

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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120th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2001

Legislative Document

No. 604

S.P. 176

In Senate, February 8, 2001

An Act to Improve Education Service for Children with Disabilities.

Reference to the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs 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 Senators: BROMLEY of Cumberland, DAGGETT of Kennebec, GAGNON of Kennebec, SMALL of Sagadahoc, Representatives: HUTTON of Bowdoinham, JONES of Greenville, MARRACHE of Waterville, WATSON of Farmingdale.

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

4 **Sec. 1. 5 MRSA §19505, sub-§4-A** is enacted to read:

6 **4-A. Special education advocacy.** The agency may advise and
8 represent parents of children with special needs in regard to the
10 special education process. Any state funding to assist special
12 education advocacy must be appropriated to the agency.

10 SUMMARY

12
14 Through the school funding formula, the State currently
16 reimburses school districts for legal advice and representation
18 in the special education process. Parents of children with
20 special needs do not receive any state assistance in seeking
22 their rights under federal and state special education laws.
24 This bill specifically authorizes the protection and advocacy
agency designated by the Governor, charged with protecting and
advocating for the rights of individuals with disabilities, with
the responsibility and authority for providing advice and
representation to parents going through the special education
process. Any state funding made available for that purpose must
be appropriated to this agency.