

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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148

L.D. 878

DATE: 5-15-03

(Filing No. H-398)

MAJORITY  
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

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14 STATE OF MAINE  
16 HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
18 121ST LEGISLATURE  
20 FIRST REGULAR SESSION

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COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" to H.P. 655, L.D. 878, Bill, "An  
Act To Provide Peer Support and Advocacy Services To Participants  
in the ASPIRE-TANF Program and the Parents as Scholars Program"

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

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'Sec. 1. 22 MRSA §3789-E is enacted to read:

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§3789-E. Peer support and advocacy demonstration project

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1. Project established. The department shall establish a  
peer support and advocacy demonstration project, referred to in  
this section as "the project," to provide information, support  
and advocacy services for participants in the ASPIRE-TANF  
program, as established in section 3781-A, and the Parents as  
Scholars Program, as established in section 3790, subsection 1.

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2. Project design. The department shall establish in 4 of  
its offices peer support and advocacy groups made up of  
ASPIRE-TANF program and Parents as Scholars Program participants  
who, on a volunteer basis, are available to assist their peers in  
the programs by answering questions or assisting them in  
resolving problems they may be having in either of the programs.  
The peer support and advocacy groups shall meet regularly with  
the management of the ASPIRE-TANF program and Parents as Scholars  
Program to discuss systemic issues and methods of improving

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT

administration of the programs. The time spent by a volunteer in a peer support and advocacy group in activities pursuant to the project may count either toward fulfilling the participation requirements for the ASPIRE-TANF program under section 3788, subsections 10 and 11 or toward fulfilling the program requirements for the Parents as Scholars Program under section 3790, subsection 3, whichever applies to the volunteer.

**3. Project specifications.** The project must meet the following specifications:

A. The department shall provide notice to ASPIRE-TANF program and Parents as Scholars Program participants in the 4 offices selected for the project pursuant to subsection 2 that peer support, information and advocacy services are available to them and ensure that the project is designed to provide, to the maximum extent feasible, access to those services;

B. Volunteers in a peer support and advocacy group must receive adequate training from the department to provide the services available under this project. Training must include, without limitation, the establishment of relationships and coordination with relevant advocacy groups;

C. Volunteers shall maintain the confidentiality of ASPIRE-TANF program and Parents as Scholars Program participants with whom they are working;

D. Volunteers in a peer support and advocacy group are authorized to work directly with ASPIRE-TANF program workers and Parents as Scholars Program workers and supervisors to help resolve problems identified by participants from whom they have received a request for assistance;

E. Each peer support and advocacy group is responsible for identifying and documenting systemic problems facing ASPIRE-TANF program and Parents as Scholars Program participants served by its office and reporting those problems to the department and to the Maine Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Advisory Council established by Title 5, section 12004-I, subsection 36-C; and

F. The department or any employee of the department may not penalize, retaliate against or discriminate against any ASPIRE-TANF program or Parents as Scholars Program participant for seeking assistance from a volunteer in a peer support and advocacy group or against any volunteer in a peer support and advocacy group acting within the scope of the volunteer's role. If a volunteer in a peer support and

2 advocacy group or a ASPIRE-TANF program or Parents as  
3 Scholars Program participant believes this paragraph has  
4 been violated, the individual or the individual's  
5 representative may request a fair hearing pursuant to Title  
6 5, chapter 375, subchapter 4.

7 4. Report. The department shall provide a report on the  
8 status and progress of the project to the Joint Standing  
9 Committee on Health and Human Services by March 1, 2004.

10 5. Repeal. This section is repealed July 1, 2005.'

14 **SUMMARY**

16 This amendment is the majority report and replaces the  
17 bill. The amendment directs the Department of Human Services to  
18 establish a volunteer peer support and advocacy demonstration  
19 project in 4 of its offices to provide information, support and  
20 advocacy services to ASPIRE-TANF program and Parents as Scholars  
21 Program participants. The amendment requires that the department  
22 provide a report on the project to the Joint Standing Committee  
23 on Health and Human Services by March 1, 2004 and adds a sunset  
24 provision repealing the project July 1, 2005.

26 **FISCAL NOTE REQUIRED**  
28 **(See attached)**

**121st Maine Legislature  
Office of Fiscal and Program Review**



**LD 878**

**An Act To Provide Peer Support and Advocacy Services To Participants  
in the ASPIRE-TANF Program and the Parents as Scholars Program**

**LR 1123(02)**

**Fiscal Note for Bill as Amended by Committee Amendment " "**

**Committee: Health and Human Services**

**Fiscal Note Required: Yes**

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**Fiscal Note**

Minor cost increase - General Fund

**Fiscal Detail and Notes**

Any additional costs to the Department of Human Services in establishing and administering a voluntary, time-limited, peer support and advocacy demonstration project in four different offices, and for reporting on the status and progress of the project, can be absorbed utilizing existing resources.