

STATE OF MAINE

In House _____

Whereas, excess mortality or excess deaths are determined by comparing the expected number of deaths in a place over a given time period to the actual number of deaths that occurred in that place over the same time period; and

Whereas, the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has estimated that approximately 1,179,024 excess deaths occurred in the United States since March 2020; and

Whereas, the Maine Department of Health and Human Services has documented mortality rates from 2015 to 2022 in the State; and

Whereas, the total number of all-cause deaths for persons 25 to 64 years of age from January 2015 to December 2019 was 15,244, which is an all-cause average number of deaths per year of 3,049, an average rate increase of 1.5% per year; and

Whereas, the all-cause number of deaths for persons 25 to 64 years of age from January 2020 to December 2020 was 3,321, a rate increase from 2019 of 6.3%; and

Whereas, the all-cause number of deaths for persons 25 to 64 years of age from January 2021 to December 2021 was 3,908, a rate increase from 2020 of 17.7%; and

Whereas, the all-cause number of deaths for persons 25 to 64 years of age from January 2022 to December 2022 was 3,844, a rate decrease from 2021 of -1.64% for a total rate increase of 16.04% since 2019; and

Whereas, the total number of all-cause deaths for persons 25 to 64 years of age from January 2020 to December 2022 was 11,073, which is an all-cause average number of deaths per year of 3,691, a rate increase of 21.1% over the average number of deaths from 2015 to 2019; and

Whereas, the Governor has repeatedly stated that every life is important and that we must protect residents and reduce the risk of death; now, therefore, be it

ORDERED, the Senate concurring, that the Task Force to Investigate Excess Deaths in Maine is established as follows.

1. Task Force to Investigate Excess Deaths in Maine established. The Task Force to Investigate Excess Deaths in Maine, referred to in this order as "the task force," is established.

2. Membership. The task force consists of 4 members appointed as follows:

A. Two members of the Senate appointed by the President of the Senate, including a member from each of the 2 parties holding the largest number of seats in the Legislature; and

B. Two members of the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker of the House, including a member from each of the 2 parties holding the largest number of seats in the Legislature.

The President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House shall invite the participation of the Director of the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention within the Department of

Health and Human Services, a person who is a statistician and a person who is a research scientist.

3. Task force chair. The first-named House member is the chair of the task force.

4. Appointments; convening of task force. All appointments must be made no later than 15 days following passage of this order. The appointing authorities shall notify the Executive Director of the Legislative Council once all appointments have been made. When the appointment of all members has been completed, the chair of the task force shall call and convene the first meeting of the task force. If 15 days or more after the passage of this order a majority of but not all appointments have been made, the chair may request authority and the Legislative Council may grant authority for the task force to meet and conduct its business.

5. Duties. The task force shall review all available data from the Department of Health and Human Services, Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention, the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other relevant sources and examine the root causes related to unprecedented increased excess deaths, all-cause deaths and all-cause death rate increases since 2019.

6. Staff assistance. The Legislative Council shall provide necessary staffing services to the task force, except that the Legislative Council staff support is not authorized when the Legislature is in regular or special session.

7. Report. No later than November 6, 2024, the task force shall submit a report to the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services that includes its findings and recommendations, including suggested legislation, for presentation to the 132nd Legislature in 2025.

SPONSORED BY: _____

(Representative SAMPSON, H.)

TOWN: Alfred