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Resolve, To Create the Task Force To End Student Hunger in Maine

Preamble. Whereas, Maine has a moral obligation to care for its most vulnerable citizens; and

Whereas, Maine ranks first in New England in food insecurity; and

Whereas, in past years, Maine has underutilized up to \$30,000,000 of federal funding that could have been used to provide meals to hungry students; and

Whereas, food insecurity has proven to negatively impact student health and learning; and

Whereas, the United States Department of Agriculture recently announced a nationwide expansion of its program known as the Community Eligibility Provision, which increases access to breakfast and lunch for all students in low-income areas; now, therefore, be it

Sec. 1 Task force established. Resolved: That, notwithstanding Joint Rule 353, the Task Force To End Student Hunger in Maine, 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 17 members as follows:

1. Three 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. Four 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;

3. Six members of the public with expertise in the fields of school food service, child health, child development or child hunger or related fields, including 2 members whose children used or are using school food programs. Three members must be appointed by the President of the Senate and 3 members must be appointed by the Speaker of the House;

4. Two members of the public appointed by the Governor;

5. The Commissioner of Education or the commissioner's designee; and

6. The Commissioner of Health and Human Services or the commissioner's designee; 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 meet 5 times. The task force shall study issues associated with the creation of a public-private partnership to provide expertise to school administrative units throughout the State in adopting best practices and maximizing available federal funds for addressing student hunger by using:

1. The United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, National School Lunch Program;

2. The United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Child and Adult Care Food Program, At-Risk Afterschool Meals;

3. The United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Summer Food Service Program; and

4. The 4 privately funded hunger coordinators positioned in the Healthy Maine Partnerships districts to encourage the use of school food programs.

The task force shall draft a 3- to 5-year plan outlining a ramp-up of school food programs throughout the State; 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 9, 2014, the task force shall submit a report that includes its findings and recommendations, including suggested legislation, as well as actions that can be taken immediately, for presentation to the First Regular Session of the 127th Legislature; and be it further

Sec. 8 Outside funding. Resolved: That the task force shall seek funding contributions to fully fund the cost of the study. All funding is subject to approval by the Legislative Council in accordance with its policies. If sufficient contributions to fund the study have not been received within 30 days after the effective date of this resolve, no meetings are authorized and no expenses of any kind may be incurred or reimbursed.

SUMMARY

This resolve establishes the Task Force To End Student Hunger in Maine.