

STATE OF MAINE

—
IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD
TWO THOUSAND AND TWELVE

—
H.P. 1257 - L.D. 1705

Resolve, To Create the Task Force on the Prevention of Sexual Abuse of Children

Emergency preamble. Whereas, acts and resolves of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

Whereas, the Task Force on the Prevention of Sexual Abuse of Children is established to create and adopt a policy addressing sexual abuse of children; and

Whereas, the study must be initiated before the 90-day period expires in order that the study may be completed and a report submitted in time for submission to the next legislative session; 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

Sec. 1. Task force established. Resolved: That the Task Force on the Prevention of Sexual Abuse of Children, referred to in this resolve as "the task force," is established; and be it further

Sec. 2. Task force membership. Resolved: That the task force consists of 13 members appointed as follows:

1. Two members of the Senate, appointed by the President of the Senate;
2. A representative of an organization representing law enforcement, appointed by the President of the Senate;
3. A representative of a statewide professional teachers organization, appointed by the President of the Senate;
4. Two members of the House of Representatives, appointed by the Speaker of the House;

5. A representative of a sexual assault crisis and support center involved in the prevention of child sexual abuse, appointed by the Speaker of the House;

6. A person who is a victim of sexual abuse, appointed by the Speaker of the House;

7. A representative of an organization representing school management, appointed by the Speaker of the House;

8. A representative of a statewide coalition against sexual assault, appointed by the President of the Senate;

9. The Commissioner of Education, or the commissioner's designee;

10. The Commissioner of Health and Human Services, or the commissioner's designee; and

11. A representative of a community-based youth-serving organization, appointed by the President of the Senate; and be it further

Sec. 3. Compensation. Resolved: That, notwithstanding Joint Rule 353, public members of the task force are not entitled to reimbursement for their expenses; and be it further

Sec. 4. Chairs. Resolved: That the first-named Senate member is the Senate chair and the first-named House of Representatives member is the House chair of the task force; and be it further

Sec. 5. Appointments; convening of task force. Resolved: That 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 once all appointments have been completed. After appointment of all members, the chairs shall call and convene the first meeting of the task force. If 30 days or more after the effective date of this resolve a majority of but not all appointments have been made, the chairs may request authority and the Legislative Council may grant authority for the task force to meet and conduct its business; and be it further

Sec. 6. Duties. Resolved: That the task force shall make recommendations for preventing child sexual abuse. In making those recommendations, the task force shall:

1. Gather information concerning child sexual abuse throughout the State;

2. Receive reports and testimony from individuals, state and local agencies, community-based organizations and other public and private organizations; and

3. Recommend policies to prevent and address sexual abuse of children, including age-appropriate curricula for students in prekindergarten to grade 5; methods for increasing teacher, student and parent awareness of issues regarding sexual abuse of children, including warning signs indicating that a child may be a victim of sexual abuse; actions that a child who is a victim of sexual abuse may take to obtain assistance and

intervention; and available counseling options for children affected by sexual abuse; and be it further

Sec. 7. Staff assistance. Resolved: That, notwithstanding Joint Rule 353, the Legislative Council shall provide necessary staffing services to the task force; and be it further

Sec. 8. Report. Resolved: That, no later than November 7, 2012, the task force shall submit a report that includes its findings and recommendations, including suggested legislation, to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over health and human services matters. That joint standing committee is authorized to introduce a bill to the First Regular Session of the 126th Legislature related to the subject matter of the report.

Emergency clause. In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this legislation takes effect when approved.

In House of Representatives, 2012

Read and passed finally.

..... Speaker

In Senate, 2012

Read and passed finally.

..... President

Approved 2012

..... Governor