

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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120th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2001

Legislative Document

No. 1360

S.P. 416

In Senate, March 5, 2001

**Resolve, to Establish a Task Force to Study Improving Economic
Opportunities for Maine People Through Higher Education Attainment.**

(EMERGENCY)

Reference to the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Joy J. O'Brien".

JOY J. O'BRIEN
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by President Pro Tem BENNETT of Oxford.

Emergency preamble. Whereas, Acts and resolves of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

Whereas, the State ranks 36th in the nation in per capita income and is 39% below the average per capita income for New England; and

Whereas, thousands of high-skill, high-wage jobs in the State are going unfilled and one in 5 employers are recruiting out-of-state, while thousands of Maine citizens are underemployed and lacking the education and skills to qualify for those good jobs; and

Whereas, the State's economic development strategy has identified key industries to support and nurture, and one of the major barriers facing these industries is the lack of skilled workers; and

Whereas, studies show a direct correlation between higher education and higher income levels, with associate degree holders earning 24% more than those with a high school diploma and bachelor's degree holders earning 67% more; and

Whereas, the State's public higher education systems have steadily increased enrollment, but this growth falls well behind many other states that have set aggressive goals for higher college attainment to prepare their citizenry for the global economy; and

Whereas, there is clear consensus among the State's education and policy leaders of the need to increase college participation, yet the State has not established goals for higher education attainment, nor reached a consensus on how best to achieve those goals; and

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

Sec. 1. Task force established. Resolved: That a task force is established to examine the continuing education levels and training required for people in the current work force to assist them in obtaining high-skill, high-wage jobs in the State. In determining what needs to be done, the task force shall look at current services and strategies offered and make recommendations regarding goals for higher educational attainment, training needs and strategies to achieve those goals.

2 **1. Membership.** The task force consists of 20 members
appointed as follows:

4 A. The President of the Senate and the President Pro
6 Tempore of the Senate shall appoint 2 members of the Senate
and 6 representatives from the private sector;

8 B. The Speaker of the House shall appoint 2 members of the
10 House, 5 representatives from the private sector and one
representative from organized labor;

12 C. The Chancellor of the University of Maine System or the
14 chancellor's designee;

16 D. The President of the Maine Technical College System or
the president's designee;

18 E. The Commissioner of Education or the commissioner's
20 designee; and

22 F. The Commissioner of Economic and Community Development
or the commissioner's designee.

24 **2. Chair.** The task force is cochaired by one member of the
26 Senate selected by the President of the Senate and the President
Pro Tempore of the Senate and one member of the House selected by
28 the Speaker of the House. The cochairs must be selected from
among the members appointed under subsection 1.

30 **3. Staff assistance.** The work of the task force must be
32 coordinated by staff of the Office of Policy and Legal Analysis.

34 **4. Compensation.** The members of the task force who are
Legislators are entitled to reimbursement of travel and necessary
36 related expenses incurred for their attendance at meetings of the
task force.

38 **5. Report.** The task force shall begin its work no later
40 than April 16, 2001 and shall submit its findings and
recommendations no later than November 1, 2001 to the President
42 of the Senate, the President Pro Tempore of the Senate and the
Speaker of the House; and be it further

44 **Emergency clause.** In view of the emergency cited in the
46 preamble, this resolve takes effect when approved.

SUMMARY

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This resolve establishes a task force to examine the continuing education levels and training required for people in the current work force to assist them in obtaining high-skill, high-wage jobs in the State.