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Date: (Filing No. H- )

**HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

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**STATE OF MAINE  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
128TH LEGISLATURE  
FIRST REGULAR SESSION**

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT “ ” to H.P. 250, L.D. 336, Bill, “An Act To Amend the Requirements of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program”

Amend the bill by adding after section 1 the following:

**Sec. 2. 22 MRSA §3785**, as amended by PL 1997, c. 530, Pt. A, §§20 to 24, is further amended to read:

**§3785. Sanctions**

An individual may not be sanctioned under this program or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families for failure to participate in the ASPIRE-TANF program if that failure to participate is based on good cause. Each individual participating in an ASPIRE-TANF orientation must receive written and oral notice of what constitutes good cause for nonparticipation in ASPIRE-TANF including the domestic violence exception. Good cause for failure to participate in this program must be found when there is reasonable and verifiable evidence of:

- 1. Illness or incapacitation.** The individual's illness, incapacity or advanced age, or the illness or incapacity of a household member, that requires the individual to provide care in the home;
- 2. Sexual harassment.** Sexual harassment at a program-approved component;
- 3. Court-required appearance; incarceration.** Court-required appearance or incarceration;
- ~~**4. Lack of supportive services.** Lack or breakdown of necessary supportive services such as child care or transportation with no appropriate alternatives available;~~
- ~~**5. Inclement weather.** Inclement weather that prevents the individual from traveling to an activity when the weather is severe enough to prevent other individuals from traveling to the same activity;~~
- ~~**6. Assignment to another activity.** Assignment by the department to an activity or component that has not been made part of the family contract;~~

**COMMITTEE AMENDMENT**

1 ~~7. **Remoteness.** Participation that requires the individual to travel outside the~~  
2 ~~individual's immediate geographic area, defined as an area within a 2-hour round-trip~~  
3 ~~commute;~~

4 **8. Crisis or special circumstance.** A crisis ~~or~~ special circumstance or other reason  
5 that the department determines to be good cause that causes an individual to be absent  
6 from or discontinue a department activity about which the department has been advised  
7 ~~and has determined to constitute good cause, including lack of transportation or child care~~  
8 necessary for participation when the individual does not have reasonable access to that  
9 service and the department cannot offer a reasonable alternative to enable the individual  
10 to participate; or

11 ~~12. **Other good cause.** Any other reason resulting in failure to participate that is~~  
12 ~~beyond the control of the individual or that a reasonable person would determine to be~~  
13 ~~good cause; or~~

14 **13. Domestic violence.** Inability to participate due to domestic violence when the  
15 individual is unable to participate because of physical injuries or the psychological effects  
16 of abuse; because of legal proceedings, counseling or other activities related to abuse;  
17 because the abuser actively interferes with the individual's participation; because the  
18 location puts the individual at risk; or for other good cause related to domestic violence.  
19 For the purposes of this subsection, reasonable and verifiable evidence may include but is  
20 not limited to the following:

21 A. Court, medical, law enforcement, child protective, social services, psychological  
22 or other records that establish that the individual has been a victim of domestic  
23 violence; or

24 B. Sworn statements from persons other than the individual with knowledge of the  
25 circumstances affecting the individual.

26 **Sec. 3. Appropriations and allocations.** The following appropriations and  
27 allocations are made.

28 **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, DEPARTMENT OF (FORMERLY DHS)**

29 **Additional Support for People in Retraining and Employment 0146**

30 Initiative: Provides funding to provide Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)  
31 benefits and alternative aid benefits to 2-parent families and to increase from \$200 to  
32 \$300 the special housing allowance for families receiving TANF benefits.

33	<b>FEDERAL BLOCK GRANT FUND</b>	<b>2017-18</b>	<b>2018-19</b>
34	All Other	\$835,215	\$1,113,620
35			
36	FEDERAL BLOCK GRANT FUND TOTAL	<u>\$835,215</u>	<u>\$1,113,620</u>

37 **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families 0138**

38 Initiative: Provides funding to provide Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)  
39 benefits and alternative aid benefits to 2-parent families and to increase from \$200 to  
40 \$300 the special housing allowance for families receiving TANF benefits.

