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House of Representatives, April 1, 2025

**Resolve, to Create a Working Group on the Status of School
Libraries and on Public Libraries in Maine**

Reference to the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs suggested and ordered printed.

Robert B. Hunt

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative MURPHY of Scarborough.
Cosponsored by Senator RAFFERTY of York and
Representatives: ARATA of New Gloucester, CARLOW of Buxton, CRAFTS of Newcastle,
DODGE of Belfast, KUHN of Falmouth, MITCHELL of Cumberland, SALISBURY of
Westbrook, Senator: LIBBY of Cumberland.

1 **Sec. 1. State Librarian to convene working group. Resolved:** That the State
2 Librarian shall convene a working group on the status of school libraries and public
3 libraries in the State, referred to in this resolve as "the working group."

4 **Sec. 2. Working group membership. Resolved:** That the working group
5 consists of 15 members as follows:

- 6 1. The State Librarian;
- 7 2. The President of the Maine Library Association or the president's designee;
- 8 3. The President of the Maine Association of School Libraries or the president's
9 designee;
- 10 4. A representative of the Maine Principals' Association, appointed by the
11 Commissioner of Education;
- 12 5. A representative from the Maine School Superintendents Association, appointed by
13 the Commissioner of Education;
- 14 6. Three representatives of nonprofit public libraries, who must be from libraries of
15 different sizes and from different regions of the State and one of whom must be a member
16 of that representative's library governing board, appointed by the President of the Maine
17 Library Association;
- 18 7. Two representatives of municipal public libraries, who must be from libraries of
19 different sizes and from different regions of the State, appointed by the President of the
20 Maine Library Association;
- 21 8. Three representatives of public school libraries, who must be from schools of
22 different sizes and from different regions of the State, appointed by the board of the Maine
23 Association of School Libraries;
- 24 9. One staff member of the Department of Education, appointed by the Commissioner
25 of Education; and
- 26 10. One staff member from the library development division within the Maine State
27 Library, appointed by the State Librarian.

28 **Sec. 3. Chair. Resolved:** That the State Librarian is the chair of the working group.

29 **Sec. 4. Convening of working group. Resolved:** That the chair shall call the
30 first meeting of the working group within 45 days of the effective date of this resolve. A
31 majority of the working group membership constitutes a quorum. The member of the
32 working group who is a staff member from the library development division within the
33 Maine State Library shall take minutes at each meeting, which must be posted on the Maine
34 State Library's publicly accessible website within 5 business days of the meeting.

35 **Sec. 5. Duties. Resolved:** That the working group shall study:

- 36 1. Library services for specific segments of the State's population, including
37 individuals 55 years of age and older, individuals with disabilities, youth and children,
38 immigrant and migrant communities, tribal communities and individuals residing in remote
39 areas of the State;

1 2. The role that libraries play in emergency preparedness; cultural diversity and
2 inclusion; public health and safety; community identity and resiliency; economic
3 development; and access to public services and resources; and

4 3. The current overall status of public and school libraries in the State, which may
5 include information related to partnerships, resources, facilities, technology and staffing.

6 In the performance of its duties under this section, the working group shall solicit input
7 from the general public and library users across the State.

8 **Sec. 6. Study guidance. Resolved:** That, in performing the duties under section
9 5, the working group may:

10 1. Assess current community, county and state partnerships with public and school
11 libraries and identify gap areas and potential additional partners, including an assessment
12 of regional partnerships based on areas of need in each region;

13 2. Study the size and diversity of library holdings and assess the strengths of and gaps
14 in materials available to residents of the State, including an assessment of how resources
15 are shared across different libraries and communities and how to best find economies of
16 scale through shared resources among public and school libraries;

17 3. Study the status of public and school library facilities across the State, with a focus
18 on how to improve accessibility, safety and energy efficiency while still accounting for
19 historic preservation and local community needs;

20 4. Study whether public and school libraries in the State have sufficient access to basic
21 technological resources, cybersecurity resources, electronic catalogs, interlibrary loan
22 services and appropriate hardware and software to address community member needs;

23 5. Study staffing levels at public and school libraries in the State, whether staffing
24 levels are sufficient to meet user needs, how libraries use volunteers and what resources
25 are available for workforce development and training of library staff;

26 6. Solicit input from the Maine Library Commission; and

27 7. Examine models for library management and organization in other states, including
28 the formation of statewide service networks.

29 **Sec. 7. Staff assistance; mileage reimbursement. Resolved:** That the Maine
30 State Library shall provide administrative, technical and legal assistance to the working
31 group, including contracting with an outside facilitator with experience in leading
32 community and library discussions to assist the State Librarian with meeting facilitation
33 and organization.

34 Members of the working group are entitled to mileage reimbursement from the Maine
35 State Library for travel to in-person meetings at the same rate as under the Maine Revised
36 Statutes, Title 5, section 8 for not more than 12 meetings.

37 **Sec. 8. Report. Resolved:** That, no later than November 1, 2027, the State
38 Librarian shall submit a report based on the study under section 5 for presentation to the
39 joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over education and cultural
40 affairs. The report must include:

41 1. Specific and detailed findings and proposals concerning the issues studied by the
42 working group;

