

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# 123rd MAINE LEGISLATURE

## FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2007

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Legislative Document

No. 870

H.P. 659

House of Representatives, February 23, 2007

### **An Act To Enhance Education Services for Blind and Visually Impaired Children**

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Reference to the Committee on Labor suggested and ordered printed.

*Millicent M. MacFarland*  
MILLICENT M. MacFARLAND  
Clerk

Presented by Representative FAIRCLOTH of Bangor.  
Cosponsored by Senator DOW of Lincoln and  
Representative: GROSE of Woolwich, Senators: BARTLETT of Cumberland, PERRY of  
Penobscot.

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

2 **Sec. 1. Appropriations and allocations.** The following appropriations and  
3 allocations are made.

4 **LABOR, DEPARTMENT OF**

5 **Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired - Education Services for Blind and**  
6 **Visually Impaired Children**

7 Initiative: Provides funds to increase salaries for teachers of blind and visually impaired  
8 children to reflect the national market for recruitment and retention of such teachers.

9

|    |                           |                 |                 |
|----|---------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 10 | <b>GENERAL FUND</b>       | <b>2007-08</b>  | <b>2008-09</b>  |
| 11 | All Other                 | \$57,500        | \$59,225        |
| 12 |                           |                 |                 |
| 13 | <b>GENERAL FUND TOTAL</b> | <b>\$57,500</b> | <b>\$59,225</b> |

14 **Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired - Education Services for Blind and**  
15 **Visually Impaired Children**

16 Initiative: Provides funds for 2 additional teachers of blind and visually impaired  
17 children to address the increasing number of students and the established standards for  
18 pupil-teacher ratios.

19

|    |                           |                  |                  |
|----|---------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| 20 | <b>GENERAL FUND</b>       | <b>2007-08</b>   | <b>2008-09</b>   |
| 21 | All Other                 | \$130,000        | \$133,900        |
| 22 |                           |                  |                  |
| 23 | <b>GENERAL FUND TOTAL</b> | <b>\$130,000</b> | <b>\$133,900</b> |

24 **Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired - Education Services for Blind and**  
25 **Visually Impaired Children**

26 Initiative: Provides funds to purchase and update assistive technology for teachers of  
27 blind and visually impaired children as well as to train those teachers to use the assistive  
28 technology, which is provided to their students pursuant to the students' individual  
29 education plans.

30

|    |                           |                 |                 |
|----|---------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 31 | <b>GENERAL FUND</b>       | <b>2007-08</b>  | <b>2008-09</b>  |
| 32 | All Other                 | \$19,000        | \$19,570        |
| 33 |                           |                 |                 |
| 34 | <b>GENERAL FUND TOTAL</b> | <b>\$19,000</b> | <b>\$19,570</b> |

|   |                                     |                  |                  |
|---|-------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| 1 | <b>LABOR, DEPARTMENT OF</b>         |                  |                  |
| 2 | <b>DEPARTMENT TOTALS</b>            | <b>2007-08</b>   | <b>2008-09</b>   |
| 3 | <b>GENERAL FUND</b>                 | <b>\$206,500</b> | <b>\$212,695</b> |
| 4 |                                     |                  |                  |
| 5 | <b>DEPARTMENT TOTAL - ALL FUNDS</b> | <b>\$206,500</b> | <b>\$212,695</b> |

6 **SUMMARY**

7 The purpose of this bill is to decrease the number of blind and visually impaired  
8 students per teacher to more appropriate levels by attracting more teachers. The bill  
9 provides funding for an increase in salaries for teachers of blind and visually impaired  
10 children. The bill also provides funding for 2 additional teachers of blind and visually  
11 impaired children positions in Maine. Finally, the bill provides funding for purchasing  
12 and updating assistive technology for teachers of blind and visually impaired children and  
13 provides the necessary funding for training them in the use of this technology.