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**HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

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

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT “ ” to H.P. 1107, L.D. 1631, Bill, “An Act To Reduce the Liability of Maine Taxpayers by Aligning Maine's Welfare Programs with Federal Law”

Amend the bill by striking out the title and substituting the following:

**'Resolve, To Establish the Commission on Child Poverty and Extreme Child Poverty and To Place a Moratorium on Actions To Enter into a Contract for the Administration of the ASPIRE-TANF Program'**

Amend the bill by striking out everything after the title and before the summary and inserting the following:

**'Emergency preamble. Whereas,** acts and resolves of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

**Whereas,** the Commission on Child Poverty and Extreme Child Poverty will examine the scope and magnitude of child poverty and extreme child poverty in this State and the roots of poverty and recommend policy solutions to improve the situation of child poverty and extreme child poverty in this State; and

**Whereas,** the study must be initiated before the 90-day period expires in order that the study may be completed and a report prepared in time for submission to the next legislative session; and

**Whereas,** in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now, therefore, be it

**Sec. 1. Commission established. Resolved:** That the Commission on Child Poverty and Extreme Child Poverty, referred to in this resolve as "the commission," is established; and be it further

**COMMITTEE AMENDMENT**

1           **Sec. 2. Commission membership. Resolved:** That, notwithstanding Joint Rule  
2 353, the commission consists of 13 members appointed as follows:

3           1. Two members of the Senate appointed by the President of the Senate, including  
4 members from each of the 2 parties holding the largest number of seats in the Legislature;

5           2. Two members of the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker of the  
6 House, including members from each of the 2 parties holding the largest number of seats  
7 in the Legislature;

8           3. Nine members who possess expertise in the subject matter of the study as follows:

9           A. A representative of an organization involved in hunger relief appointed by the  
10 President of the Senate;

11           B. A representative of an organization involved in the Head Start program appointed  
12 by the President of the Senate;

13           C. A representative of an organization that offers transitional employment and job  
14 training services to families or individuals in poverty appointed by the President of  
15 the Senate;

16           D. A member of a state or local Chamber of Commerce appointed by the President  
17 of the Senate;

18           E. A representative of an organization that advocates for public policies and  
19 practices that improve the lives of children, youth and families in the State appointed  
20 by the Speaker of the House;

21           F. A representative of an organization that is engaged in solutions to poverty and  
22 improving the lives of low-income people in the State appointed by the Speaker of  
23 the House;

24           G. An individual who is a low-income mother appointed by the Speaker of the  
25 House;

26           H. A representative of an organization that prepares at-risk children for school, with  
27 expertise in adverse childhood events appointed by the Speaker of the House; and

28           I. An individual who conducts academic research in poverty and public assistance  
29 programs appointed by the Speaker of the House; and

30           4. In addition to the 13 members appointed, the director of the office of family  
31 independence within the Department of Health and Human Services or the director's  
32 designee and the Director of the Office of Child and Family Services within the  
33 Department of Health and Human Services or the director's designee must be invited to  
34 participate as ex officio nonvoting members; and be it further

35           **Sec. 3. Chairs. Resolved:** That the first-named Senate member is the Senate  
36 chair and the first-named House of Representatives member is the House chair of the  
37 commission; and be it further

38           **Sec. 4. Appointments; convening of commission. Resolved:** That all  
39 appointments must be made no later than 30 days following the effective date of this  
40 resolve. The appointing authorities shall notify the Executive Director of the Legislative  
41 Council once all appointments have been completed. After appointment of all members,

1 the chairs shall call and convene the first meeting of the commission. If 30 days or more  
2 after the effective date of this resolve a majority of but not all appointments have been  
3 made, the chairs may request authority and the Legislative Council may grant authority  
4 for the commission to meet and conduct its business; and be it further

5 **Sec. 5. Duties. Resolved:** That the commission shall study the scope and  
6 magnitude of child poverty and extreme child poverty in the State, the roots of poverty  
7 and the reasons for any recent increase in child poverty or extreme child poverty and  
8 recommend policy solutions to improve the situation of children in poverty and in  
9 extreme poverty in this State. The commission shall:

10 1. Review statistics and data trends relating to poverty, child poverty and extreme  
11 child poverty in the State;

12 2. Identify critical data points that serve as benchmarks for measuring progress in  
13 mitigating the effect of poverty on children, including food insecurity, obesity and  
14 diabetes rates and educational achievements;

15 3. Determine the efficacy of resources available to low-income families with  
16 children and barriers to participating in public assistance programs;

17 4. Gather information about the systemic causes of child poverty and extreme child  
18 poverty;

19 5. Determine the effect of policy changes on trends in the rate of child poverty and  
20 extreme child poverty in the last decade;

21 6. Investigate the effect of adverse childhood events and parenting skills on poverty  
22 and the ability of parents to obtain and maintain employment;

23 7. Review public assistance programs, utilization data, block grant funding and  
24 general funds allocated to programs and actual spending on programs;

25 8. Review national strategies for improving the lives of children living in poverty;

26 9. Determine how the State's programs align with federal requirements and law  
27 without reducing current resources allocated to children living in households on public  
28 assistance programs; and

29 10. Determine effective methods of administering the ASPIRE-TANF program to  
30 achieve the goal of promoting sustainable employment and reducing child poverty,  
31 including the effectiveness of administering the program through the Department of  
32 Health and Human Services directly or through a contracted request for proposals  
33 process; and be it further

34 **Sec. 6. Staff assistance. Resolved:** That the Legislative Council shall provide  
35 necessary staffing services to the commission; and be it further

36 **Sec. 7. Report. Resolved:** That, no later than November 2, 2016, the  
37 commission shall submit a report that includes its findings and recommendations,  
38 including suggested legislation, to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having  
39 jurisdiction over health and human services matters. The committee may report out  
40 legislation on the subject matter of the report to the First Regular Session of the 128th  
41 Legislature; and be it further

