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Resolve, To Provide Adequate Funding for Emergency Homeless Shelters

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

Whereas, this resolve creates the Commission To Study the Funding Issues Regarding Emergency Homeless Shelters; and

Whereas, the study must be initiated before the 90-day period expires in order that the study may be completed and a report submitted in time for consideration during 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 To Study the Funding Issues Regarding Emergency Homeless Shelters, referred to in this resolve as "the commission," is established; and be it further

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;
2. One member who represents the Governor's office, appointed by the President of the Senate;
3. One member from the Department of Health and Human Services, appointed by the President of the Senate;
4. One member from the Maine State Housing Authority, appointed by the President of the Senate;
5. Four members of the House of Representatives, appointed by the Speaker of the House; and
6. Three members from the Statewide Homeless Council, one from each of 3 regional homeless councils, appointed by the Speaker of the House; and be it further

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

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. Within 15 days after appointment of all members, the chairs shall call and convene the first meeting of the commission; and be it further

Sec. 5 Duties. Resolved: That the commission shall examine the following issues concerning homeless shelters:

1. Affordable housing for the homeless;
2. Causes of homelessness;
3. How the money designated for homeless shelters is used and whether the formula for distributing funds to homeless shelters should be amended; and
4. Solutions to homelessness; and be it further

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

Sec. 7 Compensation. Resolved: That the legislative members of the commission are entitled to receive the legislative per diem, as defined in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 3, section 2, and reimbursement for travel and other necessary expenses related to their attendance at authorized meetings of the commission. Public members not otherwise compensated by their employers or other entities that they represent are entitled to receive reimbursement of necessary expenses and, upon a demonstration of financial hardship, a per diem equal to the legislative per diem for their attendance at authorized meetings of the commission; and be it further

Sec. 8 Report. Resolved: That no later than December 1, 2007 the commission shall submit a report that includes its findings and recommendations, including suggested legislation, for presentation to the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services and the Legislative Council. The commission is not authorized to introduce legislation. Following receipt and review of the report, the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services may submit a bill to the Second Regular Session of the 123rd Legislature; and be it further

Sec. 9 Extension. Resolved: That, if the commission requires a limited extension of time to complete its study and make its report, it may apply to the Legislative Council, which may grant an extension; and be it further

Sec. 10 Commission budget. Resolved: That the chairs of the commission, with assistance from the commission staff, shall administer the commission's budget. Within 10 days after its first meeting, the commission shall present a work plan and proposed budget to the Legislative Council for its approval. The commission may not incur expenses that would result in the commission's exceeding its approved budget. Upon request from the commission, the Executive Director of the Legislative Council shall promptly provide the commission chairs and staff with a status report on the commission budget, expenditures incurred and paid and available funds; and be it further

Sec. 11 Appropriations and allocations. Resolved: That the following appropriations and allocations are made.

MAINE STATE HOUSING AUTHORITY

Shelter Operating Subsidy

Initiative: Provides one-time funding for emergency homeless shelters.

GENERAL FUND	2007-08	2008-09
All Other	\$1,000,000	\$0
GENERAL FUND TOTAL	<hr/> \$1,000,000	\$0

Emergency clause. In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this legislation takes effect when approved.

SUMMARY

This resolve provides funding for emergency homeless shelters. The resolve establishes the Commission To Study the Funding Issues Regarding Emergency Homeless Shelters. The commission shall submit a report to the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services and to the Legislative Council by December 1, 2007. The commission shall examine the issues concerning affordable housing for the homeless, the causes of and solutions for homelessness, how the money designated for homeless shelters is used and whether the funding formula for distributing funds to the homeless shelters should be amended.