

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)



L.D. 1879

DATE: May 14, 1999

(Filing No. S-290)

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Reported by:

Reproduced and distributed under the direction of the Secretary of the Senate.

**STATE OF MAINE
SENATE
119TH LEGISLATURE
FIRST REGULAR SESSION**

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT " A " to S.P. 657, L.D. 1879, Bill, "An Act to Increase Access to Basic Needs for Low-income Maine Children and Families"

Amend the bill by striking out everything after the enacting clause and before the summary and inserting in its place the following:

'Sec. 1. 22 MRSA §3769-C is enacted to read:

§3769-C. Adjustment to amount of assistance; report

1. Amount of assistance. It is the goal of this section to provide low-income families with children sufficient income to meet their most basic needs. If the commissioner determines that unexpended funds are available within the Department of Human Services ASPIRE or TANF accounts, the commissioner may, by rule, use those funds to increase the maximum levels of assistance in the TANF Program.

2. Report required. If the department has not increased benefits to low-income families with children by at least 5% pursuant to this section by January 1, 2001, the commissioner shall report to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over health and human services matters and the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over appropriations and financial affairs by February 1, 2001, comparing the State's TANF benefits to those of the other New England states and to the nonfarm income official poverty line. This report must identify the amount of funding required to raise benefit levels over periods of 3 years and 5

R. S.

2 years to the average of the maximum benefit amounts for a family
3 of 3 in all of the other New England states. This report must be
4 made by the last business day in January of each subsequent year
5 following a year in which maximum assistance levels were not
6 increased by at least 5%, as long as the State's maximum
7 assistance levels remain lower than the average of the New
8 England states.'

9
10 Further amend the bill by inserting at the end before the
11 summary the following:

12
13
14

FISCAL NOTE

15
16 Allowing the Commissioner of Human Services to increase the
17 maximum levels of assistance in the TANF program if there are
18 unexpended funds in the Aspire or TANF accounts may result in
19 future requests for additional appropriations and/or allocations
20 to continue the increases provided through the use of unexpended
21 funds.

22 The Department of Human Services will incur some minor
23 additional costs to adopt rules and to report to the
24 Legislature. These costs can be absorbed within the department's
25 existing budgeted resources.'

26
27
28

SUMMARY

29
30

31 This amendment replaces the bill. It allows the
32 Commissioner of Human Services to increase the maximum levels of
33 assistance in the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, or
34 TANF, program if there are unexpended funds in the Addition
35 Support for People in Retraining and Employment, ASPIRE or TANF
36 accounts. The amendment also requires the Department of Human
37 Services to report to the Legislature in years following years in
38 which the maximum assistance levels have not increased by 5%.
39 That report must adds an average of TANF assistance levels across
40 the New England states. The amendment also includes a fiscal
41 note to the bill.

42