

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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131st MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2023

Legislative Document

No. 1067

S.P. 436

In Senate, March 7, 2023

**Resolve, to Create the Commission to Study the Operations of the
Maine Legislature**

(EMERGENCY)

Reference to the Committee on State and Local Government suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D M Grant'.

DAREK M. GRANT
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator STEWART of Aroostook.
Cosponsored by Senators: BALDACCI of Penobscot, BENNETT of Oxford, President
JACKSON of Aroostook, LYFORD of Penobscot, Representatives: FAULKINGHAM of
Winter Harbor, MILLETT of Waterford, TERRY of Gorham.

1 **Emergency preamble. Whereas,** acts and resolves of the Legislature do not
2 become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

3 **Whereas,** this resolve establishes the Commission to Study the Operations of the
4 Maine Legislature; and

5 **Whereas,** the study must be initiated before the 90-day period expires in order that
6 the study may be completed and a report submitted in time for submission to the next
7 legislative session; and

8 **Whereas,** in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within
9 the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as
10 immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now,
11 therefore, be it

12 **Sec. 1. Commission established. Resolved:** That the Commission to Study the
13 Operations of the Maine Legislature, referred to in this resolve as "the commission," is
14 established.

15 **Sec. 2. Commission membership. Resolved:** That, notwithstanding Joint Rule
16 353, the commission consists of 12 members appointed as follows:

17 1. Two members of the Senate appointed by the President of the Senate, including a
18 member from each of the 2 parties holding the largest number of seats in the Legislature;

19 2. Two members of the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker of the
20 House, including a member from each of the 2 parties holding the largest number of seats
21 in the Legislature;

22 3. Two members who are registered to lobby in the State, including one member
23 appointed by the leaders of the party holding the largest number of seats in the Legislature
24 and one member appointed by the leaders of the party holding the 2nd largest number of
25 seats in the Legislature;

26 4. Two public members recommended by a statewide organization that represents local
27 labor unions, appointed by the Governor;

28 5. Two public members recommended by a statewide organization that advocates for
29 the creation and preservation of jobs that create economic value or bring money into the
30 State, appointed by the Governor; and

31 6. Two public members who represent the interests of small businesses and working
32 families, appointed by the Governor.

33 **Sec. 3. Chairs. Resolved:** That, notwithstanding Joint Rule 353, the first-named
34 public member recommended by a statewide organization that represents local labor unions
35 and the first-named public member recommended by a statewide organization that
36 advocates for the creation and preservation of jobs that create economic value or bring
37 money into the State shall serve as cochairs of the commission.

38 **Sec. 4. Appointments; convening of commission. Resolved:** That all
39 appointments must be made no later than 30 days following the effective date of this
40 resolve. The appointing authorities shall notify the Executive Director of the Legislative
41 Council once all appointments have been completed. After appointment of all members,

1 the chairs shall call and convene the first meeting of the commission. If 30 days or more
2 after the effective date of this resolve a majority of but not all appointments have been
3 made, the chairs may request authority and the Legislative Council may grant authority for
4 the commission to meet and conduct its business.

5 **Sec. 5. Duties. Resolved:** That the commission shall study the existing structure
6 and operations of the Maine Legislature for the purposes of determining its adequacy and
7 effectiveness and identifying changes to the Legislature that could improve efficiency,
8 provide better information to inform decisions, help prioritize legislative activity and
9 reinforce political trust and support in State Government. In its work, the commission shall
10 consider, but is not limited to considering, the following elements:

- 11 1. The size of the Legislature;
- 12 2. The number of terms for members of the Legislature;
- 13 3. The frequency of elections for members of the Legislature;
- 14 4. The number of bills introduced each session;
- 15 5. The prioritization of legislation;
- 16 6. The roles and responsibilities of legislative leadership;
- 17 7. The determination of legislative districts during the reapportionment process;
- 18 8. The training and education of Legislators and legislative staff;
- 19 9. The committee assignment process;
- 20 10. The rules for testimony;
- 21 11. The use of policy research and data in the legislative process;
- 22 12. The process for transparency in the Legislature;
- 23 13. The adoption of a legislative strategic plan;
- 24 14. The inclusion of economic impact statements on legislation; and
- 25 15. The process for forming and approving the state budget.

26 **Sec. 6. Staff assistance. Resolved:** That the Legislative Council shall provide
27 necessary staffing services to the commission, except that Legislative Council staff support
28 is not authorized when the Legislature is in regular or special session.

29 **Sec. 7. Report. Resolved:** That, notwithstanding Joint Rule 353, no later than
30 December 6, 2023, the commission shall submit a report that includes its findings and
31 recommendations, including suggested legislation, for presentation to the Second Regular
32 Session of the 131st Legislature. If the commission is unable to agree on all
33 recommendations, the commission may issue both a majority report and a minority report.

34 **Emergency clause.** In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this legislation
35 takes effect when approved.

36 SUMMARY

37 This resolve establishes the Commission to Study the Operations of the Maine
38 Legislature.