

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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SEVENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

HOUSE

NO. 527

House of Representatives, March 5, 1915.

Ordered that five hundred copies be printed and that the same be referred to the Committee on Judiciary.

Committee on Reference.

Presented by Mr. Haskell of Portland.

STATE OF MAINE

RESOLVE, in favor of Conference of Commissioners and of the Commissioners from Maine for the Promotion of Uniformity of Legislation in the United States.

Resolved, That the sum of Five Hundred Dollars (\$500) 2 for the year 1915, and Five Hundred Dollars (\$500) for the 3 year 1916, be, and hereby is, appropriated, Two Hundred 4 Dollars (\$200) each year to be paid to the Conference of 5 Commissioners for the Promotion of Uniformity of Legis- 6 lation in the United States, and so much of the balance of 7 Three Hundred Dollars (\$300) each year, as may be neces- 8 sary, to be paid to the Commissioners from Maine for the 9 Promotion of Uniformity of Legislation in the United 10 States for their expenses in attending the Conference of 11 Commissioners.

STATEMENT OF FACTS.

In the year 1890 the New York Legislature adopted an Act authorizing the appointment of Commissioners for the Promotion of Uniformity of Legislation in the United States, whose duty it was to examine the subjects of marriage, divorce, form of notarial certificates, etc., and other subjects, to ascertain the best means to effect an assimilation and uniformity in the laws of the states, and especially whether it would be wise and practicable for the State of New York to invite the other States of the Union to send representatives to a convention to draft uniform laws to be submitted for the approval and adoption by the several states. At its session held during the same year, the American Bar Association resolved to recommend the passage of each state and by the Congress of the United States for the District of Columbia and the territories, of an Act similar to that of the State of New York.

During the years which have elapsed since this memorable action, twenty-four National Conferences of Commissioners from different states and territories have been held.

All of the states and territories of the United States, as well as the District of Columbia, the Philippine Islands and Porto Rico being represented in the Conference. At the Twenty-Third Annual Conference held at Montreal, Quebec, in August 1913, Commissioners from thirty-three states and jurisdictions were present, and at the Twenty-Fourth Annual Conference held at Washington, D. C., in October, 1914, thirty-five states and jurisdictions were represented.

In 1895 the Legislature of this State passed an Act (Chapter 138 of the Public Laws of that year) authorizing the appointment of three Commissioners from Maine, and three Commissioners were appointed by the Governor, to wit, Charles F. Libby of Portland, Hannibal E. Hamlin of Ellsworth and Frank M. Higgins of Limerick, the terms of service beginning May 9, 1895. Mr. Libby resigned in 1910, and Levi Turner of Portland was appointed July 29, 1910. Mr. Turner died February 19, 1911, and Harry L. Cram of Portland was appointed his successor May 29, 1913.

Mr. Hamlin resigned in 1913, and P. H. Gillin of Bangor was appointed his successor July 29, 1913.

Frank M. Higgins, although he acted for several years, never qualified, and Charles P. Barnes of Houlton was appointed in his place September, 1914.

From 1895 to 1910, inclusive, an appropriation was made by the Legislature for the expenses of the Commissioners. This appropriation was \$250 for each of the years 1907, 1908, 1909, and 1910.

In 1911 the Legislature refused to provide this appropriation for the years 1911 and 1912, and the item was likewise omitted from the appropriation, both for 1913 and 1914. This was on account of the uncertainty of the term of office of the Commissioners.

All of the present Commissioners have been appointed since the adjournment of the sessions of the Legislature of 1913 and 1914, and there is no question of the legality of their appointments. They feel that Maine should do its part in the important work of Conference, and urge that the appropriations mentioned be made.