

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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130th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST SPECIAL SESSION-2021

Legislative Document

No. 1597

H.P. 1186

House of Representatives, April 27, 2021

**An Act To Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue To Strengthen
Maine's Health Care Workforce**

Reference to the Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs suggested and ordered printed.

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

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative PIERCE of Falmouth.
Cosponsored by Representatives: BRENNAN of Portland, CRAVEN of Lewiston, MADIGAN of Waterville, MEYER of Eliot, STOVER of Boothbay, ZAGER of Portland, Senators: CHIPMAN of Cumberland, SANBORN of Cumberland.

1 **Preamble.** Two thirds of both Houses of the Legislature deeming it necessary in
2 accordance with the Constitution of Maine, Article IX, Section 14 to authorize the issuance
3 of bonds on behalf of the State of Maine to provide funds as described in this Act,

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

5 **PART A**

6 **Sec. A-1. Authorization of bonds.** The Treasurer of State is authorized, under the
7 direction of the Governor, to issue bonds in the name and on behalf of the State in an
8 amount not exceeding \$11,000,000 for the purposes described in section 5 of this Part. The
9 bonds are a pledge of the full faith and credit of the State. The bonds may not run for a
10 period longer than 10 years from the date of the original issue of the bonds.

11 **Sec. A-2. Records of bonds issued; Treasurer of State.** The Treasurer of State
12 shall ensure that an account of each bond is kept showing the number of the bond, the name
13 of the successful bidder to whom sold, the amount received for the bond, the date of sale
14 and the date when payable.

15 **Sec. A-3. Sale; how negotiated; proceeds appropriated.** The Treasurer of
16 State may negotiate the sale of the bonds by direction of the Governor, but no bond may
17 be loaned, pledged or hypothecated on behalf of the State. The proceeds of the sale of the
18 bonds, which must be held by the Treasurer of State and paid by the Treasurer of State
19 upon warrants drawn by the State Controller, are appropriated solely for the purposes set
20 forth in this Part. Any unencumbered balances remaining at the completion of the project
21 in this Part lapse to the Office of the Treasurer of State to be used for the retirement of
22 general obligation bonds.

23 **Sec. A-4. Interest and debt retirement.** The Treasurer of State shall pay interest
24 due or accruing on any bonds issued under this Part and all sums coming due for payment
25 of bonds at maturity.

26 **Sec. A-5. Disbursement of bond proceeds from General Fund bond issue.**
27 The proceeds of the sale of the bonds authorized under this Part must be expended as
28 designated in the following schedule under the direction and supervision of the agencies
29 and entities set forth in this section.

30 **DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

31 Provides funds to award grants to the University of New England Institute for
32 Interprofessional Education and Practice to improve and expand collaborative team-
33 based education of health care workers, including training in the use of telehealth and
34 other technologies, to increase access to high-quality health care and to upgrade the
35 capacity of federally qualified health centers and other community-based health care
36 clinics and hospitals throughout the State in order to facilitate educational and clinical
37 links to the University of New England Institute for Interprofessional Education and
38 Practice and to enhance and expand their capacity to provide access to high-quality
39 health care.

40 Total \$11,000,000

41

1 affiliated with a center promoting interprofessional health care education and practice
2 efforts at a university in the State.

3 **PART C**

4 **Sec. C-1. Interprofessional education of health care workers.** Of the bond
5 issue approved by the voters pursuant to Part A, \$7,000,000 must be used to fund the
6 University of New England Institute for Interprofessional Education and Practice to
7 improve and expand collaborative team-based education of health care workers, including
8 training in the use of telehealth and other technologies, to increase access to high-quality
9 health care.

10 **PART D**

11 **Sec. D-1. Grants to community-based health care clinics and hospitals.** Of
12 the bond issue approved by the voters pursuant to Part A, \$4,000,000 must be used to offer
13 competitive grants pursuant to this Part. The grants must be used to upgrade the capacity
14 of federally qualified health centers and other community-based health care clinics and
15 hospitals throughout the State in order to facilitate educational and clinical links to the
16 University of New England Institute for Interprofessional Education and Practice and to
17 enhance and expand their capacity to provide access to high-quality health care. The
18 Department of Health and Human Services shall establish the Health Care Advisory
19 Committee, referred to in this Part as "the committee."

20 **1. Membership.** The Commissioner of Health and Human Services or the
21 commissioner's designee shall serve as the chair of the committee and shall appoint the
22 following 6 members:

- 23 A. A representative of critical access hospitals in this State;
- 24 B. A representative of a statewide organization representing low-income individuals;
- 25 C. A representative of an organization representing federally qualified health centers;
- 26 D. A representative of a foundation based in this State committed to improving the
27 health of citizens in this State who has experience funding direct service for health
28 care;
- 29 E. An individual representing physicians who has experience with health care; and
- 30 F. A representative of the University of New England.

31 **2. Appointments.** The committee must be appointed and convene within 30 days of
32 the passage of the referendum set out in Part A.

33 **3. Duties.** The committee shall create an application for grants for interested parties
34 within 60 days of passage of the referendum in Part A. The committee shall hold a bidders'
35 conference within 7 days following issuance of the applications, after which an applicant
36 has 18 days to complete the application. The committee shall award grants before March
37 1, 2022.

38 **4. Distribution of balance of bond.** The committee shall establish an application
39 process for the \$4,000,000 in health center, clinic and hospital grants. A recipient of a grant
40 under this subsection must:

- 41 A. Be from an underserved community that has a demonstrated need for health care;

1 B. Be a qualified health care provider, which includes but is not limited to: federally
2 qualified health centers, hospitals, veterans' health care facilities, health care facilities
3 established by the United States Department of Defense serving active duty military
4 personnel, state-based nonprofit health care centers and municipally supported health
5 clinics;

6 C. Be established as a health care clinical training site affiliated with the University of
7 New England; and

8 D. Demonstrate a need for telehealth or other infrastructure to assist in remote learning
9 and health care delivery.

10 **5. Completion date.** The awarding of grants under this Part must be completed by
11 December 1, 2023, and following disbursement of these grants the committee terminates.

12 **PART E**

13 **Sec. E-1. Contingent effective date.** Parts B to D take effect only if the bond issue
14 under Part A is approved by the voters of the State.

15 **SUMMARY**

16 The funds provided by this bond issue, in the amount of \$11,000,000, will be used to
17 provide funding on the following basis: \$7,000,000 to be used for the University of New
18 England Institute for Interprofessional Education and Practice to improve and expand
19 collaborative team-based education of health care workers, including training in the use of
20 telehealth and other technologies, and to increase access to high-quality health care; and
21 \$4,000,000 to be used to upgrade the capacity of federally qualified health centers and other
22 community-based health care clinics and hospitals throughout the State in order to facilitate
23 educational and clinical links with the University of New England Institute for
24 Interprofessional Education and Practice and to enhance and expand their capacity to
25 provide access to high-quality health care.