

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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STATE OF MAINE  
ONE HUNDRED AND TWELFTH LEGISLATURE  
FIRST REGULAR SESSION

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
STATE GOVERNMENT  
BILL SUMMARY



JULY, 1985

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ONE HUNDRED AND TWELFTH LEGISLATURE  
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JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE  
BILL SUMMARIES  
JULY 1985

This document is a compilation of the bill summaries prepared by this office for the Joint Standing Committees of the Maine Legislature, covering the First Regular Session of the 112th Legislature. The summaries are arranged by LD number and indexed separately by committee.

LD:

804

AN ACT TO ESTABLISH A MAINE COMMISSION FOR  
MEN

GILL  
ROLDE  
BUSTIN  
BAKER H

LV-WD

HOUSE Accepted Committee Report  
SENATE Accepted Committee Report  
GOV

SUMMARY:

LD 804 proposed to establish a Maine Commission for Men to serve as an advocate for men and to assist in approving opportunities for men. The Commission would have been composed of 17 members who are Maine residents and have knowledge of issues facing men. The members would be required to represent low income, youth, and elderly groups. The Governor would annually select a chairperson and vice-chairperson.

The Commission for Men, modeled after the Maine Commission for Women would be primarily an advisory and advocacy organization. The Commission is empowered to conduct research; promote and coordinate programs designed to meet the needs of men; conduct public hearings, workshops, and conferences with respect to the problems of men; propose recommendations to the Governor and Legislature; and employ staff and consultants.

The purpose of LD 804, according to §7101 is to promote, carry out, and coordinate programs designed to improve opportunities for men in the State.

Newspaper accounts of the bill and the hearing, however, indicate that the primary purpose of the bill is to provide a means by which males can be accorded more equitable treatment with respect to divorce proceedings and the award of custody of children.

The bill did not receive committee approval for a number of reasons. In the first case, the bill was a too ambitious proposal to rectify inequitable treatment of males in divorce proceedings. Another reason is the recently enacted mediation legislation for divorce proceedings which is designated to provide more equitable and just settlements. Another reason is that existing law allows the review of divorce settlements when new circumstances develop. The courts have been liberal in their interpretation of "changed circumstances" which affords males greater opportunity to obtain more equitable treatment particularly with respect to child custody.