

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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NINETY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document

No. 775

S. P. 418

In Senate, February 17, 1949.

Referred to Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs, sent down for concurrence and ordered printed.

CHESTER T. WINSLOW, Secretary.

Presented by Senator Williams of Penobscot.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED
FORTY-NINE

RESOLVE, Providing Funds to Augment Institutional Appropriations.

Emergency preamble. Whereas, the cost of commodities, fuel, etc. have increased to such extent, plus increase in population in many of the institutions; and

Whereas, budget requests have been reduced in most instances; and

Whereas, in the judgment of the legislature, these facts create an emergency within the meaning of the constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now, therefore, be it

Funds to augment institutional appropriations. Resolved: That the sum of \$65,000 be, and hereby is, appropriated from the unappropriated surplus of the general fund to the appropriation of the department of institutional service, to be used as necessary to augment institutional appropriations of the present fiscal year as necessary, upon recommendation of the commissioner of institutional service and approval of the commissioner of finance.

Emergency clause. In view of the emergency cited in the preamble this resolve shall take effect when approved.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

A review of institutional budgets for the current fiscal year reveals that the above amount of money may be necessary to enable certain institutions to continue current standards of care and treatment for the remainder of the fiscal year. Three of these institutions are the Augusta state hospital, the Bangor state hospital and the Central Maine sanatorium, which care for mentally and physically sick people. Curtailments which would be necessary at the Augusta state hospital can be made only through personnel and food, and a minimum of \$22,000 appears necessary to maintain present levels of care. At the Bangor state hospital the balance of the institution's appropriation may not be sufficient to meet the institution's needs, and assistance up to \$15,000 may be necessary.

At the Central Maine sanatorium, the opening of another patients' building to meet needs was not contemplated when the original appropriation was made, but has been necessary, and up to \$15,000 may be required to maintain the level of care.

There is also a probability that the reformatory for men, where a substantial increase in population exists in the face of a small appropriation, will require some financial assistance beyond what the department can now provide by transfers within the department.

These funds will be held in reserve and spent as above indicated solely on the basis of need and any unexpended balance will lapse to the general fund.

This situation has been discussed with the governor and council and the commissioner of finance, and in view of the presence of the legislature, this method of action to relieve this situation has been suggested.

This department, which must plan in advance for the institutional care of more than 5,000 persons for a 2-year period, has no institutional emergency funds, and this resolve if approved would enable maintaining of present standards of care for the remainder of the fiscal year.

This department stayed within its appropriations for 1947-1948 and lapsed \$23,901 to the general fund.