

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

The following document is provided by the
LAW AND LEGISLATIVE DIGITAL LIBRARY
at the Maine State Law and Legislative Reference Library
<http://legislature.maine.gov/lawlib>



Reproduced from scanned originals with text recognition applied
(searchable text may contain some errors and/or omissions)



119th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-1999

Legislative Document

No. 1718

S.P. 594

In Senate, March 9, 1999

An Act to Ensure that Displaced Workers Have Access to Appropriate Job Training, Education and Employment Services through a Peer Support Program.

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 Representative COLWELL of Gardiner and
Senators: BENNETT of Oxford, CASSIDY of Washington, FERGUSON of Oxford,
MICHAUD of Penobscot, O'GARA of Cumberland, Representatives: DUPLESSIE of
Westbrook, McKEE of Wayne, STANLEY of Medway.

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

4 **Sec. 1. 26 MRSA §26-A** is enacted to read:

6 **CHAPTER 26-A**

8 **PEER SUPPORT PROGRAM FOR DISPLACED WORKERS**

10 **§2061. Program created**

12 The Peer Support Program for Displaced Workers is created
14 within the department to provide advocacy and information for
16 workers displaced by significant layoffs. The program may
18 initiate one or more projects to assist employees, as provided in
20 this chapter.

22 **§2062. Peer Support Projects**

24 **1. Initiation of project.** When 100 or more employees of a
26 single employer are laid off, the department shall initiate a
28 peer support project to assist the affected employees. The
30 department may initiate a project when 50 or more employees are
32 laid off if the bureau determines that a peer support project is
34 warranted, after considering the particular needs of the affected
36 workforce and the affected communities.

38 **2. Employment and role of peer support workers.** For each
40 project, the department shall employ one or more peer support
42 workers who must be displaced nonmanagerial employees from the
44 affected workforce. The department shall attempt in all cases to
46 hire one peer support worker for each 50 affected employees and
48 to hire at least 2 peer support workers for each project. A peer
support worker shall serve as a worker advocate and an
information source connecting the affected workers and the
State's workforce development programs. The peer support worker
shall use the resources of local employment assistance programs
as well as state programs. The department shall collaborate with
employee representatives in hiring and overseeing peer support
workers. The department shall ensure that peer support workers
have an opportunity to receive training and to work as a team
even if they are geographically dispersed.

3. Duration of project. The department shall determine the
duration of each project, taking into consideration the size,
scope and nature of the layoff and the period of time over which
the layoffs occur.

2

SUMMARY

4 This bill creates the Peer Support Program for Displaced
6 Workers within the Department of Labor to provide advocacy and
8 information to employees affected by significant layoffs. Under
10 the program, the department would initiate a peer support project
 and hire peer support workers when layoffs of 100 or more
 employees occur or when 50 or more employees are laid off and a
 project is warranted by the nature of the workforce or the
 community.