CORRECTED COPY March 10, 2011 (Please Destroy any copy of L.D. 1039 that does not have

L.D. 1039 that does not have the notation "Corrected Copy")



125th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2011

Legislative Document

No. 1039

H.P. 773

House of Representatives, March 10, 2011

Resolve, To Create a Working Group To Make Recommendations To Improve the Efficiency, Accountability and Proper Administration of Municipal General Assistance Programs

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

ath Al Furt

HEATHER J.R. PRIEST Clerk

Presented by Representative ROTUNDO of Lewiston. Cosponsored by Senator ROSEN of Hancock and Representatives: CAREY of Lewiston, EVES of North Berwick, MARTIN of Eagle Lake, PETERSON of Rumford, SANBORN of Gorham, STRANG BURGESS of Cumberland, WEBSTER of Freeport, Senator: CRAVEN of Androscoggin.

Printed on recycled paper

Printed on recycled paper

Sec. 1. Working group established. Resolved: That the Commissioner of Health and Human Services or the commissioner's designee shall convene a working group to study and make recommendations related to the administration of the general assistance programs under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 22, chapter 1161. The commissioner or the commissioner's designee shall convene the first meeting of the working group no later than October 30, 2011, and the working group shall elect a chair from among its members; and be it further

- 8 Sec. 2. Working group members. Resolved: That the working group consists 9 of 9 members:
- 10

16

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

- Four members representing general assistance applicants and recipients from the
 following organizations invited by the commissioner or the commissioner's designee:
- A. A statewide nonprofit legal services organization that provides representation
 with legislative and administrative advocacy to low-income persons;
- 15 B. A faith-based ecumenical organization representing multiple denominations;
 - C. An organization representing the interests of persons who are homeless; and
- D. A statewide nonprofit legal services organization that provides free legal services,
 including representation in general assistance matters, to low-income persons; and
- 19 3. Four members representing the interests of municipalities or other entities 20 administering a general assistance program invited by the commissioner or the 21 commissioner's designee:
- A. A representative of the municipality administering the largest number of people
 served under general assistance programs in the State;
- 24 B. A representative of a rural municipality;
- C. A representative of a statewide organization representing the interests of general assistance administrators; and
- D. A representative of an entity administering general assistance on behalf of a
 municipality or municipalities; and be it further
- Sec. 3. Selection of members. Resolved: That, no later than 30 days following the effective date of this resolve, the organizations described in section 2 shall notify the Commissioner of Health and Human Services or the commissioner's designee of the members selected for participation in the working group; and be it further
- 33 Sec. 4. Duties. Resolved: That the working group shall:
- Examine the administration of general assistance programs throughout the State
 and the extent to which the programs are administered properly and in accordance with
 law;

- Examine the efficiency of general assistance programs, including the extent to
 which applicants and recipients receive assistance in accessing other sources of assistance
 for which they are eligible;
- 4 3. Study the extent to which appropriate records related to the administration of general assistance are maintained;
- 4. Determine the opportunity for electronic data exchange between municipalities
 and the Department of Health and Human Services to verify eligibility factors for general
 assistance applicants and promote program integrity;
- 5. Study methods to improve program accountability both with respect to general
 assistance applicants and recipients and to the administration of general assistance
 programs; and
- 6. Recommend changes determined by the working group that will improve the
 efficiency, accountability and proper administration of general assistance programs; and
 be it further

15 Sec. 5. Notice to Legislature. Resolved: That the chair of the working group 16 shall provide written notice of meetings and copies of any minutes of meetings of the 17 working group to the Commissioner of Health and Human Services or the commissioner's 18 designee and to members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human 19 Services and the Office of Policy and Legal Analysis; and be it further

Sec. 6. Report. Resolved: That, no later than February 15, 2012, the working group shall submit a report that includes its findings and recommendations, including suggested legislation, to the Commissioner of Health and Human Services or the commissioner's designee, who shall report to the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services. The Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services is authorized to introduce a bill related to the subject matter of the report to the Second Regular Session of the 125th Legislature upon receipt of the report.

27

SUMMARY

28 This resolve directs the Commissioner of Health and Human Services to convene a 29 working group to examine municipal general assistance programs. The commissioner is 30 directed to report to the Second Regular Session of the 125th Legislature with its findings 31 and suggested legislation. The working group is directed to examine the administration and efficiency of the programs, to study the administration of appropriate records and to 32 33 determine the opportunity for electronic data exchange between municipalities and the Department of Health and Human Services to verify eligibility factors and to promote 34 35 program integrity.