

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# SEVENTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE

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SENATE.

No. 16

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## STATE OF MAINE.

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RESOLVE in favor of Young Women's Home at Lewiston.

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*Resolved,* That there be and hereby is appropriated the sum  
2 of one thousand dollars to be paid to the Young Women's  
3 Home, of Lewiston, for the use of said institution for the  
4 year one thousand nine hundred and seven and one thousand  
5 dollars for the use of said institution for the year one thou-  
6 sand nine hundred and eight.

## STATEMENT OF FACTS.

The ladies of the Women's Christian Association of Lewiston purchased the Young Women's Home fourteen years ago last November, a brick house and ell with a very large lot. The house is most advantageously located on the corner of Pine and Bates streets, facing the park, and near the working districts. The price paid was \$8,500,—\$4,000 down and a mortgage of \$4,500 for the balance. The object of the home is to care for poor, homeless working girls who come from other places in large numbers seeking employment. Many of them are from respectable farm homes but totally unacquainted with the ways and wiles of the world, and the snares set for unwary feet. Many come from remote towns and are from the age of fourteen upward, and you can better imagine than I can describe the dangers that beset them when they first arrive. This home is a haven of safety and protection for this class of girls who greatly need it, and through its influences and protecting care has proved a special blessing to many. It is not a reformatory but a home to prevent the need for a reformatory. Among the numbers cared for in the home the first year were fifteen orphans. The ladies have worked indefatigably to get the home where it is, and the good it has accomplished is inestimable. This is not a local work, but a work for the state, which has helped and cared for more than a thousand girls in the home, and out of that large number less than twenty-five were from Lewiston, and those were homeless. The number of "regulars" and "transients" cared for in the home in 1906 was one hundred and one. Every county in the state has been represented in the home and nearly all the towns. In addition to those cared for in the home there is a large number of poor working girls who cannot be cared for in the home on account of the lack of rooms, who visit the home to enjoy the privileges of the warm, cheerful living rooms, three in number, parlor, reading room and library, which has more than a thousand volumes of well selected books and a large number of the leading magazines and papers. Some

come for advice, some for the use of the sewing machines, many to read, many for the employment bureau, some for social amusements and many for the evening classes in which, from fall until spring, are taught cooking, sewing, dressmaking and sometimes common English and bookkeeping.

The annual average number of these visits is more than five thousand. For 1906 the number was 6,452. I do not mean to say that more than five thousand girls come annually, because one girl may come two or three times a week, but more than five thousand of these helpful, educating visits annually. The last two years there has been a class for attendants on the sick and one in progress now where girls are taught to care for the sick by a regular trained hospital graduate. They are not to take the place of a trained nurse but go where a trained nurse is not imperatively needed, and where people are not able to pay the price of a trained nurse. The first year after they graduate they are to have seven dollars a week and the second year eight dollars and that is the limit. The number attending evening classes from January 1st, 1906, to January 1st, 1907, was one hundred and seven. The prices charged to girls who are cared for in the home are very low and according to what they earn. No girl is retained after she earns more than six dollars a week, for then she can obtain a good, respectable place elsewhere, and the association strives to help those less favored. One poor girl who had no home, money, family or friends to help her was very ill in the home between three and four months at one time and many others have been similarly conditioned. If a girl comes without money she is never turned away for that, but is helped to obtain work. The more destitute the girl, the more welcome. Any girl has the privilege of boarding herself if she needs to, and all girls can do their washing and ironing free of charge. The design of the home is to help girls to help themselves, and to lead them in the best ways for practical life. It is a work that reaches far into the future, for naturally, many of these will be mothers of the coming generation and surely the protection and educating influences received in this home cannot fail to make wiser, better wives and mothers of the state's daughters. The need of more rooms for the girls is imperative, and the ladies of the association are now striving to raise funds for an enlargement of the house for which the lot has ample room.

The home is in no sense sectarian and girls with or without religion are alike welcome. I wish you could visit the home and see for yourself what it is doing for I know it would more strongly appeal to you than any written words can. The ladies of the association did not ask for or receive a dollar from the state until they had purchased the home and paid for it, renovated the rooms and furnished them, put in a bathroom and new furnace, painted and repaired the house outside, carried on the work for eight years and paid all expenses, and had demonstrated its great need and its great success and was entirely free from debt as it is at present; and they do not now ask the state to relieve them of a burden, but to assist in this important work for the state which has outgrown their strength and means to carry alone.

There can be no more worthy appeal made to the state for aid than this home makes. The home is unquestionably an institution benefiting all sections of the state, and it was for this reason that the legislatures of 1901, 1903 and 1905 made an annual appropriation of \$1,000, for which the ladies are truly grateful, and it is to continue this work and increase its usefulness that this sum is now asked by the association.

I have thus sketched out the work and object of the home. I regret its length but the importance of the subject seemed to demand it. I pray that you will find a proper discharge of your duty consistent with a favorable support of the resolve for which the ladies of the association will be most thankful.

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## STATE OF MAINE.

IN SENATE, January 18, 1907.

Reported by Mr. EATON from Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs, and laid on table to be printed under joint rules.

F. G. FARRINGTON, *Secretary.*