

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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118th MAINE LEGISLATURE

SECOND REGULAR SESSION-1998

Legislative Document

No. 1964

S.P. 721

In Senate, January 7, 1998

**Resolve, to Ensure that Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Are
Provided in an Efficient, Accessible and Cost-effective Manner.**

(EMERGENCY)

Approved for introduction by a majority of the Legislative Council pursuant to Joint Rule
203.

Reference to the Committee on Labor 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 TREAT of Kennebec.

Cosponsored by Senator NUTTING of Androscoggin, Representatives: BUMPS of China,
JONES of Greenville, KERR of Old Orchard Beach.

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
6 **Whereas,** it is vitally necessary to determine the proper
level and type of services needed by the population of persons
who are deaf or hard-of-hearing; and

8
10 **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
12 necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and
safety; now, therefore, be it

14 **Sec. 1. Commissioner of Labor to review Division of Deafness.**

16 **Resolved:** That the Commissioner of Labor shall review the
mission and services provided by the Division of Deafness within
18 the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services, Department of Labor.
Specifically, the commissioner shall assess:

20 1. The extent to which the statutory responsibilities of
22 the Division of Deafness, as set forth in the Maine Revised
Statutes, Title 26, chapter 19, subchapter II, article II, are
24 currently being met;

26 2. The population of persons who are deaf and
hard-of-hearing who could be served by the division and the
28 extent to which this population currently accesses services
provided by the Department of Labor and the Division of Deafness
30 within the department;

32 3. The funds expended serving persons who are deaf or
hard-of-hearing, and whether this funding is commensurate with
34 the identified need, and with the funding for services for
persons who are nondeaf disabled or the general population; and

36 4. Identification of the core needs for which services
38 should be provided by the State for persons who are deaf and
hard-of-hearing, the funding necessary to meet those needs and
40 the most appropriate means of providing those services; and be it
further

42 **Sec. 2. Recommendations. Resolved:** That the Commissioner of

44 Labor, in consultation with a subcommittee composed of the Joint
Standing Committee on Labor, the Deaf Advisory Council, and
46 advocacy groups and organizations representing persons who are
deaf and hard-of-hearing, shall make recommendations to the
48 Governor and the joint standing committee of the Legislature
having jurisdiction over labor matters by September 15, 1998 for
50 statutory changes, reorganization or restructuring, and funding

2 as necessary to carry out these recommendations. The joint
3 standing committee may report out legislation as necessary to
4 implement the recommendations of the commissioner to the First
5 Regular Session of the 119th Legislature.

6 **Emergency clause.** In view of the emergency cited in the
7 preamble, this resolve takes effect when approved.
8

10 SUMMARY

12 This resolve directs the Commissioner of Labor to assess the
13 mission and services of the Division of Deafness within the
14 Bureau of Rehabilitation Services, Department of Labor and, in
15 consultation with other interested parties, make recommendations
16 regarding any proposed changes. The joint standing committee of
17 the Legislature having jurisdiction over labor matters is
18 authorized to report out legislation to the First Regular Session
of the 119th Legislature to implement the recommendations.