

131st MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST SPECIAL SESSION-2023

Legislative Document

No. 1702

H.P. 1091

House of Representatives, April 18, 2023

Resolve, to Establish the Commission to Improve the Educational Experience of People Who Are Resettling in Maine

Reference to the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs suggested and ordered printed.

ROBERT B. HUNT

R(+ B. Hunt

Clerk

Presented by Speaker TALBOT ROSS of Portland.
Cosponsored by Senator BENNETT of Oxford and
Representatives: ABDI of Lewiston, BRENNAN of Portland, CLOUTIER of Lewiston,
DHALAC of South Portland, RANA of Bangor, Senators: RAFFERTY of York, ROTUNDO of Androscoggin.

Sec. 1. Commission established. Resolved: That the Commission to Improve the Educational Experience of People Who Are Resettling in Maine, referred to in this resolve as "the commission," is established.

- **Sec. 2. Commission membership. Resolved:** That, notwithstanding Joint Rule 353, the commission consists of 16 members as follows:
- 1. 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;
- 2. 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;
 - 3. Four members appointed by the President of the Senate as follows:
 - A. One member who is a teacher in a public school with a population of people who have resettled in the State, such as asylum seekers, refugees and immigrants who has direct experience providing services for those populations, selected from a list of nominees provided by a statewide labor organization representing teachers in the State;
 - B. One member who serves as a liaison under the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act in a public school with a population of people who have resettled in the State, such as asylum seekers, refugees and immigrants, selected from a list of nominees provided by a statewide organization familiar with immigrant rights in the State;
 - C. One member who serves as a social worker in a public school with a population of people who have resettled in the State, such as asylum seekers, refugees and immigrants who has direct experience providing services for those populations, selected from a list of nominees provided by a statewide labor organization representing teachers in the State; and
 - D. One member who is a student who has attended a public school in the State, selected from a list of nominees provided by a community-based resettlement organization;
- 4. Four members appointed by the Speaker of the House as follows:
 - A. One member who is familiar with general assistance programs under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 22, chapter 1161, selected from a list of nominees provided by a statewide organization representing cities and towns in the State;
- B. One member who has provided legal services in the State concerning immigration laws;
 - C. One member with direct experience in housing services for new arrivals to the State, selected from a list of nominees provided by a statewide organization familiar with immigrant rights in the State; and
 - D. One member who is a parent of a student who attended a public school in the State, selected from a list of nominees provided by a community-based resettlement organization;
 - 5. Three members appointed by the Governor as follows:

- 1 A. One member with expertise in issues affecting maternity and postpartum care for asylum seekers, refugees and immigrants;
 - B. One member familiar with the provision of community-based health care services, especially the accessibility of MaineCare services to people who have resettled in the State, such as asylum seekers, refugees and immigrants; and
 - C. One member with expertise in public health and the provision of health care services to people who have resettled in the State, such as asylum seekers, refugees and immigrants; and
 - 6. The Commissioner of Education or the commissioner's designee.

- **Sec. 3. Chairs. Resolved:** That the first-named Senate member is the Senate chair and the first-named House of Representatives member is the House chair of the commission.
- **Sec. 4. Appointments; convening of commission. Resolved:** That all appointments must be made no later than 30 days following the effective date of this resolve. The appointing authorities shall notify the Executive Director of the Legislative Council once all appointments have been completed. After appointment of all members, the chairs shall call and convene the first meeting of the commission. If 30 days or more after the effective date of this resolve a majority of but not all appointments have been made, the chairs may request authority and the Legislative Council may grant authority for the commission to meet and conduct its business.
- **Sec. 5. Duties. Resolved:** That the commission shall review the current barriers for people who have resettled in this State, such as asylum seekers, refugees and immigrants to access and successfully participate in public education programs and develop recommendations to improve the experience of people who have resettled in this State, such as asylum seekers, refugees and immigrants in public schools. In undertaking its review, the commission shall provide the opportunity for input from affected communities, including, but not limited to, students who are asylum seekers, refugees or immigrants, their families and public school teachers and administrators.
- **Sec. 6. Staff assistance. Resolved:** That the Legislative Council shall provide necessary staffing services to the commission, except that Legislative Council staff support is not authorized when the Legislature is in regular or special session.
- **Sec. 7. Report. Resolved:** That, no later than December 6, 2023, the commission shall submit a report that includes its findings and recommendations, including suggested legislation, to the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs and the joint standing committee may report out legislation related to the report to the Second Regular Session of the 131st Legislature.

37 SUMMARY

This resolve establishes the Commission to Improve the Educational Experience of People Who Are Resettling in Maine to review the current barriers for people who have resettled in the State, such as asylum seekers, refugees and immigrants to access and successfully participate in public education programs. By December 6, 2023, the commission must submit a report that includes its findings and recommendations, including

- suggested legislation, to the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs and the joint standing committee may report out legislation related to the report to the Second Regular Session of the 131st Legislature. 1
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