



131st MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2023

Legislative Document

No. 1339

H.P. 853

House of Representatives, March 28, 2023

Resolve, to Establish the Task Force to Study Forming the Maine Commission on Disabilities

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

R(+ B. Hunt

ROBERT B. HUNT Clerk

Presented by Representative SACHS of Freeport. Cosponsored by Senator DAUGHTRY of Cumberland and Representatives: BRENNAN of Portland, CLOUTIER of Lewiston, FAY of Raymond, GRAMLICH of Old Orchard Beach, TERRY of Gorham, WHITE of Waterville, WILLIAMS of Bar Harbor, Senator: DUSON of Cumberland.

1	Preamble. Whereas, one in 4 adults in Maine has a disability; and
2 3 4	Whereas, the State has a significant role in supporting more inclusive state programs, communities and health care to help people with or at risk for disabilities to be well and active in their communities; and
5 6	Whereas, the services for those with disabilities are dispersed throughout state departments, which can result in lack of effectiveness or utilization; and
7 8 9	Whereas, other New England states such as Rhode Island and New Hampshire have successfully integrated their services into a commission on disabilities model to increase accessibility and transparency for their residents; now, therefore, be it
10 11 12	Sec. 1. Task force established. Resolved: That the Task Force to Study Forming the Maine Commission on Disabilities, referred to in this resolve as "the task force," is established.
13 14	Sec. 2. Task force membership. Resolved: That, notwithstanding Joint Rule 353, the task force consists of 14 members as follows:
15	1. One member of the Senate, appointed by the President of the Senate;
16 17	2. One member of the House of Representatives, appointed by the Speaker of the House;
18 19	3. One member representing a statewide organization of consumers of mental health services, appointed by the President of the Senate;
20 21	4. One member representing an organization representing the deaf and hard-of-hearing community, appointed by the President of the Senate;
22 23	5. One member representing an organization representing older adults, appointed by the President of the Senate;
24 25	6. One member who is a municipal code enforcement officer, appointed by the President of the Senate;
26 27	7. One member representing a statewide self-advocacy organization for people with developmental disabilities, appointed by the Speaker of the House;
28 29	8. One member representing an organization representing the blind and visually impaired community, appointed by the Speaker of the House;
30 31	9. One member representing an organization providing independent living services, appointed by the Speaker of the House;
32 33 34	10. One member representing the Maine Statewide Independent Living Council administered by the Department of Labor, Bureau of Rehabilitation Services, appointed by the Executive Director of the Maine Statewide Independent Living Council;
35 36	11. One member representing the Maine Municipal Association, appointed by the Executive Director of the Maine Municipal Association;
37	12. The State Fire Marshal or the State Fire Marshal's designee;
38	13. The Commissioner of Labor or the commissioner's designee; and
39	14. The Commissioner of Health and Human Services or the commissioner's designee.

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

Sec. 4. Appointments; convening of task force. Resolved: That all appointments must be made no later than 30 days following the effective date of this resolve. The appointing authorities shall notify the Executive Director of the Legislative Council once all appointments have been completed. After appointment of all members, the chairs shall call and convene the first meeting of the task force. If 30 days or more after the effective date of this resolve a majority of but not all appointments have been made, the chairs may request authority and the Legislative Council may grant authority for the task force to meet and conduct its business.

Sec. 5. Duties. Resolved: That the task force shall study the formation of a statewide commission on disabilities and the consolidation of services for persons with or at risk for disabilities. The task force shall determine what services are currently provided by state agencies, including but not limited to the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, the Department of Labor, the Maine State Library and the State Workforce Board, and how a commission on disabilities model is used in other states to combine those services for greater effectiveness and access.

18 Sec. 6. Staff assistance. Resolved: That the Legislative Council shall provide 19 necessary staffing services to the task force, except that Legislative Council staff support 20 is not authorized when the Legislature is in regular or special session.

Sec. 7. Report. Resolved: That, no later than December 6, 2023, the task force shall submit a report that includes its findings and recommendations, including suggested legislation, for presentation to the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services. The Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services is authorized to introduce legislation related to the report to the Second Regular Session of the 131st Legislature.

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SUMMARY

This resolve establishes the Task Force to Study Forming the Maine Commission on Disabilities. The task force is directed to study the formation of a statewide commission on disabilities and the consolidation of services for persons with or at risk for disabilities. The task force must, no later than December 6, 2023, submit a report, including suggested legislation, for presentation to the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services, which may introduce legislation related to the report to the Second Regular Session of the 131st Legislature.