

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# 116th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-1993

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Legislative Document

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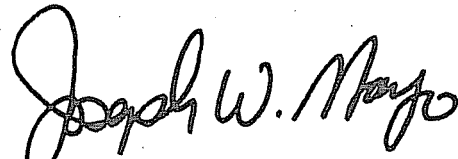
House of Representatives, April 8, 1993

**Resolve, to Establish the Commission to Examine Alternatives to  
Maine's Welfare System and to Make Recommendations Concerning Its  
Replacement.**

(EMERGENCY)

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Reference to the Committee on Human Resources suggested and ordered printed.

  
JOSEPH W. MAYO, Clerk

Presented by Representative SIMONDS of Cape Elizabeth.  
Cosponsored by Representative TREAT of Gardiner, Senator PARADIS of Aroostook and  
Representatives: NORTON of Winthrop, PENDLETON of Scarborough, Senators: AMERO of  
Cumberland, BRANNIGAN of Cumberland, HARRIMAN of Cumberland.

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

4           Whereas, the State's welfare system contains too many  
6           disincentives to achieve self-sufficiency goals and avoid  
revolving-door dependency on aid to families with dependent  
8           children; and

10          Whereas, children and families are stigmatized and  
demoralized by the system despite their positive efforts and  
12          achievements; and

14          Whereas, the system fails to capitalize on the desire of the  
vast majority of aid to families with dependent children families  
16          for decent work, training or education opportunities; and

18          Whereas, the State's public and private job training,  
rehabilitation, education, parent training and child-care  
20          agencies exist to meet these needs and should become the primary  
providers of services leading to self-sufficiency for needy  
22          families; and

24          Whereas, the public has lost confidence in the present  
system; and

26          Whereas, the new administration in Washington, D.C. will  
28          likely entertain proposals to radically reform welfare early in  
the new term; and

30          Whereas, the State's budget crisis requires that the State  
32          take immediate steps to explore all avenues to reduce welfare  
dependency and its associated costs in a humane and productive  
34          manner; and

36          Whereas, in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts  
create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of  
38          Maine and require the following legislation as immediately  
necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and  
40          safety; now, therefore, be it

42          **Sec. 1. Commission established. Resolved:** That the Commission  
to Examine Alternatives to Maine's Welfare System is established;  
44          and be it further

46          **Sec. 2. Commission membership. Resolved:** That the commission  
consists of the following 17 members: 6 members appointed by the  
48          Governor, 2 members from the Department of Human Services, one  
member from the Department of Education, one member from the  
50          Department of Labor and a chair representing the public; 3  
members appointed by the President of the Senate, 2 of whom may  
52          be Senators, one member from the Joint Standing Committee on

2 Human Resources, one member from the Joint Standing Committee on  
Education and one member representing the public; 3 members  
4 appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, 2 of  
whom may be Representatives, one member from the Joint Standing  
6 Committee on Human Resources, one member from the Joint Standing  
Committee on Education and one member representing the public;  
8 one member of the public jointly appointed by the President of  
the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives; one  
10 member designated by the Aid to Families with Dependent Children  
Advisory Committee; one member designated by Coastal Enterprises,  
12 Inc. of Maine; one member designated by the Maine Association of  
Interdependent Neighborhoods; one member designated by the  
14 Women's Lobby; and one member designated by the Maine Municipal  
Association; and be it further

16 **Sec. 3. Appointments; meetings. Resolved:** That all  
appointments must be made no later than 30 days following the  
18 effective date of this resolve. The chair shall call the first  
meeting of the commission; and be it further

20 **Sec. 4. Duties. Resolved:** That the commission shall explore  
with appropriate state and federal agencies an alternative to  
22 Maine's aid to families with dependent children system that will  
meet the goals of the State for needy children and families and  
24 provide for:

- 26 1. Timely and adequate response to basic needs;
- 28 2. Enrollment in a goal-oriented training program leading  
30 to self-sufficiency and adequate child care; and
- 32 3. Financial assistance as a supporting element for the  
goal-oriented program; and be it further

34 **Sec. 5. Goals. Resolved:** That the goals of the commission are  
36 to:

- 38 1. Identify barriers to self-sufficiency among the aid to  
families with dependent children population and determine how to  
40 replace the existing system with a goal-oriented program  
promoting optimum levels of financial independence and family  
42 stability;
- 44 2. Utilize existing work, training, education,  
rehabilitation and social service agencies to administer  
46 self-sufficiency programs, as primary service providers;
- 48 3. Customize existing federally matched public assistance  
and social services to support goal-oriented training programs  
50 during periods of enrollment; and

2 4. Continue the existing medical assistance programs for  
medically needy families, irrespective of their status in  
self-sufficiency programs; and be it further

4  
6 **Sec. 6. Alternatives. Resolved:** That the commission consider  
the following alternatives:

8 1. Determine to what extent the system, or components of  
the system, may operate without Federal Government waivers; and

10 2. Determine the waivers needed to implement the program or  
12 to demonstrate the feasibility and cost benefits of a  
goal-oriented, financial assistance program; and be it further

14  
16 **Sec. 7. Role of state agencies. Resolved:** That the commission  
shall consider the administration, service and case-management  
18 functions of the participating agencies to ensure that certain  
conditions are met. The operating principles guiding these  
conditions must include:

20 1. Prompt, efficient and sensitive handling of all  
22 financial assistance applications;

24 2. The needs of children in arranging for self-sufficiency  
program enrollments;

26 3. The use of casework skills and principles of  
28 self-determination in helping applicants select a  
self-sufficiency program;

30 4. Interviewing and case-management skills employed by the  
32 participating service agencies; and

34 5. Adequate financial assistance to maintain the family  
36 during periods of enrollment and transition at optimum levels of  
self-sufficiency or parenting; and be it further

38 **Sec. 8. Pilot project. Resolved:** That the commission shall  
investigate the desirability and feasibility of demonstrating the  
40 recommended alternative system in one or more regions of the  
Department of Human Services; and be it further

42  
44 **Sec. 9. Process. Resolved:** That, in conducting the study, the  
commission may:

46 1. Employ brainstorming approaches;

48 2. Employ negotiation and conflict resolution techniques;  
and

50 3. Utilize the services of a facilitator; and be it further  
52

2                    **Sec. 10. Staff assistance. Resolved:** That the commission may  
request staff assistance from state agencies as the commission  
considers appropriate; and be it further

4  
6                    **Sec. 11. Report. Resolved:** That the commission shall present  
its findings, together with any recommended legislation, to the  
First Regular Session of 117th Legislature by March 30, 1995.

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10                    **Emergency clause.** In view of the emergency cited in the  
preamble, this resolve takes effect when approved.

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#### STATEMENT OF FACT

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16                    This resolve establishes the Commission to Examine  
Alternatives to Maine's Welfare System to study enrollment in a  
goal-oriented training program leading to self-sufficiency and  
18 adequate child care and to make recommendations concerning the  
replacement of the welfare system.