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Resolve, To Establish a Working Group To Review the Function and Mission of Probation Officers and Establish a Licensing Procedure

Sec. 1 Working group on the profession of probation officer. Resolved: That the Commissioner of Corrections shall convene a working group to review the function and mission of probation officers within the Department of Corrections and to make recommendations to the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety by January 1, 2018 regarding legislation to update the laws and rules regarding probation officers and establish a procedure and statute for licensure of probation officers.

1. The working group must include, but is not limited to:

A. A representative of the Department of Corrections and a representative of the Department of Health and Human Services, who shall cochair the working group;

B. A representative of a statewide organization of religious or faith communities; and

C. A representative of a prison advocacy organization; a representative of a grassroots community organization; a representative of the judicial branch; a journalist; and any other interested persons who will broaden the perspective and add to the strength of the review and recommendations of the working group.

2. The working group shall review the function and mission of probation officers and shall make recommendations to:

A. Strengthen the role of probation officers in the rehabilitation of juvenile and criminal offenders and the reduction of recidivism;

B. Develop a procedure and proposed statute for licensing probation officers that will provide regulation, licensing and disciplinary responsibilities within the Department of Professional and Financial Regulation;

C. Develop performance standards for probation officers; and

D. Develop 3 regional community resource units to reinforce standards of job performance and provide support to probation officers.

3. The Department of Corrections and the Department of Health and Human Services shall provide staffing and support services to the working group; and be it further

Sec. 2 Sunrise review. Resolved: That the Commissioner of Professional and Financial Regulation shall undertake the sunrise review procedure for licensure of probation officers in accordance with the procedure and criteria set forth in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 32, sections 60-J, 60-K and 60-L. In conducting the sunrise review procedure, the commissioner shall take into consideration the work and recommendations of the working group convened pursuant to section 1 of this resolve.

The commissioner shall report to the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety by February 1, 2018 regarding the results of the sunrise review procedure and any recommendations regarding licensure of probation officers.

SUMMARY

This resolve directs the Commissioner of Corrections to convene a working group to review the function and mission of probation officers within the Department of Corrections and to make recommendations to the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety by January 1, 2018 regarding legislation to update the laws and rules regarding probation officers and establish a procedure and statute for licensure of probation officers. The resolve directs the Commissioner of Professional and Financial Regulation to undertake a sunrise review procedure for licensure of probation officers and directs the commissioner to take into consideration the work and recommendations of the working group. The commissioner is required to report to the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety by February 1, 2018 regarding the results of the sunrise review procedure and any recommendations regarding licensure of probation officers.