

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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LAWS
OF THE
STATE OF MAINE

AS PASSED BY THE
ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTEENTH LEGISLATURE

SECOND SPECIAL SESSION
September 5, 1996 to September 7, 1996

ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTEENTH LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION
December 4, 1996 to March 27, 1997

FIRST SPECIAL SESSION
March 27, 1997 to June 20, 1997

THE GENERAL EFFECTIVE DATE FOR
FIRST REGULAR SESSION
NON-EMERGENCY LAWS IS
JUNE 26, 1997

FIRST SPECIAL SESSION
NON-EMERGENCY LAWS IS
SEPTEMBER 19, 1997

PUBLISHED BY THE REVISOR OF STATUTES
IN ACCORDANCE WITH MAINE REVISED STATUTES ANNOTATED,
TITLE 3, SECTION 163-A, SUBSECTION 4.

J.S. McCarthy Company
Augusta, Maine
1997

CHAPTER 68**H.P. 1287 - L.D. 1832****Resolve, to Establish the Task Force to Study Strategies to Support Parents as Children's First Teachers**

Preamble. Whereas, research has demonstrated that the early years of childhood are critical to learning; and

Whereas, before they are born, children need proper nutrition and protection from the harmful effects of drugs, alcohol and cigarette smoke; and

Whereas, research shows that if children can not read well by the 3rd grade their chances of success are greatly diminished; and

Whereas, the Parents as Teachers Program, Healthy Start and other early childhood parent education and family support programs have been designed to help all parents give their children the best possible start in life; and

Whereas, it has been found in other states that children who had participated in these programs consistently scored higher on measures of intelligence, achievement, auditory comprehension, verbal and language ability and social development; and

Whereas, parents who have been involved in these programs have been found to be significantly more knowledgeable about child development issues than are uninvolved parents; and

Whereas, the State already has some programs and agencies that work well with parents and children, including Head Start, Healthy Start and Child Development Services; now, therefore, be it

Sec. 1. Task force established. Resolved: That the Task Force to Study Strategies to Support Parents as Children's First Teachers, referred to in this resolve as the "task force," is established to investigate ways to determine the most efficient and effective strategies to support parents as children's first and most influential teachers; and be it further

Sec. 2. Membership. Resolved: That the task force consists of 16 members as follows:

1. Two Legislators jointly appointed by the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House;
2. The Commissioner of Education, or a designee;
3. The Commissioner of Human Services, or a designee;

4. The Commissioner of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services, or a designee;

5. One member representing Healthy Start, designated by that program;

6. One member representing Head Start, designated by that program;

7. One member representing the Maine Children's Alliance, designated by the alliance;

8. One member representing the Maine Association of Child Abuse and Neglect Councils, designated by the council;

9. Three members at large, appointed by the Governor;

10. One member representing elementary education, designated by the Maine Education Association;

11. One member representing the Parents as Teachers Program, designated by that program;

12. One member representing the Child Development Services System, designated by that program; and

13. One member representing the Maine Parent Federation, designated by that program.

All appointments must be made no later than 30 days following the effective date of this resolve. The appointing authorities shall notify the Executive Director of the Legislative Council upon making their appointments. The Executive Director of the Legislative Council shall contact appointing authorities who have not made their appointments as of the required date; and be it further

Sec. 3. Convening. Resolved: That the Chair of the Legislative Council shall call the task force together for its first meeting no later than 45 days after the effective date of this resolve. If the first meeting is not called within the assigned time, the Governor shall call the first meeting for a date no later than 10 days after the initially required date. It is not necessary for all members to be appointed in order for the task force to meet. A quorum consists of a majority of those appointed; and be it further

Sec. 4. Chair. Resolved: That the task force shall select a chair from among the members at the first meeting; and be it further

5. Duties. Resolved: That the task force shall investigate and determine the most efficient and effective strategies to support parents as children's first

and most influential teachers. In conducting its study, the task force shall:

1. Design a comprehensive model of early childhood education and parent support that has at least the following components:

A. Provision of information on children, from birth to 5 years of age, to help parents understand how to encourage their child's development in the areas of social, emotional, cognitive and motor development and to help their children achieve good health and maintain safety;

B. Opportunities for families to meet and share experiences and common concerns and to participate in parent-child activities; and

C. A referral network that helps parents connect with special services;

2. Catalog and review existing programs to ensure there is a comprehensive and coordinated continuum of early childhood education and parent support services in the State; and

3. Investigate ways to establish a statewide resource center for the collection and dissemination of resource materials and an ongoing evaluation of early childhood education and parent support programs.

As part of its study, the task force shall review early childhood education and parent support programs in other states and shall investigate all possible funding sources to implement its recommendations, including funding from private foundations, fee-for-service, federal grant programs and any other federal, state or local funding that may be available; and be it further

Sec. 6. Staff. Resolved: That the task force shall request staffing assistance from the Department of Human Services; and be it further

Sec. 7. Compensation. Resolved: That the legislative members of the task force are entitled to legislative per diem and reimbursement for travel and other necessary expenses upon application to the Executive Director of the Legislative Council; and be it further

Sec. 8. Meetings. Resolved: That the task force may meet up to 4 times; and be it further

Sec. 9. Report. Resolved: That the task force shall submit to the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs, with a copy to the Governor, a report of its findings, including any necessary implementing legislation no later than December 1, 1997. If the task force requires an extension, it may apply to the Legislative Council, which may grant the extension; and be it further

Sec. 10. Budget authorization. Resolved: That the Commissioner of Human Services shall utilize the department's existing budgeted resources to review and report on the matters pursuant to section 5 of this resolve. The commissioner may accept and administer any outside funds contributed to support the work of the task force; and be it further

Sec. 11. Appropriation. Resolved: That the following funds are appropriated from the General Fund to carry out the purposes of this resolve.

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Task Force to Study Strategies to Support Parents as Children's First Teachers

Personal Services	\$440
All Other	400

Provides funds for the per diem and expenses of legislative members of the Task Force to Study Strategies to Support Parents as Children's First Teachers.

TOTAL	_____
APPROPRIATION	\$840

See title page for effective date.

CHAPTER 69

H.P. 201 - L.D. 254

Resolve, Compensating Robert O'Malley for Claims against the State

Sec. 1. Compensation authorized. Resolved: That the Governor is authorized and directed, upon receipt of the necessary releases, to pay \$150,000 from the General Fund to compensate Robert O'Malley and members of his family in full settlement and satisfaction of any and all claims by him and members of his family against the State, the Department of the Attorney General and present or former employees of that department or of the State for damages resulting from the investigation and prosecution of gross sexual assault or unlawful sexual contact charges against Mr. O'Malley resulting from allegations by Jeanine Margryta; and be it further