

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# EIGHTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE

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**Legislative Document**

**No. 996**

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H. P. 943          House of Representatives, March 25, 1931.

Reported by Mr. Webster from Committee on Insane Hospitals and laid on table to be printed under joint rules.

CLYDE R. CHAPMAN, Clerk.

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## STATE OF MAINE

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IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD ONE THOUSAND NINE  
HUNDRED AND THIRTY-ONE

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RESOLVE, in Favor of the Augusta State Hospital for New  
Construction.

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Resolved: That there be, and hereby is appropriated for the Augusta State Hospital, the sum of one hundred and forty-four thousand dollars, for the year nineteen hundred and thirty-one, for the construction and equipment of two additions for the segregation and treatment of disturbed and violent patients, to the third wings of the stone buildings, to be expended under the direction of the board of State Hospital Trustees, with the approval of the Governor and Council.

## STATEMENT OF FACTS

The two new additions to the third wings of the male and female stone buildings for disturbed and violent patients will accommodate 36 men and 36 women, total 72 patients.

The cost of construction with extensions and equipment will cost not more than two thousand dollars, per bed if both can be constructed at the same time. The estimated cost of each addition is \$72,000, total \$144,000.

The hospital is unreasonably overcrowded. The total inmate capacity is 970. The daily average number in the hospital for the year ending June 30, 1930 was 1191 patients. The number of patients actually in the hospital at the end of the year was 1202. The estimated number of patients for the fiscal years is: 1932, 1221 patients; 1933, 1251 patients. At the close of the fiscal years 1930 there were 178 more women than men in the hospital. Since 1910, 290 patients, mostly men have been transferred to the Bangor State Hospital and the State School at Pownal.

In 1910 the daily average number of patients in the hospital was 500 men and 390 women, total 890 patients. The capacity was 868 patients. In 1922 the daily average was 575 men and 538 women, total 1,113 patients. The normal capacity of the hospital was at this time increased to 970 by the construction of a new building for 102 women.

In 1929 the daily average was 584 men and 639 women, total 1,223 patients. In January 30, 1929, 70 male patients were transferred to the Bangor State Hospital. To further relieve the situation the Trustees reallocated a portion of the territory formerly assigned to the Augusta State Hospital to Bangor which resulted in a reduction of admissions to Augusta.

At the present time the male pavilion on the male side is being used for housing 79 women. Plans are completed for taking one whole ward in the Harlow building for men to house 58 women. This compulsory change will still further deprive the men's department of wards designed for the well behaved and convalescent class. These cases must remain on the acute mental wards long after they have recovered or regained their composure and suffer from the association with the acutely disturbed, noisy and violent patients.

At the present time these disturbed patients are housed in the second wings of the stone building. The accommodations

are inadequate for the number and the location is such as to cause them to disturb and annoy others in the first and third wings. The third wing is not adapted to their care.

The proposed additions to the extreme ends of the third wings are architecturally correct and will prove satisfactory from a psychiatric point of view as physio and hydro-therapeutics departments can be incorporated in them.

As it is probably not possible to obtain at this time sufficient accommodations for the excess number of patients in the hospital, the erection of these extensions will give immediate and practical relief, at a minimum cost, because violent patients now scattered throughout the various wards, can be assembled where they can be more easily cared for, thereby removing the objectionable features of overcrowding in other wards.

In making these additions, the veneered stone at the end of each third wing will be taken down and re-erected at the ends of the extensions. This will save expense as new stone will only be required for two sides of the extension. The inner walls will be of brick.

This plan constitutes one unit in the general scheme for systematic enlargement of the institution. The number of patients is constantly increasing at the rate of approximately twenty-five each year under normal conditions. The demands of the public are increasing and are more exacting. Higher standards of care and treatment are expected. The types of patients are changing. The simpler forms of nervous ailments and infirmities due to age are increasing in number. The state has no adequate means of preventing the commitment of mild and feeble cases. More often than not it is an act of charity to receive and care for such cases. The State Hospital is an absolute necessity. The results of treatment seem to justify the state's efforts in the treatment of such cases. At least forty per cent of those admitted make social recovery and are salvaged as self-supporting citizens, and twenty per cent never have a recurrence of mental trouble.