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**An Act To Implement the Recommendations of the Commission
To Strengthen and Align the Services Provided to Maine's
Veterans by Requiring the University of Maine System
To Provide Supportive Services to Student-veterans**

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 20-A MRS §10910 is enacted to read:

§ 10910. Assistance to student-veterans

No later than January 15, 2017, the university shall establish on each campus of the university that has a student population with a significant number of enrolled student-veterans an office at which a student-veteran recently separated from military service may obtain assistance with that student-veteran's transition from military service to the campus environment and support for the successful completion of the student-veteran's postsecondary education. The office must also serve as a resource for students, faculty and staff who are not veterans in order to create awareness about the issues faced by student-veterans recently separated from military service. The university shall ensure that each office established pursuant to this section, to the greatest extent possible, provides services offered at a similar office serving the University of Southern Maine campuses during the 2015-2016 academic year. As used in this section, "a significant number of enrolled student-veterans" means 25 or more student-veterans or a number of student-veterans equal to or greater than 5% of the number of enrolled students, whichever is less. As used in this section, "veteran" means a person who served on active duty as a member of the National Guard or in the United States Armed Forces, including the Reserves of the United States Armed Forces, who has received a discharge other than dishonorable.

SUMMARY

This bill implements one of the recommendations made by the final report of the Commission To Strengthen and Align the Services Provided to Maine's Veterans and is submitted pursuant to Resolve 2015, chapter 48. The bill requires each campus of the University of Maine System with a significant number of student-veterans to include an office that provides assistance to those veterans with the intent of facilitating transition from military life and supporting successful completion of the veterans' postsecondary education. The bill requires that any office established pursuant to this bill must use, to the greatest extent possible, the office at the University of Southern Maine as a model.