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Resolve, To Evaluate the Public Safety Answering Points for the State of Maine

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 to Evaluate Public Safety Answering Points is charged with reviewing goals already established in statute; 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 to Evaluate Public Safety Answering Points, 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 9 members appointed as follows:

1. Two Senators, appointed by the President of the Senate, one of whom serves on the Joint Standing Committee on Natural Resources and one of whom serves on the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety;

2. Four members of the House of Representatives, appointed by the Speaker of the House, 2 of whom serve on the Joint Standing Committee on Natural Resources and 2 of whom serve on the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety;

3. One member representing a statewide association of sheriffs, appointed by the President of the Senate;

4. One member representing a statewide association of fire chiefs, appointed by the Speaker of the House; and

5. The Commissioner of Public Safety or the commissioner's designee; and be it further

Sec. 3 Chairs. Resolved: That the first-named Senator is the Senate chair of the task force and the first-named House of Representatives member is the House chair of the task force; and be it further

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. Within 15 days after appointment of all members, the chairs shall call and convene the first meeting of the task force, which must be no later than August 1, 2006; and be it further

Sec. 5 Duties. Resolved: That the task force shall review the goals expressed in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 25, section 2926, subsection 2-A and evaluate whether establishing 16 to 24 public safety answering point sites and dispatch centers is the best plan for a coordinated statewide E-9-1-1

system. In making its evaluation, the task force shall take into consideration technological achievements that may allow a reduction in the number of public safety answering point sites, which may reduce costs and improve the efficiency of the statewide E-9-1-1 system. The task force must also address the issue of interoperability and explore means to ensure that the various entities comprising the system are able to communicate effectively. The task force may invite the participation of interested parties and may conduct 4 public hearings in Augusta in the course of its study; and be it further

Sec. 6 Staff assistance. Resolved: That the Legislative Council shall provide necessary staffing services to the task force; and be it further

Sec. 7 Compensation. Resolved: That the legislative members of the task force are entitled to receive the legislative per diem, as defined in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 3, section 2, and reimbursement for travel and other necessary expenses related to their attendance at authorized meetings of the task force. Public members not otherwise compensated by their employers or other entities that they represent are entitled to receive reimbursement of necessary expenses and, upon a demonstration of financial hardship, a per diem equal to the legislative per diem for their attendance at authorized meetings of the task force; and be it further

Sec. 8 Report. Resolved: That, no later than November 17, 2006, the task force shall submit a report that includes its findings and recommendations, including suggested legislation, for presentation to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over natural resources matters and the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over criminal justice and public safety matters. The task force is authorized to introduce legislation related to its report to the First Regular Session of the 123rd Legislature at the time of submission of its report; and be it further

Sec. 9 Extension. Resolved: That, if the task force requires a limited extension of time to complete its study and make its report, it may apply to the Legislative Council, which may grant an extension; and be it further

Sec. 10 Task force budget. Resolved: That the chairs of the task force, with assistance from the task force staff, shall administer the task force's budget. Within 10 days after its first meeting, the task force shall present a work plan and proposed budget to the Legislative Council for its approval. The task force may not incur expenses that would result in the task force's exceeding its approved budget. Upon request from the task force, the Executive Director of the Legislative Council shall promptly provide the task force chairs and staff with a status report on the task force's budget, expenditures incurred and paid and available funds.

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

SUMMARY

This resolve establishes the Task Force to Evaluate Public Safety Answering Points. The task force is given the task of reviewing and evaluating whether the goal of between 16 and 24 public safety answering points, which is established by statute, is the best plan for the State in its overall E-9-1-1 plan.