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Legislative Document

No. 1497

H.P. 1107

House of Representatives, April 14, 2021

An Act To Establish the Maine Youth Impact Commission

Received by the Clerk of the House on April 12, 2021. Referred to the Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Business pursuant to Joint Rule 308.2 and ordered printed pursuant to Joint Rule 401.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert B. Hunt".

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative WARREN of Hallowell.
Cosponsored by Senator DAUGHTRY of Cumberland and
Representatives: Speaker FECTEAU of Biddeford, HASENFUS of Readfield, RIELLY of
Westbrook, Senator: MAXMIN of Lincoln.

1 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

2 **Sec. 1. 5 MRSA §3109** is enacted to read:

3 **§3109. Maine Youth Impact Commission**

4 **1. Commission established.** The Maine Youth Impact Commission, as established in
5 section 12004-J, subsection 19 and referred to in this section as "the commission," is made
6 up entirely by young people to provide the representation of youth voices in all aspects of
7 state policy making to ensure that young people throughout the State have a prosperous,
8 sustainable and secure future in the State. The commission shall promote, coordinate and
9 implement programs designed to improve opportunities for young people in the State. The
10 mission of the commission is to make sure that critical data is collected and used to directly
11 inform policy makers about the issues affecting young people in the State and to ensure
12 that youth advocates and organizations have a direct and coordinated access point to policy
13 makers and government. For purposes of this section, "young people" means persons 15
14 years of age or older and under 31 years of age.

15 **2. Membership.** The commission consists of 15 members appointed as follows:

16 A. One member of the Senate, appointed by the President of the Senate;

17 B. One member of the House of Representatives, appointed by the Speaker of the
18 House of Representatives;

19 C. Five members of the public, appointed by the Governor;

20 D. Four members of the public, appointed by the President of the Senate; and

21 E. Four members of the public, appointed by the Speaker of the House of
22 Representatives.

23 Members of the commission must be residents of the State and members of the public must
24 be young people chosen to be geographically, politically, racially and economically
25 diverse. Preference must be given to members of the public who have knowledge of
26 problems facing young people of various racial and ethnic backgrounds in the State and
27 who have experience in advocacy relating to the issues experienced by young people in the
28 State. All members of the commission may provide policy suggestions, guidance and
29 supervision for issues and programs that improve opportunities for young people.

30 **3. Terms; quorum; meetings; termination.** Members serve for a term of 2 years.
31 The members shall select a chair from among the members of the commission. At the end
32 of a term an outgoing member serves until a successor has been appointed. A member may
33 serve multiple terms. The commission shall convene for the first time within 30 days from
34 the appointment of the last member and meet at least 8 times per year at the call of the chair
35 to conduct business. A quorum consists of at least 8 members. The affirmative vote of a
36 majority of the members present is necessary to decide any business brought before the
37 commission. A member's membership is terminated if the member is absent from 3
38 consecutive meetings without communicating good cause to the chair. An appointing
39 authority may terminate the membership of a member appointed by the authority for good
40 cause, the reason for which must be communicated to the member whose membership was
41 terminated. A member appointed to fill a vacancy occurring prior to the expiration of the
42 term for which the member's predecessor was appointed serves for the remainder of that

1 term and must be appointed by the same appointing authority. Any vacancy on the
2 commission does not affect the commission's powers.

3 **4. Staff support.** The commission is staffed by an executive director, a research
4 program specialist and an administrative assistant to the executive director, who are housed
5 in the Office of Policy Innovation and the Future.

6 **5. Powers and duties of commission.** The powers and duties of the commission
7 include:

8 A. Consulting with the Governor and the Legislature about and assisting them with
9 improving opportunities for young people in the State;

10 B. Developing policy proposals to diversify job opportunities for young people;

11 C. Implementing professional development programs and career incentives that center
12 around the needs of young people;

13 D. Creating statewide digital campaigns to address current policy issues being
14 discussed within government, formatted in a way that is clear and accessible to young
15 people of various backgrounds;

16 E. Collecting data on the perspectives, concerns and ideas of young people that
17 consider current policy issues being discussed within government and issues that have
18 not been brought to the attention of policy makers;

19 F. Providing a space to centralize information from various government departments
20 that young people are involved in to make information sharing between branches of
21 government efficient;

