

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# 131st MAINE LEGISLATURE

## FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2023

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H.P. 623

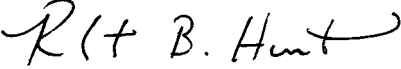
House of Representatives, March 2, 2023

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**Resolve, to Establish the Task Force on Accessibility to Appropriate  
Communication Methods for Deaf and Hard-of-hearing Patients**

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Reference to the Committee on Health and Human Services suggested and ordered printed.

  
ROBERT B. HUNT  
Clerk

Presented by Representative DODGE of Belfast.  
Cosponsored by Senator BALDACCI of Penobscot and  
Representatives: ANKELES of Brunswick, GOLEK of Harpswell, PLUECKER of Warren,  
RISEMAN of Harrison, WILLIAMS of Bar Harbor, ZEIGLER of Montville, Senators:  
GROHOSKI of Hancock, RAFFERTY of York.

1           **Sec. 1. Task force established. Resolved:** That the Task Force on Accessibility  
2 to Appropriate Communication Methods for Deaf and Hard-of-hearing Patients, referred  
3 to in this resolve as "the task force," is established.

4           **Sec. 2. Task force membership. Resolved:** That, notwithstanding Joint Rule  
5 353, the task force consists of 7 members appointed as follows:

6           1. One member of the Senate who serves on the Joint Standing Committee on Health  
7 and Human Services, appointed by the President of the Senate;

8           2. One member of the House of Representatives who serves on the Joint Standing  
9 Committee on Health and Human Services, appointed by the Speaker of the House;

10          3. One member representing the Department of Health and Human Services, Office of  
11 Aging and Disability Services, appointed by the Commissioner of Health and Human  
12 Services;

13          4. One member representing Disability Rights Maine, appointed by the Commissioner  
14 of Health and Human Services;

15          5. One member representing the Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of  
16 Hearing and the Governor Baxter School for the Deaf, appointed by the Commissioner of  
17 Health and Human Services;

18          6. One member representing the Department of Labor who works with compliance  
19 issues regarding deaf and hard-of-hearing persons, appointed by the Commissioner of  
20 Labor; and

21          7. One member of the public, appointed by the Speaker of the House.

22           **Sec. 3. Chairs. Resolved:** That the Senate member is the Senate chair and the  
23 House of Representatives member is the House chair of the task force.

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. After appointment of all members,  
28 the chairs shall call and convene the first meeting of the task force. If 30 days or more after  
29 the effective date of this resolve a majority of but not all appointments have been made, the  
30 chairs may request authority and the Legislative Council may grant authority for the task  
31 force to meet and conduct its business.

32           **Sec. 5. Duties. Resolved:** That the task force shall study accessibility to appropriate  
33 communication methods for deaf and hard-of-hearing patients in health care settings and  
34 how that accessibility may be improved. The task force shall consider, but is not limited  
35 to, the following:

36           1. The availability of American Sign Language interpreters in health care settings;

37           2. The availability of other communication technologies in health care settings, such  
38 as video interpreters, automatically generated voice transcriptions and automatically  
39 generated captions;

40           3. Staff education and training programs on overcoming barriers to health care  
41 experienced by deaf and hard-of-hearing patients; and

