

STATE OF MAINE

—
IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD
TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-TWO

—
H.P. 465 - L.D. 629

Resolve, To Establish the Task Force To Study the Process for Bringing Criminal Cases in Situations of Violence against Health Care Workers

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 issue of violence against hospital and medical staff has increased in recent years; and

Whereas, hospitals are unclear what the options are for prosecution when victims are unwilling to bring cases; and

Whereas, the work of the Task Force To Study the Process for Bringing Criminal Cases in Situations of Violence against Health Care Workers needs to begin prior to 90 days after adjournment in order for the task force to have enough time to review the circumstances and make recommendations; 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 To Study the Process for Bringing Criminal Cases in Situations of Violence against Health Care Workers, referred to in this resolve as "the task force," is established.

Sec. 2. Task force membership. Resolved: That, notwithstanding Joint Rule 353, the task force consists of 9 members appointed as follows:

1. Two members of the Senate appointed by the President of the Senate, including members from each of the 2 parties holding the largest number of seats in the Legislature;
2. Two members of the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker of the House, including members from each of the 2 parties holding the largest number of seats in the Legislature;

3. Two members who are representatives of entities knowledgeable about or involved in providing hospital, medical or mental health services, appointed by the President of the Senate;

4. Two members who are representatives of entities knowledgeable about or involved in providing hospital, medical or mental health services, appointed by the Speaker of the House; and

5. One member representing law enforcement officers, appointed by the Speaker of the House.

The task force shall also invite 2 members of the judicial branch and 2 members representing district attorneys designated by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court to serve as members of the task force.

Sec. 3. 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.

Sec. 4. 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.

Sec. 5. Duties. Resolved: That the task force shall review the process by which criminal cases may be brought related to incidents of violence in hospitals and other health care facilities and settings, in particular, incidents of violence involving patients or individuals related to patients assaulting hospital or medical staff.

Sec. 6. Staff assistance. Resolved: That the Legislative Council shall provide necessary staffing services to the task force, except that Legislative Council staff support is not authorized when the Legislature is in regular or special session.

Sec. 7. Report. Resolved: That, no later than November 2, 2022, the task force shall submit a report that includes its findings and recommendations, including suggested legislation, to the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety. The joint standing committee is authorized to report out legislation to the First Regular Session of the 131st Legislature.

Sec. 8. Outside funding. Resolved: That the task force shall seek funding contributions to fully fund the costs of the study. All funding is subject to approval by the Legislative Council in accordance with its policies. If sufficient contributions to fund the study have not been received within 30 days after the effective date of this resolve, no meetings are authorized and no expenses of any kind may be incurred or reimbursed.

Sec. 9. Appropriations and allocations. Resolved: That the following appropriations and allocations are made.

LEGISLATURE

Study Commissions - Funding 0444

Initiative: Allocates funds from outside sources for the costs to the Legislature of the Task Force To Study the Process for Bringing Criminal Cases in Situations of Violence against Health Care Workers.

OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS	2021-22	2022-23
Personal Services	\$440	\$440
All Other	\$560	\$810
OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS TOTAL	\$1,000	\$1,250

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