

MEMORANDUM

To: Advisory Panel To Better Understand and Make Recommendations Regarding the Implications of Genome-editing Technology for the Citizens of the State

From: Office of Policy and Legal Analysis Staff

Date: October 19, 2022

Re: **Malaga Island Legislative Apology and Scholarship Fund Information**

At the third Advisory Panel meeting on September 21, 2022 members inquired whether the State of Maine had issued an apology for the actions surrounding the expulsion of the residents of Malaga Island, Maine. Additionally, members expressed an interest in learning more about the scholarship fund for descendants of Malaga Island residents that was mentioned during the presentation by Kate McBrien.

Governor John Baldacci offered an apology to the descendants of Malaga on September 12, 2010. In 2017 Governor Paul LePage joined others in dedicating a memorial in honor of the community of Malaga Island.

The 124th Maine Legislature adopted [H.P. 1327, Joint Resolution Recognizing the Tragic Expulsion of the Residents of Malaga Island, Maine in 1912 and Rededicating Ourselves to the Maine Ideals of Tolerance, Independence and Equality for All Peoples](#) on April 7, 2010, setting forth legislative findings related to the history of Malaga Island including the forced eviction of all Malaga Island residents by the State of Maine in 1912 and forcible relocation of many islanders to the Maine School for the Feeble Minded as well as the forced sterilization under state law of many residents of the Maine School for the Feeble Minded in 1925, and resolving:

That We, the Members of the One Hundred and Twenty-fourth Legislature now assembled in the Second Regular Session, on behalf of the people we represent, do recognize with profound regret the tragic displacement of the Malaga islanders in 1912, in the name of the disgraced Eugenics Movement, with its overtones of prejudice against poverty, racism and stereotyping; and, while rebuking this past, rededicate the future to the ideals of tolerance, independence and equality of all peoples in our ever-changing world, which are the birthright and heritage of all proud Mainers; and rededicate ourselves as lawmakers to the social and economic justice that is the right of all peoples[.]¹

The Malaga 1912 Scholarship Fund was established in [Public Law 2013, chapter 368, An Act Making Unified Appropriations and Allocation for the Expenditures of State Government, General Fund and Other Funds and Changing Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2014 and June 30, 2015](#). (See page 204 of the PDF version of the enacted law). The initial proposal, as submitted by Governor LePage, was for “one-time funding” of \$500,000 “for scholarships for descendants of former residents of Malaga Island,” with the Commissioner of Education directed to award the funds to a nonprofit entity to administer the scholarship program. Prior to enactment of the budget bill, the total funding was reduced to \$300,000 by the Legislature. After enactment, the Commissioner of Education selected the Maine Community Foundation to manage the scholarship program.

¹ An official copy of the text of this Joint Resolution can be found on pages S-1819 to S-1820 of the Senate Legislative Record for the Second Regular Session of the 124th Legislature, which is available at http://lldc.mainelegislature.org/Open/LegRec/124/Senate/LegRec_2010-04-07_SD_pS1785-1830.pdf.