



129th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2019

Legislative Document

No. 1417

H.P. 1030

House of Representatives, March 28, 2019

**An Act To Expand Access to Head Start To Assist Opioid-affected
and Other At-risk Families**

Reference to the Committee on Health and Human Services suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "R B. Hunt".

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative McCREIGHT of Harpswell.
Cosponsored by Senator SANBORN, L. of Cumberland and
Representatives: BEEBE-CENTER of Rockland, FECTEAU of Biddeford, HICKMAN of
Winthrop, RECKITT of South Portland, STOVER of Boothbay, TALBOT ROSS of Portland,
Senators: CLAXTON of Androscoggin, VITELLI of Sagadahoc.

1 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

2 **Sec. 1. 22 MRSA §3736, sub-§4** is enacted to read:

3 **4. Head Start eligibility.** A Head Start program service provider shall provide Head
4 Start program services to a child up to 5 years of age:

5 A. Who is affected or whose family is affected by substance use disorder; or

6 B. Whose family's income is at or below 185% of the federal poverty level. For
7 purposes of this paragraph, "federal poverty level" has the same meaning as in section
8 3762, subsection 1, paragraph C.

9 **Sec. 2. Department of Health and Human Services to distribute funds to**
10 **Head Start programs based upon new eligibility standards for at-risk**
11 **children and family poverty level.** The Department of Health and Human Services,
12 Office of Child and Family Services shall use funds received in section 3 to supplement
13 funds currently available for Head Start program service providers. The department shall
14 proportionately distribute the funds received in section 3 to nontribal Head Start program
15 service providers in an amount based upon the percentage of children up to 5 years of age
16 who live at or below the federal poverty level in each provider's service area compared to
17 the percentage of children up to 5 years of age who live at or below the federal poverty
18 level statewide. A Head Start program service provider that receives funds pursuant to
19 this Act shall use the funds to provide Head Start program services to applicants who
20 meet the eligibility standards under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 22, section 3736,
21 subsection 4, with preference given to children who are at risk or whose families are at
22 risk. If a Head Start program service provider that receives funds pursuant to this Act has
23 a vacancy, the service provider shall seek referrals from the Office of Child and Family
24 Services. For purposes of this section, "at risk" means affected by substance use disorder,
25 sexual or physical abuse, homelessness, a mental health disorder or another condition that
26 affects the emotional, mental or physical health of a child.

27 **Sec. 3. Appropriations and allocations.** The following appropriations and
28 allocations are made.

29 **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, DEPARTMENT OF**

30 **Office of Child and Family Services - Central 0307**

31 Initiative: Provides ongoing funds to supplement funding to nontribal Head Start
32 program service providers.

33			
34	GENERAL FUND	2019-20	2020-21
35	All Other	\$7,500,000	\$15,000,000
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37	GENERAL FUND TOTAL	<u>\$7,500,000</u>	<u>\$15,000,000</u>

SUMMARY

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This bill establishes eligibility standards for the Head Start program that allow participation for a child up to 5 years of age who is or whose family is affected by substance use disorder or whose family's income is at or below 185% of the federal poverty level. This bill also provides appropriations to be distributed to nontribal Head Start program service providers proportionately in an amount based upon the percentage of children up to 5 years of age who live at or below the federal poverty level in each provider's service area compared to the percentage of children up to 5 years of age who live at or below the federal poverty level statewide, with preference given to children who are at risk or whose families are at risk.