

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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114th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION - 1989

Legislative Document

No. 961

S.P. 360

In Senate, March 28, 1989

Reference to the Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joy J. O'Brien".

JOY J. O'BRIEN
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator BOST of Penobscot.

Cosponsored by Senator ANDREWS of Cumberland, Representative MAYO of Thomaston and Representative SWAZEY of Bucksport.

STATE OF MAINE

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

An Act to Establish a Pilot Program to Promote Literacy in Maine Correctional Facilities.



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

3 Sec. 1. 34-A MRSA §1403, sub-§10 is enacted to read:

5 10. Literacy programs. The commissioner shall establish a
7 literacy program at each correctional facility for the purpose of
9 raising the literacy rate of prisoners and juvenile clients. The
11 commissioner shall, in consultation with the Department of
13 Educational and Cultural Services, develop a literacy program and
15 may carry out that authority by arrangements with volunteer
17 individuals or agencies, by utilizing existing qualified staff or
19 by hiring new staff.

21 Sec. 2. Appropriation. The following funds are appropriated
23 from the General Fund to carry out the purposes of this Act.

| | | |
|----|-----------------------------------|----------|
| 17 | | 1989-90 |
| 19 | CORRECTIONS, DEPARTMENT OF | |
| 21 | All Other | \$50,000 |

23

25 **STATEMENT OF FACT**

27 This State has one of the lowest literacy rates in the
29 country. It is commonly accepted that persons confined to
31 prisons and juvenile offender facilities have a lower literacy
33 rate than the general population. These facilities are an ideal
place to offer literacy programs. Raising the literacy rate of
prisoners and juvenile clients may make readjustment easier
following discharge and may reduce recidivism.

35 The purpose of this bill is to authorize the Commissioner of
37 Corrections, in consultation with the Department of Educational
and Cultural Services, to provide literacy programs by a variety
of means to prisoners and juvenile clients.