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Date: (Filing No. H-)

VETERANS AND LEGAL AFFAIRS

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**STATE OF MAINE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
127TH LEGISLATURE
FIRST REGULAR SESSION**

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT “ ” to H.P. 497, L.D. 721, “Resolve, To Establish the Commission To Strengthen and Align the Services Provided to Maine's Veterans”

Amend the resolve by striking out all of section 2 and inserting the following:

'Sec. 2. Commission membership. Resolved: That the commission consists of 13 members appointed as follows:

1. Three members of the Senate appointed by the President of the Senate who are either veterans of military service or members of the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs;

2. Four members of the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives who are either veterans of military service or members of the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs;

3. The Commissioner of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management or the commissioner's designee;

4. Three members appointed by the President of the Senate, representing both genders, including a member who is 30 years of age or younger and a member who is 65 years of age or older. Members appointed under this subsection must have experience in:

A. Developing, implementing or advising on veterans' affairs policy;

B. Representing a veterans' service organization; or

C. Providing services to veterans as part of a nonprofit organization; and

5. Two members appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, including a member who is between 30 and 40 years of age and a member who is between 41 and 64 years of age. Members appointed under this subsection must have experience in:

A. Developing, implementing or advising on veterans' affairs policy; or

B. Providing services to veterans as part of a nonprofit organization; and be it further'

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT

1 Amend the resolve by striking out all of section 3.

2 Amend the resolve by striking out all of sections 6 and 7 and inserting the following:

3 **'Sec. 6. Duties. Resolved:** That the commission shall:

4 1. Review the services provided by the State to veterans for the purpose of
5 identifying gaps, duplications and inefficiencies;

6 2. Consider methods and strategies for improving the State's engagement and
7 communication with veterans of the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq;

8 3. Identify gaps and insufficiencies in the provision of health care and mental health
9 care services to veterans through both state and federal programs and consider ways in
10 which the State can improve health care and mental health care services for veterans
11 where insufficiencies or gaps in federal resources or state services exist;

12 4. Study how to better align community, state and federal services and resources for
13 veterans who are facing the problem of homelessness;

14 5. Study how the State can develop and implement a campaign and marketing
15 strategy to better communicate with veterans and military retirees regarding attending
16 colleges in the State and to better attract veterans and military retirees to live and work in
17 the State;

18 6. Study how the State can encourage partnerships with businesses, industry groups
19 and nonprofit organizations to improve veterans' employment, career and volunteer
20 opportunities;

21 7. Make recommendations to the Commissioner of Defense, Veterans and
22 Emergency Management concerning practices or rules regarding services and programs
23 for veterans;

24 8. Work with the Commissioner of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management
25 to develop a multiyear plan that identifies priorities and suggests initiatives to strengthen
26 and align services provided to veterans in the State;

27 9. Make recommendations to the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal
28 Affairs concerning changes to services and programs for veterans; and

29 10. Study other critical veterans' issues that arise as agreed upon by the commission;
30 and be it further

31 **Sec. 7. Staff assistance. Resolved:** That the Office of Policy and Legal Analysis
32 shall provide necessary staffing services to the commission as approved by the
33 Legislative Council; and be it further'

34 Amend the resolve in section 8 in the first line (page 3, line 1 in L.D.) by striking out
35 the following: "December 2, 2015" and inserting the following: 'January 15, 2016'

36 Amend the resolve by relettering or renumbering any nonconsecutive Part letter or
37 section number to read consecutively.

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SUMMARY

This amendment changes the membership of the Commission To Strengthen and Align the Services Provided to Maine's Veterans to better comply with study guidelines and assigns a more specific list of duties for the commission with regard to identifying insufficiency of services required for and provided to Maine veterans. The amendment also extends the commission's reporting date to the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs from December 2, 2015 to January 15, 2016 and states that staffing will be provided to the commission by the Office of Policy and Legal Analysis.

FISCAL NOTE REQUIRED

(See attached)