

PLEASE NOTE: Legislative Information **cannot** perform research, provide legal advice, or interpret Maine law. For legal assistance, please contact a qualified attorney.

Amend the bill by striking out the title and substituting the following:

'Resolve, To Examine the Information, Training and Support Services Provided to Parents of Children with Disabilities'

Amend the bill by striking out everything after the title and before the summary and inserting the following:

'Sec. 1 Work group review of resources available to families of children with disabilities. Resolved: That the Maine Developmental Disabilities Council, established by the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 5, section 12004-I, subsection 66 and referred to in this resolve as "the council," shall convene a work group to examine the information, training and support services that are available to the families of children with disabilities regarding special education programs and special education services. The work group shall:

1. Review existing information, training and support services available to families of children with disabilities, including the extent to which ombudsman services would be beneficial to the parents of children with disabilities;

2. Identify gaps and other limitations in existing resources that limit the capacity to address families' needs for information, training and support services to effectively participate in programming for their children;

3. Identify potential additional resources needed to address gaps and limitations in existing resources;

4. Consider input gathered from the families of children with disabilities across the State; and

5. Develop recommendations for changes in current law, rules or policies; and be it further

Sec. 2 Work group membership. Resolved: That the work group convened pursuant to section 1 consists of members appointed by the executive committee of the council to represent the following organizations:

1. Maine Parent Federation, Inc.;

2. Maine Administrators of Services for Children with Disabilities;

3. Maine Education Association;

4. Maine Principals' Association;

5. Disability Rights Center;

6. KIDS Legal, a statewide project of Pine Tree Legal Assistance;

7. Maine Developmental Disabilities Council;

8. Learning Disabilities Association of Maine;

9. Autism Society of Maine;

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10. The Maine Transition Network that implements the transition service coordination as set forth in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A, chapter 308;

11. Maine Children's Alliance;

12. Department of Education; and

13. Other organizations as determined by the executive committee of the council; and be it further

Sec. 3 Convening of work group; staffing assistance; funding. Resolved: That the council shall provide the necessary resources to organize and support the work of the work group convened pursuant to section 1, including convening and providing any necessary staffing services for the work group; and be it further

Sec. 4 Report. Resolved: That the council shall submit a report that includes a summary of input gathered from families across the State regarding the information, training and support services available to them and the findings of the work group convened pursuant to section 1, recommendations and any suggested legislation to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over education matters no later than January 31, 2009. Upon receipt of the report required by this section, the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over education matters shall review the findings and recommendations of the report and may introduce a bill during the session to which the report is submitted to implement its recommendations on matters relating to the study.'

SUMMARY

This amendment strikes the bill and replaces it with a resolve that directs the Maine Developmental Disabilities Council to establish a work group to examine the information, training and support services that are currently available to the parents of children with disabilities regarding special education programs and services, including the extent to which ombudsman services would be beneficial to the parents of children with disabilities. The Maine Developmental Disabilities Council shall convene the work group and provide all staffing assistance and funding necessary to carry out the duties of the work group. The Maine Developmental Disabilities Council shall submit a report no later than January 31, 2009 to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over education matters, which may introduce a bill to the 124th Legislature on matters relating to the recommendations of the work group.

FISCAL NOTE REQUIRED

(See attached)