

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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L.D. 1561

DATE: May 20, 1997

(Filing No. S- 278)

STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Reported by: Majority

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STATE OF MAINE SENATE 118TH LEGISLATURE FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" to S.P. 499, L.D. 1561, "Resolve, to Establish a Devolution Review Board"

Amend the resolve by striking out the title and substituting the following:

'Resolve, to Examine the Impact of Federal Devolution Decisions on Municipalities and Other Local Agencies'

Further amend the resolve by striking out everything after the title and before the summary and inserting in its place the following:

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

Whereas, due to decisions at the federal levels increasing governmental responsibilities and duties are being delegated to state and local levels of government; and

Whereas, reductions in the levels of funding for many federal programs have resulted in significantly fewer federal dollars flowing to states and localities just as responsibilities are increasing for those levels of government; and

Whereas, decisions to delegate governmental responsibilities by higher levels of government may ultimately force municipalities and local and regional agencies to accept additional responsibilities and reduced funding with no possibility of passing those new responsibilities on to others; and

Whereas, it is vitally important that an organized effort be put in place to assist municipal and regional agencies to begin to plan for the impact of federal devolution decisions; 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

Sec. 1. Governor's Municipal Advisory Council to examine the impact of federal devolution decisions on municipalities. Resolved: That the Governor's Municipal Advisory Council, established pursuant to Executive Order No. 14 FY 1986-87, and referred to in this resolve as "the council" as part of its deliberations shall examine the direct and indirect impacts of the delegation of federal responsibilities and reduction in federal funding levels on municipalities and regional and local agencies and programs. The Department of Administrative and Financial Services, Bureau of the Budget and the Executive Department, State Planning Office shall assist the council in its examination; and be it further

Sec. 2. Report. Resolved: That the council shall report to the Legislature by February 1, 1998 on its findings, recommendations and any necessary implementing legislation; and be it further

Sec. 3. Staff. Resolved: That the State Planning Office shall provide staff support for the council for the purposes provided in this resolve.

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

Further amend the resolve by inserting at the end before the summary the following:

FISCAL NOTE

The additional costs associated with providing staff assistance can be absorbed by the State Planning Office utilizing existing budgeted resources.

The Department of Administrative and Financial Services will incur some minor additional costs to assist the council in examining federal funding issues. These costs can be absorbed within the department's existing budgeted resources.'

SUMMARY

Although considerable work has been done assessing the impact on states of federal funding reductions and program shifts, less attention has been given to the effect on municipalities. Municipalities and other local and regional government agencies and programs will ultimately feel the result of changes at the federal level. This resolve establishes a mechanism to study the nature of the changes being imposed from higher levels of government and the opportunities and obligations accompanying those changes so that local governments will be best positioned to respond. The existing Governor's Municipal Advisory Council is directed to examine the issue and to report to the Legislature next year. This amendment also adds a fiscal note to the resolve.