

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

The following document is provided by the  
**LAW AND LEGISLATIVE DIGITAL LIBRARY**  
at the Maine State Law and Legislative Reference Library  
<http://legislature.maine.gov/lawlib>



Reproduced from scanned originals with text recognition applied  
(searchable text may contain some errors and/or omissions)

---

---

# E I G H T Y - N I N T H   L E G I S L A T U R E

---

---

**Legislative Document**

**No. 242**

---

---

S. P. 201

In Senate, February 1, 1939.

On motion by Senator Friend referred to Committee on Pensions and sent down for concurrence. 500 copies ordered printed.

ROYDEN V. BROWN, Secretary.

---

---

## S T A T E   O F   M A I N E

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED  
THIRTY-NINE

---

January 31, 1939.

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives:

In compliance with the requirements of Chapter 100 of the Private and Special Laws of 1937, I herewith submit report of a census of crippled persons residing in the state, between the ages of 21 and 65 years, procured under the provisions of that act. It will be noted that the list shows the number reported from each county.

Information concerning the details in each case is available if desired.

GEORGE W. LEADBETTER,  
Commissioner of Health and Welfare.

### CENSUS OF CRIPPLED PERSONS

The Eighty-eighth Legislature enacted a bill requiring the Department of Health and Welfare to procure a census of crippled persons in the state between the ages of 21 and 65. The bill, which is Chapter 100 of the Private and Special Laws of 1937, gave a very broad definition of a crippled person as one unable to earn a livelihood for himself and his dependents because of permanent physical disability. The department was instructed to obtain the desired information through the best and most economical means at its disposal. The act further required all municipal officials to cooperate with the department in the procuring of said census.

Shortly after the first of July, 1937, plans were made to gather the names

of crippled persons. A form letter was written to explain the reason for making the survey.

An information blank was also drawn up and printed, providing spaces for reporting the name, address, date and place of birth, and civil and economic status of the crippled person, as well as the number of dependents and legal settlement. Spaces were also provided for a description of the crippling condition and the extent to which it handicapped the individual, as well as the duration of the disability. A statement was included that the form was not to be filled out on the basis of need for assistance alone.

Because overseers of the poor are usually in the best position to know of handicapped persons in their communities, it was decided to send a supply of information blanks with a form letter of explanation to all overseers of the poor in the state. Supplies of information blanks with the form letters were also given to all social workers of the Bureau of Social Welfare, the Division of Old Age Assistance, the Division of Poor Relief, and to district health officers and staff nurses of the Bureau of Health, as well as to the staff of the Maine Public Health Association. At a later date, all chapter chairmen of the Red Cross were asked to cooperate and were sent supplies of forms. The Crippled Children's Service also was asked to report all crippled persons known to them who were over 21 or who became 21 during the period of the survey.

The forms and letters were distributed to town officials about the first of November, 1937, and shortly thereafter to all others who were asked to report handicapped persons. First reports began to be received about the middle of November, 1937 in large numbers, but as time went on, fewer reports were sent in. Reports have been received, however, to the present time.

In July, 1938, a second form letter was sent to all poor relief officials. This letter explained again the purpose of the census and asked cooperation in reporting crippled persons of all such officials and all others engaged in health and welfare work.

Many letters have been received from persons who have wished to apply for the "pension for cripples". Each such letter has been individually answered with a careful explanation that there was no type of pension or assistance for crippled people, but all such persons have been asked to fill out and return an information blank. The purpose of the blank was also made clear.

Many city, town and plantation officials made special efforts to report all persons in their communities who were crippled. The district health officers of the Bureau of Health also secured considerable information. The

Chairmen of the American Red Cross chapters were especially helpful and sent many reports. One member of the Eighty-ninth Legislature, in particular, was of great service in reporting crippled persons from his district. Members of the Staffs of the Nursing Division of the Bureau of Health, the Maine Public Health Association, the Bureau of Social Welfare, the Division of Poor Relief, and the Division of Old Age Assistance have cooperated in reporting all crippled persons who have come to their attention.

Up to January 16, 1939, there have been 1209 crippled adults reported. In some cases, duplicate reports were received, but the above figure does not, of course, include duplications. A few reports were received from persons under 21, and all such cases were referred to the Crippled Children's Service, while all reports on persons over 65 were turned over to the Division of Old Age Assistance.

In view of the broad definition of the term "crippled persons", it is believed that the number of persons in the state who would fall within this class would actually be very much larger, but this census is the best that could be procured without prohibitive expense.

Number of Crippled Persons Reported from each County

Androscoggin	70
Aroostook	228
Cumberland	123
Franklin	80
Hancock	37
Kennebec	108
Knox	46
Lincoln	27
Oxford	65
Penobscot	108
Piscataquis	53
Sagadahoc	31
Somerset	61
Waldo	58
Washington	79
York	35
<hr/>	
Total .....	1,209