

Maine Counseling Association – Public Policy Update
128th Legislature January, 2017
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The 128th Legislature is just getting started, and the Legislative requests are being documents and added to the growing list of bills (Legislative Documents) to be considered for approval.

One LR (#1756), An Act to Enhance Workforce Development for Behavioral Health and Substance Abuse Workers, may be of significant interest to us as the session develops.

Other bill of interest so far:

LD 43 - Resolve, To Establish the Task Force To Study Higher Education Attainment and Completion Goals.

SUMMARY

This resolve establishes the Task Force To Study Higher Education Attainment and Completion Goals. The task force membership consists of Legislators, representatives of quasi-governmental and business entities, state agency commissioners and one member of the public. The task force's duties include examination and review in the areas of college completion, statewide postsecondary education attainment goals and metrics, college affordability and completion initiatives and college and university support of state policies and strategies to enable college completion and support workforce development. The task force is required to submit a report containing its findings and recommendations, including any necessary implementing legislation, to the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs by December 15, 2017.

LD 94 - An Act To Provide a Source of Funding for Drug Abuse Resistance Education

SUMMARY

This bill requires that the funds generated by forfeited firearms that are auctioned to federally licensed firearms dealers or the public be used to fund educational programs taught by law enforcement officers that target prevention of substance abuse, violence or high-risk behavior and teach students good decision-making skills to help them lead safe and healthy lives. These educational programs are known as the Drug Abuse Resistance Education program.

LD 95 - An Act To Provide a Method for a Student To Be Excused from Standardized Testing

SUMMARY

This bill requires a school administrative unit to excuse a student from a standardized assessment at the written request of the student's parent or guardian and establishes requirements for school administrative units and the Department of Education related to excusing a student.

LD 105 - An Act To Create a Centralized Authority To Combat Opiate Addiction in Maine
SUMMARY

This bill establishes an office within the Department of Health and Human Services to coordinate efforts in the State to combat addiction to opiates.

LD 107 - An Act To Increase the Effectiveness of Opioid Addiction Therapy
SUMMARY

This bill repeals the 24-month limit on MaineCare coverage or reimbursement for buprenorphine and naloxone combination drugs, also known as Suboxone, for the treatment of addiction to opioids.

LD 169 - An Act To Support Sexual Assault Survivors
SUMMARY

This bill enacts protections for alleged victims of gross sexual assault that mirror protections provided in federal law. The bill contains the following provisions. 1. The bill requires a prosecutor or law enforcement agency to provide written information to an alleged victim concerning the right to undergo a forensic examination and the right to receive the results and any report resulting from a forensic examination unless disclosure to the alleged victim could impede or compromise an ongoing investigation or an ongoing prosecution. 2. The bill requires the prosecutor or law enforcement agency that has custody of the results and any report to retain the results and any report without charge until the expiration of the period of the statute of limitations. The bill requires the prosecutor or law enforcement agency, at least 60 days prior to destroying or disposing of the results and report, to provide notice of the intended destruction or disposal to the victim and allows for further retention upon the objection of the victim. The bill provides for routine technical rulemaking by the Chief of the State Police regarding retention and destruction or disposal of the results and any report.