

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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131st MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST SPECIAL SESSION-2023

Legislative Document

No. 1702

H.P. 1091

House of Representatives, April 18, 2023

**Resolve, to Establish the Commission to Improve the Educational
Experience of People Who Are Resettling in Maine**

Reference to the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs suggested and ordered printed.

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

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Speaker TALBOT ROSS of Portland.
Cosponsored by Senator BENNETT of Oxford and
Representatives: ABDI of Lewiston, BRENNAN of Portland, CLOUTIER of Lewiston,
DHALAC of South Portland, RANA of Bangor, Senators: RAFFERTY of York, ROTUNDO
of Androscoggin.

1 **Sec. 1. Commission established. Resolved:** That the Commission to Improve
2 the Educational Experience of People Who Are Resettling in Maine, referred to in this
3 resolve as "the commission," is established.

4 **Sec. 2. Commission membership. Resolved:** That, notwithstanding Joint Rule
5 353, the commission consists of 16 members as follows:

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

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

11 3. Four members appointed by the President of the Senate as follows:

12 A. One member who is a teacher in a public school with a population of people who
13 have resettled in the State, such as asylum seekers, refugees and immigrants who has
14 direct experience providing services for those populations, selected from a list of
15 nominees provided by a statewide labor organization representing teachers in the State;

16 B. One member who serves as a liaison under the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless
17 Assistance Act in a public school with a population of people who have resettled in the
18 State, such as asylum seekers, refugees and immigrants, selected from a list of
19 nominees provided by a statewide organization familiar with immigrant rights in the
20 State;

21 C. One member who serves as a social worker in a public school with a population of
22 people who have resettled in the State, such as asylum seekers, refugees and
23 immigrants who has direct experience providing services for those populations,
24 selected from a list of nominees provided by a statewide labor organization
25 representing teachers in the State; and

26 D. One member who is a student who has attended a public school in the State, selected
27 from a list of nominees provided by a community-based resettlement organization;

28 4. Four members appointed by the Speaker of the House as follows:

29 A. One member who is familiar with general assistance programs under the Maine
30 Revised Statutes, Title 22, chapter 1161, selected from a list of nominees provided by
31 a statewide organization representing cities and towns in the State;

32 B. One member who has provided legal services in the State concerning immigration
33 laws;

34 C. One member with direct experience in housing services for new arrivals to the State,
35 selected from a list of nominees provided by a statewide organization familiar with
36 immigrant rights in the State; and

37 D. One member who is a parent of a student who attended a public school in the State,
38 selected from a list of nominees provided by a community-based resettlement
39 organization;

40 5. Three members appointed by the Governor as follows:

- 1 A. One member with expertise in issues affecting maternity and postpartum care for
2 asylum seekers, refugees and immigrants;
- 3 B. One member familiar with the provision of community-based health care services,
4 especially the accessibility of MaineCare services to people who have resettled in the
5 State, such as asylum seekers, refugees and immigrants; and
- 6 C. One member with expertise in public health and the provision of health care services
7 to people who have resettled in the State, such as asylum seekers, refugees and
8 immigrants; and
- 9 6. The Commissioner of Education or the commissioner's designee.

10 **Sec. 3. Chairs. Resolved:** That the first-named Senate member is the Senate chair
11 and the first-named House of Representatives member is the House chair of the
12 commission.

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

21 **Sec. 5. Duties. Resolved:** That the commission shall review the current barriers
22 for people who have resettled in this State, such as asylum seekers, refugees and immigrants
23 to access and successfully participate in public education programs and develop
24 recommendations to improve the experience of people who have resettled in this State,
25 such as asylum seekers, refugees and immigrants in public schools. In undertaking its
26 review, the commission shall provide the opportunity for input from affected communities,
27 including, but not limited to, students who are asylum seekers, refugees or immigrants,
28 their families and public school teachers and administrators.

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

32 **Sec. 7. Report. Resolved:** That, no later than December 6, 2023, the commission
33 shall submit a report that includes its findings and recommendations, including suggested
34 legislation, to the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs and the joint
35 standing committee may report out legislation related to the report to the Second Regular
36 Session of the 131st Legislature.

37 **SUMMARY**

38 This resolve establishes the Commission to Improve the Educational Experience of
39 People Who Are Resettling in Maine to review the current barriers for people who have
40 resettled in the State, such as asylum seekers, refugees and immigrants to access and
41 successfully participate in public education programs. By December 6, 2023, the
42 commission must submit a report that includes its findings and recommendations, including

1 suggested legislation, to the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs
2 and the joint standing committee may report out legislation related to the report to the
3 Second Regular Session of the 131st Legislature.