

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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127th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2015

Legislative Document

No. 803

H.P. 552

House of Representatives, March 10, 2015

Resolve, To Establish the Task Force To Develop Strategies To Protect Towns

Reference to the Committee on Labor, Commerce, Research and Economic Development suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert B. Hunt".

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative STANLEY of Medway.
Cosponsored by Senator PATRICK of Oxford and
Representatives: ALLEY of Beals, CAMPBELL of Orrington, GILBERT of Jay,
HANINGTON of Lincoln, HARLOW of Portland, SHORT of Pittsfield.

1 **Sec. 1. Task force established. Resolved:** That the Task Force To Develop
2 Strategies To Protect Towns, referred to in this resolve as "the task force," is established.
3 The purpose of the task force is to assist municipalities with a narrow commercial base;
4 and be it further

5 **Sec. 2. Task force membership. Resolved:** That the task force consists of 7
6 members as follows:

7 1. Two members of the Senate who are members of the Joint Standing Committee on
8 Labor, Commerce, Research and Economic Development, appointed by the President of
9 the Senate;

10 2. Two members of the House of Representatives who are members of the Joint
11 Standing Committee on Labor, Commerce, Research and Economic Development,
12 appointed by the Speaker of the House;

13 3. A member of a school board representing a municipality that is dependent on or
14 has lost its one major industry or suffers economically due to a lack of a diversified
15 economy or commercial base, appointed by the President of the Senate;

16 4. A municipal official representing a municipality that is dependent on or has lost its
17 one major industry or suffers economically due to a lack of a diversified economy or
18 commercial base, appointed by the Speaker of the House; and

19 5. The State Tax Assessor or the State Tax Assessor's designee, who serves as an ex
20 officio member; and be it further

21 **Sec. 3. Chairs. Resolved:** That the first-named Senate member is the Senate
22 chair and the first-named House of Representatives member is the House chair of the task
23 force; and be it further

24 **Sec. 4. Appointments; convening of task force. Resolved:** That all
25 appointments must be made no later than 30 days following the effective date of this
26 resolve. The appointing authorities shall notify the Executive Director of the Legislative
27 Council once all appointments have been completed. Within 15 days after appointment
28 of all members, the chairs shall call and convene the first meeting of the task force, which
29 must be no later than 30 days following the appointment of all members; and be it further

30 **Sec. 5. Duties. Resolved:** That the task force shall study municipalities that have
31 lost their only major industry, rely on only one major industry or otherwise are dependent
32 on or suffer economically due to a lack of a diversified economy or commercial base.
33 The task force shall review state law and policies affecting these municipalities, including
34 the system of school funding pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A, chapter
35 606-B, state-municipal revenue sharing, assistance programs and other state policies and
36 programs to develop a plan and a strategy to assist the municipalities in developing the
37 existing commercial base or transitioning to a new commercial base, attracting and
38 retaining industries and workers and diversifying the municipalities' economies,
39 including:

- 1 1. Assisting existing businesses and industries in attracting additional business and
2 market share and capital and revenue from sources outside the local community;
- 3 2. Assisting existing businesses and industries by training workers with new skills
4 and expertise to allow growth and expansion of the commercial base;
- 5 3. Upgrading existing local infrastructure, including transportation networks and
6 Internet broadband services;
- 7 4. Exploring creative alternatives for new economic bases, industries or occupations;
- 8 5. Reviewing municipal services, tax policies and conditions to create a better
9 climate for and relationship with businesses and industries;
- 10 6. Reviewing local schools to make improvements that attract high-quality workers
11 and businesses and focus on areas of education desired by local industry;
- 12 7. Reviewing and implementing programs to assist local businesses and industries in
13 investing and growing locally, including providing financing for new equipment or
14 energy efficiency measures;
- 15 8. Reviewing local conditions to increase quality of life, shopping and recreational
16 opportunities and other local factors to attract or retain high-quality workers and
17 businesses;
- 18 9. Implementing various tax exemption and government incentive programs to
19 attract and retain businesses and industries; and
- 20 10. Developing mutually beneficial partnerships with neighboring communities; and
21 be it further

22 **Sec. 6. Staff assistance. Resolved:** That the Legislative Council shall provide
23 necessary staffing services to the commission; and be it further

24 **Sec. 7. Report. Resolved:** That, no later than December 2, 2015, the task force
25 shall submit a report that includes its findings and recommendations to the Joint Standing
26 Committee on Labor, Commerce, Research and Economic Development. The Joint
27 Standing Committee on Labor, Commerce, Research and Economic Development may
28 report out legislation based upon the report for presentation to the Second Regular
29 Session of the 127th Legislature.

30 **SUMMARY**

31 This resolve creates the Task Force To Develop Strategies To Protect Towns. The
32 task force will examine ways of assisting municipalities in developing and strengthening
33 their commercial bases. The task force is required to submit a report to the Joint Standing
34 Committee on Labor, Commerce, Research and Economic Development.