22 G. Providing assistance and empowering young people throughout the State to engage
23 in policy making;

24 H. Creating relationships with local schools statewide to bridge the gap between
25 education and government;

26 I. Hiring staff under subsection 4 and overseeing the staff's activities in carrying out
27 the duties of the commission;

28 J. Creating partnerships with organizations that address youth issues in the State;

29 K. Organizing and promoting conferences, occupational trainings and networking
30 opportunities for young people to exchange ideas, develop policies and draft legislation
31 that benefit young people in the State;

32 L. Collecting, synthesizing and analyzing data and information for use in commission
33 activities and to inform the public on issues regarding young people in the State;

34 M. Advocating for young people by making recommendations on proposed budgetary,
35 legislative and policy actions to the Governor, Legislature and other officials of the
36 State Government and Federal Government regarding state and federal policies,
37 programs and other activities affecting or relating to young people in the State;

38 N. Conducting public hearings, conferences, workshops and other meetings to obtain
39 information about and discuss and publicize the needs of and solutions to the problems
40 of young people;

1 O. Ensuring that young people from diverse backgrounds and identities in the State
2 are provided with equal opportunities throughout the State; and

3 P. Administering and expending funds from the fund to carry out the purposes of this
4 section.

5 In carrying out the powers and duties under this subsection, the commission shall support
6 marginalized young people who are working to create meaningful change in the State and
7 State Government and consider the social, political and economic status of young people
8 to create improvement in all areas of their life experience in the State.

9 **6. Report.** Beginning March 1, 2022, and biennially thereafter, the commission shall
10 submit a report to the Governor and the Legislature concerning the work, activities, status
11 of projects and programs, issues and policy recommendations of the commission, including
12 the findings of and recommendations on the commission's research, and may include
13 suggested legislation.

14 **7. Maine Youth Impact Fund.** The Maine Youth Impact Fund, referred to in this
15 section as "the fund," is established as an interest-bearing account within the office and
16 administered by the commission with oversight by the office. Any private or public funds
17 appropriated, allocated or dedicated to the fund must be deposited into the fund as well as
18 income from any other source directed to the fund. All interest earned by the fund becomes
19 part of the fund. Any balance remaining in the fund at the end of the fiscal year does not
20 lapse but is carried forward into subsequent fiscal years. Balances in the fund may be used
21 for the necessary expenses of the commission and the office in the administration of the
22 fund. The commission may use the fund to carry out the purposes of this section.

23 **Sec. 2. 5 MRSA §12004-J, sub-§19** is enacted to read:

24 **19.**

25 <u>Children</u>	<u>Maine Youth Impact Commission</u>	<u>Per Diem and</u>	<u>5 MRSA</u>
26		<u>Expenses</u>	<u>§3109</u>

27 **Sec. 3. Initial members.** Notwithstanding the provisions of the Maine Revised
28 Statutes, Title 5, section 3109, subsection 3, of those public members initially appointed to
29 the Maine Youth Impact Commission, one appointed by the Governor, one appointed by
30 the President of the Senate and one appointed by the Speaker of the House of
31 Representatives must be appointed for one-year terms. The term of office of each member
32 must be designated at the time of appointment.

33 **Sec. 4. Report.** The initial report of the Maine Youth Impact Commission submitted
34 pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 5, section 3109, subsection 6, must include
35 suggested legislation and be submitted to the Joint Standing Committee on Innovation,
36 Development, Economic Advancement and Business. The Joint Standing Committee on
37 Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Business may report out a bill
38 based on the report to the Second Regular Session of the 130th Legislature.

39 **SUMMARY**

40 This bill creates the Maine Youth Impact Commission, an independent commission
41 housed within the Office of Policy Innovation and the Future. The commission, consisting
42 of 15 members, including 2 Legislators, is made up entirely of young people 15 years of

1 age or older and under 31 years of age to provide the representation of youth voices in all
2 aspects of state policy making. The commission is charged with promoting, coordinating
3 and implementing programs designed to improve opportunities for young people in the
4 State. The mission of the commission is to make sure that critical data is collected and
5 used to directly inform policy makers about the issues affecting young people in the State
6 and to ensure that youth advocates and organizations have a direct and coordinated access
7 point to policy makers and government.