



132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST SPECIAL SESSION-2025

Legislative Document

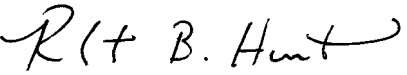
No. 1577

H.P. 1035

House of Representatives, April 10, 2025

Resolve, to Establish the Commission to Study and Recommend Solutions for Modernizing the Maine Legislature

Reference to the Committee on State and Local Government suggested and ordered printed.


ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative RIELLY of Westbrook.
Cosponsored by Senator STEWART of Aroostook and
Representatives: BOYER of Poland, CARLOW of Buxton, EATON of Deer Isle,
FAULKINGHAM of Winter Harbor, SUPICA of Bangor, Senators: BENNETT of Oxford,
BRENNER of Cumberland, HICKMAN of Kennebec.

1 **Sec. 1. Commission established. Resolved:** That the Commission to Study and
2 Recommend Solutions for Modernizing the Maine Legislature, referred to in this resolve
3 as "the commission," is established.

4 **Sec. 2. Commission membership. Resolved:** That, notwithstanding Joint Rule
5 353, the commission consists of 15 members as follows:

6 1. Four members who are current or former members of the Senate appointed by the
7 President of the Senate, 2 of whom are from the party holding the largest number of seats
8 in the Legislature and 2 of whom are from the party holding the 2nd largest number of seats
9 in the Legislature;

10 2. Five members who are current or former members of the House of Representatives
11 appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, 2 of whom are from the party
12 holding the largest number of seats in the Legislature, 2 of whom are from the party holding
13 the 2nd largest number of seats in the Legislature and one without a party affiliation;

14 3. Four members of the nonpartisan legislative staff as follows:

15 A. The Executive Director of the Legislative Council or the executive director's
16 designee;

17 B. The Director of the Office of Policy and Legal Analysis or the director's designee;

18 C. The Director of the Office of Fiscal Program and Review or the director's designee;
19 and

20 D. The Director of the Office of Program Evaluation and Government Accountability
21 or the director's designee;

22 4. One member appointed by the Governor; and

23 5. One member appointed by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court.

24 **Sec. 3. Chairs. Resolved:** That the first-named Senate member is the Senate chair
25 and the first-named House of Representatives member is the House chair of the
26 commission.

27 **Sec. 4. Appointments; convening of commission; number of meetings.**
28 **Resolved:** That, notwithstanding Joint Rule 353, all appointments must be made no later
29 than 30 days following the effective date of this resolve. The appointing authorities shall
30 notify the Executive Director of the Legislative Council once all appointments have been
31 completed. After appointment of all members, the chairs shall call and convene the first
32 meeting of the commission. If 30 days or more after the effective date of this resolve a
33 majority of but not all appointments have been made, the chairs may request authority and
34 the Legislative Council may grant authority for the commission to meet and conduct its
35 business. The commission shall meet at least 10 times and shall allow for remote
36 participation by residents of the State.

37 **Sec. 5. Duties. Resolved:** That the commission shall study issues regarding and
38 solutions for modernizing the Legislature, including, but not limited to:

39 1. Improving efficiencies through technology;

40 2. Improving the legislative process;

3. Increasing transparency;
4. Improving physical access;
5. Increasing partisan and nonpartisan staffing;
6. Evaluating remote access, as implemented during the First Regular Session of the 130th Legislature;
7. Evaluating meetings of joint standing committees of the Legislature;
8. Limiting the number of bills;
9. Reducing the size of the Legislature, including whether there should be 3 House of Representatives districts within each Senate district;
10. Exploring whether the State would benefit from a professional legislature versus a citizen legislature;
11. Exploring whether the State would benefit from a year-round legislature;
12. Implementing a unicameral legislature versus maintaining a bicameral legislature;
13. Implementing multimember districts versus maintaining single-member districts;
14. Increasing term limits to 6 or 8 terms;
15. Changing legislative staffing structure; and
16. Updating facilities to make it easier for Legislators and legislative staff who have children to bring them to work.

The commission shall consult with the National Conference of State Legislatures on best practices and ideas from other states for modernizing the Legislature.

Sec. 6. Staff assistance. Resolved: That, notwithstanding Joint Rule 353, the Legislative Council shall provide necessary staffing services to the commission.

Sec. 7. Report. Resolved: That, notwithstanding Joint Rule 353, no later than November 4, 2026, the commission shall submit a report that includes its findings and recommendations, including suggested legislation, to the Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government. The joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over state and local government matters may submit legislation based upon the report to the 133rd Legislature in 2027.

SUMMARY

This resolve establishes the Commission to Study and Recommend Solutions for Modernizing the Maine Legislature. The commission has 15 members, including current and former Legislators, nonpartisan staff, a member appointed by the Governor and a member appointed by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court. The commission is required to study issues regarding and solutions for modernizing the Legislature, including, but not limited to, improving efficiencies through technology; increasing transparency; limiting the number of bills; changing the structure and type of Legislature through a reduction in the overall size or the length of sessions; increasing staffing; and improving physical access and facilities

1 The commission is required to submit a report to the Joint Standing Committee on State
2 and Local Government no later than November 4, 2026. The joint standing committee may
3 submit legislation based on the report to the 133rd Legislature in 2027.