

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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118th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST SPECIAL SESSION-1997

Legislative Document

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H.P. 1287

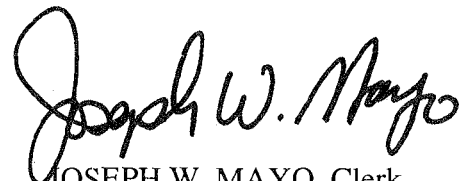
House of Representatives, April 24, 1997

**Resolve, to Establish the Task Force to Study Strategies to Support
Parents as Children's First Teachers.**

(AFTER DEADLINE)

Approved for introduction by a majority of the Legislative Council pursuant to Joint Rule 205.

Received by the Clerk of the House on April 22, 1997. Referred to the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs pursuant to Joint Rule 308.2 and ordered printed pursuant to Joint Rule 401.


JOSEPH W. MAYO, Clerk

Presented by Representative BAKER of Bangor.
Cosponsored by Senator PENDLETON of Cumberland and
Representatives: JABAR of Waterville, McELROY of Unity, RICHARD of Madison,
SKOGLUND of St. George, TOWNSEND of Portland, Senators: CATHCART of Penobscot,
LONGLEY of Waldo, MILLS of Somerset.

2 **Preamble. Whereas,** research has demonstrated that the early
years of childhood are critical to learning; and

4 **Whereas,** before they are born, children need proper
nutrition and protection from the harmful effects of drugs,
6 alcohol and cigarette smoke; and

8 **Whereas,** research shows that if children can not read well
by the 3rd grade their chances of success are greatly diminished;
10 and

12 **Whereas,** the Parents as Teachers Program, Healthy Start and
other early childhood parent education and family support
14 programs have been designed to help all parents give their
children the best possible start in life; and

16 **Whereas,** it has been found in other states that children who
18 had participated in these programs consistently scored higher on
measures of intelligence, achievement, auditory comprehension,
20 verbal and language ability and social development; and

22 **Whereas,** parents who have been involved in these programs
have been found to be significantly more knowledgeable about
24 child development issues than are uninvolved parents; and

26 **Whereas,** the State already has some programs and agencies
that work well with parents and children, including Head Start,
28 Healthy Start and Child Development Services; now, therefore, be
it

30 **Sec. 1. Task force established. Resolved:** That the Task Force to
32 Study Strategies to Support Parents as Children's First Teachers,
referred to in this resolve as the "task force," is established
34 to investigate ways to determine the most efficient and effective
strategies to support parents as children's first and most
36 influential teachers; and be it further

38 **Sec. 2. Membership. Resolved:** That the task force consists
of 18 members as follows:

40 1. Six Legislators, 2 of whom must be members of the Joint
42 Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs; 2 of whom
must be members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and
44 Human Services; and 2 of whom must be members of the Joint
Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs,
46 jointly appointed by the President of the Senate and the Speaker
of the House;

48 2. The Commissioner of Education, or a designee;

50

- 2 3. The Commissioner of Human Services, or a designee;
- 4 4. The Commissioner of Mental Health, Mental Retardation
and Substance Abuse Services, or a designee;
- 6 5. One member representing Healthy Start, designated by
that program;
- 8 6. One member representing Head Start, designated by that
10 program;
- 12 7. One member representing the Maine Children's Alliance,
designated by the alliance;
- 14 8. One member representing the Maine Association of Child
16 Abuse and Neglect Councils, designated by the council;
- 18 9. Three parents, appointed by the Governor;
- 20 10. One member representing elementary education,
designated by the Maine Education Association; and
- 22 11. One member representing the Parents as Teachers
24 Program, designated by that program.

26 All appointments must be made no later than 30 days
28 following the effective date of this resolve. The appointing
authorities shall notify the Executive Director of the
30 Legislative Council upon making their appointments. The
Executive Director of the Legislative Council shall contact
32 appointing authorities who have not made their appointments as of
the required date; and be it further

34 **Sec. 3. Convening. Resolved:** That the Chair of the
Legislative Council shall call the task force together for its
36 first meeting no later than 45 days after the effective date of
this resolve. If the first meeting is not called within the
38 assigned time, the Governor shall call the first meeting for a
date no later than 10 days after the initially required date. It
40 is not necessary for all members to be appointed in order for the
task force to meet. A quorum consists of a majority of those
42 appointed; and be it further

44 **Sec. 4. Chair. Resolved:** That the task force shall select a
chair from among the members at the first meeting; and be it
46 further

2 **5. Duties. Resolved:** That the task force shall investigate
and determine the most efficient and effective strategies to
support parents as children's first and most influential
4 teachers. In conducting its study, the task force shall:

6 1. Design a comprehensive model of early childhood
education and parent support that has at least the following
8 components:

10 A. Provision of information on children, from birth to 5
years of age, to help parents understand how to encourage
12 their child's development in the areas of social, emotional,
cognitive and motor development and to help their children
14 achieve good health and maintain safety;

16 B. Opportunities for families to meet and share experiences
and common concerns and to participate in parent-child
18 activities; and

20 C. A referral network that helps parents connect with
special services;

22 2. Catalog and review existing programs to ensure there is
24 a comprehensive and coordinated continuum of early childhood
education and parent support services in the State; and

26 3. Investigate ways to establish a statewide resource
28 center for the collection and dissemination of resource materials
and an ongoing evaluation of early childhood education and parent
30 support programs.

32 As part of its study, the task force shall review early
childhood education and parent support programs in other states
34 and shall investigate all possible funding sources to implement
its recommendations, including funding from private foundations,
36 fee-for-service, federal grant programs and any other federal,
state or local funding that may be available; and be it further

38 **Sec. 6. Staff. Resolved.** That the task force shall request
40 staffing assistance from the Legislative Council; and be it
further

42 **Sec. 7. Compensation. Resolved:** That task force members serve
44 without per diem or expenses; and be it further

46 **Sec. 8. Report. Resolved:** That the task force shall submit to
the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs,
48 with a copy to the Governor, a report of its findings, including
any

2 necessary implementing legislation no later than December 1,
1997. If the task force requires an extension, it may apply to
4 the Legislative Council, which may grant the extension.

6 **SUMMARY**

8 This resolve establishes the Task Force to Study Strategies
to Support Parents as Children's First Teachers.