

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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The bill was opposed by the Department of Human Services and low-income groups, because of the work being done on the other General Assistance bills, and also because of the difficulty of defining the term "luxury items."

It was considered together with the other general assistance bills (LDs 554, 841, 842 and 1135) and then withdrawn.

1353 AN ACT TO LIMIT FUTURE INCREASES IN THE COST OF HOSPITAL CARE IN MAINE Sen. Najarian OTP-ND LD 1737

SUMMARY: The Hospital Cost-Containment bill resulted from recommendations made by the Health Facilities Cost Review Board to develop a mandatory hospital prospective reimbursement system.

The bill established a Health Care Finance Commission to develop and oversee the system, set requirements for hospitals to meet, provided for regional development funds and required equity among payors.

It was discussed together with LDs 631 and 1174. The Committee supervised and directed the negotiations between the Department of Human Services and the Maine Hospital Association, which led to the new draft, LD 1737.

1358 AN ACT TO ESTABLISH A STATE BOARD OF PRISON TERMS AND SUPERVISED RELEASE Rep. McHenry ONTP HSE-ACCPY ONTP SEN-ACCPY ONTP

SUMMARY: The bill would have created a State Board of Prison Terms, replacing the present State Parole Board, which would authorize release of eligible inmates after they had completed serving half of their sentence. The Board would also be able to add time to the release date, if the inmate had been guilty of misconduct while in prison. Inmates released into the community would be supervised by the Division of Probation and Parole in the Department of Corrections.

There was considerable opposition to the bill from District Attorneys, the Criminal Law Advisory Commission and current and former P & P officers. The Department of Corrections also expressed strong reservations.

After the hearing, the Committee voted to re-refer the bill to the Judiciary Committee, who then sent it back to the H & I S Committee. The Committee then voted it Ought Not to Pass.

1387 AN ACT TO ESTABLISH AN OFFICE OF FOSTER PARENT ADVOCATE Sen. Wood LV/WD HSE-ACCPY LV/WD SEN-ACCPY LV/WD

SUMMARY: The bill would have provided funding for a staff person in the Department of Human Services to serve as an advocate on behalf of foster parents.

Department spokespersons indicated they did not feel the legislation was necessary, and that most foster parents seemed satisfied in their dealings with them. However, in response to specific comments from the sponsor, who had introduced the bill because of a particular incident, they agreed to review policies with respect to foster parents and foster children, and the Department's liaison with foster parents.

1391 AN ACT TO REQUIRE HOSPITALS TO PROVIDE ITEMIZED BILLS UPON REQUEST Sen. Najarian HSE-ENACT.
SEN-ENACT.
GOV-SIGNED
PL 83, c. 166

SUMMARY: The new draft of LD 549 required hospitals to inform patients or their guardians, in writing at the time of discharge, that they could request an itemized bill at any time up to 7 years from discharge, and the hospital would provide the bill within 30 days of the request.

The House Amendment (H-120) required that after July 1, 1985, the itemized bill should specify the costs of nursing services.

1412 AN ACT TO REQUIRE DISCHARGE PLANNING FOR MENTAL HEALTH PATIENTS Sen. Gill LV/WD
HSE-ACCP LV/WD
SEN-ACCP LV/WD

SUMMARY: The bill would have established a process to involve patients, their families and community providers in planning for a patient's discharge from the state mental health institutes. It would have established discharge planning teams, required written notice of actions involving the patient, and required follow-up by the mental health institute to see that the plan was being carried out.

This bill was withdrawn by the sponsor on the day of the hearing because of an agreement among the parties who had drafted the bill and the Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation.

1420 AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAWS GOVERNING THE ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATIONS IN GROUP HOME INTERMEDIATE CARE FACILITIES FOR THE MENTALLY RETARDED Sen. Bustin OTP
HSE-ENACT.
SEN-ENACT.
GOV-SIGNED
PL 83, c. 284

SUMMARY: The administration of medication in boarding care facilities, drug treatment centers, day care facilities, children's homes and nursery schools is already governed by rules of the Department of Human Services. This bill added group home intermediate-care facilities for the mentally retarded to that list.

In addition, unlicensed personnel may administer medication in ICF-MR facilities if those personnel have received training established by rule and approved by the Department of Human Services.