care, education,
17 clergy and others. The thrust of the planning activi-
18 ty will be to develop and implement a wide range of
19 activities which will soon affect the community.

20 The other position will provide a variety of edu-
21 cational and mutual support activities which will as-
22 sist individuals and groups to cope with the tensions
23 in their personal lives resulting from changes at the
24 community level. Wherever possible, self-help groups
25 will be utilized.

26 If at all possible, at least one of these posi-
27 tions will be filled by a person already living in
28 the Millinocket area who is knowledgeable about, and
29 fully involved in, the many changes and challenges
30 which are having an impact on people.

31 The approach described in this bill will suffice
32 for the first year. After that, when the community
33 effort has been organized and activated, it will be
34 desirable to shift some of these resources to the
35 provision of clinical counseling services.

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