



131st MAINE LEGISLATURE

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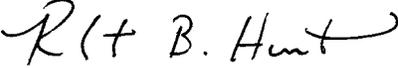
No. 976

H.P. 623

House of Representatives, March 2, 2023

Resolve, to Establish the Task Force on Accessibility to Appropriate Communication Methods for Deaf and Hard-of-hearing Patients

Reference to the Committee on Health and Human Services suggested and ordered printed.


ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative DODGE of Belfast.
Cosponsored by Senator BALDACCI of Penobscot and
Representatives: ANKELES of Brunswick, GOLEK of Harpswell, PLUECKER of Warren,
RISEMAN of Harrison, WILLIAMS of Bar Harbor, ZEIGLER of Montville, Senators:
GROHOSKI of Hancock, RAFFERTY of York.

1 **Sec. 1. Task force established. Resolved:** That the Task Force on Accessibility
2 to Appropriate Communication Methods for Deaf and Hard-of-hearing Patients, referred
3 to in this resolve as "the task force," is established.

4 **Sec. 2. Task force membership. Resolved:** That, notwithstanding Joint Rule
5 353, the task force consists of 7 members appointed as follows:

6 1. One member of the Senate who serves on the Joint Standing Committee on Health
7 and Human Services, appointed by the President of the Senate;

8 2. One member of the House of Representatives who serves on the Joint Standing
9 Committee on Health and Human Services, appointed by the Speaker of the House;

10 3. One member representing the Department of Health and Human Services, Office of
11 Aging and Disability Services, appointed by the Commissioner of Health and Human
12 Services;

13 4. One member representing Disability Rights Maine, appointed by the Commissioner
14 of Health and Human Services;

15 5. One member representing the Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of
16 Hearing and the Governor Baxter School for the Deaf, appointed by the Commissioner of
17 Health and Human Services;

18 6. One member representing the Department of Labor who works with compliance
19 issues regarding deaf and hard-of-hearing persons, appointed by the Commissioner of
20 Labor; and

21 7. One member of the public, appointed by the Speaker of the House.

22 **Sec. 3. Chairs. Resolved:** That the Senate member is the Senate chair and the
23 House of Representatives member is the House chair of the task force.

24 **Sec. 4. Appointments; convening of task force. Resolved:** That all
25 appointments must be made no later than 30 days following the effective date of this
26 resolve. The appointing authorities shall notify the Executive Director of the Legislative
27 Council once all appointments have been completed. After appointment of all members,
28 the chairs shall call and convene the first meeting of the task force. If 30 days or more after
29 the effective date of this resolve a majority of but not all appointments have been made, the
30 chairs may request authority and the Legislative Council may grant authority for the task
31 force to meet and conduct its business.

32 **Sec. 5. Duties. Resolved:** That the task force shall study accessibility to appropriate
33 communication methods for deaf and hard-of-hearing patients in health care settings and
34 how that accessibility may be improved. The task force shall consider, but is not limited
35 to, the following:

36 1. The availability of American Sign Language interpreters in health care settings;

37 2. The availability of other communication technologies in health care settings, such
38 as video interpreters, automatically generated voice transcriptions and automatically
39 generated captions;

40 3. Staff education and training programs on overcoming barriers to health care
41 experienced by deaf and hard-of-hearing patients; and

