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Date: (Filing No. H-)

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

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**STATE OF MAINE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
128TH LEGISLATURE
SECOND REGULAR SESSION**

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT “ ” to H.P. 203, L.D. 270, Bill, “An Act To Consolidate Administration of Kinship Care and Relative Placement Issues within the Department of Health and Human Services”

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

'An Act To Support Kinship Families by Creating a Kinship Care Navigator Program'

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

'Sec. 1. 22 MRSA c. 1065 is enacted to read:

CHAPTER 1065

KINSHIP CARE NAVIGATOR PROGRAM

§3921. Kinship care navigator program

1. Program established. The kinship care navigator program, referred to in this chapter as "the program," is established as an independent program within the department to provide resources and support to persons providing kinship care to children in the State. The department shall contract with a nonprofit organization to operate the program. The nonprofit organization must have an understanding of child development issues and must have experience in the support of persons providing kinship care to children, with the child welfare system and with District Court and Probate Court proceedings. The department shall choose a nonprofit organization that the department determines to be best able to provide resources and support on a statewide basis.

2. Services. The program, in consultation with appropriate interested parties, as determined by the department, may:

A. Identify and coordinate existing resources available to persons providing kinship care to children;

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT

1 B. Develop collaborative working relationships with state agencies, social services
2 agencies and other organizations serving persons providing kinship care to children;

3 C. Develop publicly accessible educational materials about the program and
4 resources available to persons providing kinship care to children and present that
5 information to the public, state agencies, social services organizations and other
6 stakeholders;

7 D. Provide to persons providing kinship care to children referrals to available
8 resources and information about the means of obtaining services from the
9 department;

10 E. Analyze and provide recommendations to agencies, the Governor and the
11 Legislature on state programs, rules, policies and laws relating to kinship care to
12 children; and

13 F. Collect and analyze records and data relevant to the duties and activities of the
14 program and make reports as required by law or determined to be appropriate.

15 **3. Report.** The department shall require the entity contracted under subsection 1 to
16 operate the program to provide annually by January 1st a report to the joint standing
17 committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over health and human services matters
18 and the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over judiciary
19 matters on the activities of and services provided by the program. A legislative
20 committee that receives a report under this subsection may report out legislation to the
21 Legislature.

22 **4. Funding.** The department shall seek and apply for available federal funds to pay
23 the costs of the program.

24 **Sec. 2. Appropriations and allocations.** The following appropriations and
25 allocations are made.

26 **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, DEPARTMENT OF**
27 **Office of Child and Family Services - Central 0307**

28 Initiative: Provides funding to contract with a nonprofit organization to provide statewide
29 support to persons who are providing kinship care to children.

| | | | |
|----|---------------------|----------------|----------------|
| 30 | GENERAL FUND | 2017-18 | 2018-19 |
| 31 | All Other | \$0 | \$80,000 |
| 32 | | | |
| 33 | GENERAL FUND TOTAL | \$0 | \$80,000 |
| 34 | | | |

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SUMMARY

This amendment establishes a kinship care navigator program to be contracted by the Department of Health and Human Services to provide educational information, referrals and support to persons providing kinship care to children. It provides that funding will be drawn from federal funds, if available, and through the General Fund.

FISCAL NOTE REQUIRED

(See attached)