

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

Resolve, To Create a Task Force on Maine's Ethics and Transparency Laws

Emergency preamble. Whereas, acts and resolves of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

Whereas, this resolve establishes the Task Force To Study Maine's Governmental Ethics and Transparency Laws; 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 Study Maine's Governmental Ethics and Transparency Laws, 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 13 members appointed as follows:

1. Six 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 of whom serve on the Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government, 2 of whom serve on the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs and 2 of whom serve on the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary; and

2. Seven 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, 2 of whom serve on the Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government, 2 of whom serve on the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs and 3 of whom serve on the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary.

The task force shall seek input and information from the Executive Director of the Commission on Governmental Ethics and Election Practices, the chair of the Right To Know Advisory Committee and the Attorney General; and be it further

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; 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. 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; and be it further

Sec. 5 Duties. Resolved: That the task force shall review the State's laws concerning governmental ethics and transparency, including but not limited to laws governing financial disclosure for the legislative and executive branches, conflicts of interest, lobbyist disclosure and public records access, and shall recommend any changes it determines appropriate. In conducting its review, the task force shall examine the laws in effect in other states, information and recommendations provided by public policy organizations and information provided by the public; 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 Report. Resolved: That, no later than December 4, 2013, the task force shall submit a report that includes its findings and recommendations, including suggested legislation, to the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs. After receipt and review of the report, the joint standing committee may submit a bill implementing the recommendations to the Second Regular Session of the 126th Legislature.

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

SUMMARY

This resolve establishes the Task Force To Study Maine's Governmental Ethics and Transparency Laws.