



# 131st MAINE LEGISLATURE

## FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2023

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Legislative Document

No. 993

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H.P. 628

House of Representatives, March 7, 2023

### **An Act to Facilitate Stakeholder Input Regarding Forest Policy in Maine**

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Reference to the Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry suggested and ordered printed.

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

ROBERT B. HUNT  
Clerk

Presented by Representative O'NEIL of Saco.  
Cosponsored by President JACKSON of Aroostook and  
Representatives: CARLOW of Buxton, CRAFTS of Newcastle, OSHER of Orono, Senators:  
BENNETT of Oxford, HICKMAN of Kennebec.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 5 MRSA §12004-I, sub-§24-H** is enacted to read:

3 **24-H.**

4 Environment: Maine Forest Advisory Board Not Authorized 12 MRSA  
5 Natural Resources §8007  
6

7 **Sec. 2. 12 MRSA §8007** is enacted to read:

8 **§8007. Maine Forest Advisory Board established**

9 The Maine Forest Advisory Board, as established in Title 5, section 12004-I,  
10 subsection 24-H and referred to in this section as "the board," advises the bureau and  
11 provides input in the development, updating and implementation of the state forest action  
12 plan required under the federal Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008, Public Law  
13 110-234 and Public Law 110-246.

14 **1. Membership.** The board consists of 21 members appointed as follows:

15 A. Four members who serve in an advisory, nonvoting capacity, appointed by the  
16 Governor as follows:

17 (1) A representative of the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife;

18 (2) A representative of the Department of Marine Resources;

19 (3) A representative of the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry,  
20 Bureau of Parks and Lands; and

21 (4) A representative of the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry,  
22 Natural Areas Program;

23 B. Nine members appointed by the President of the Senate as follows:

24 (1) A representative of the University of Maine Cooperative Extension;

25 (2) A representative of a statewide organization representing the forest products  
26 industry;

27 (3) A representative of an organization of professional logging contractors;

28 (4) A representative of a commercial landowner that owns a large amount of  
29 forested land in the State;

30 (5) A representative of a nonprofit corporation that owns a large amount of  
31 forested land in the State;

32 (6) A representative of a cooperative representing loggers in the State;

33 (7) A representative of a fisheries conservation organization with a statewide  
34 presence;

35 (8) A representative of a statewide organization representing small woodland  
36 owners in the State; and

1                   (9) A representative of a statewide organization representing outdoor  
2                   recreationists, including, without limitation, hunters and fishing enthusiasts, in the  
3                   State; and

4                   C. Eight members appointed by the Speaker of the House as follows:

5                   (1) A representative who is a member of the joint standing committee of the  
6                   Legislature having jurisdiction over agriculture, conservation and forestry matters,  
7                   who serves in an advisory, nonvoting capacity;

8                   (2) A representative of a land trust with a statewide presence;

9                   (3) A representative of a statewide organization dedicated to wildlife issues;

10                  (4) A wildlife biologist with expertise in forest habitat;

11                  (5) An academic with expertise in forest ecology;

12                  (6) A representative of a soil and water conservation district;

13                  (7) A representative of a statewide labor organization; and

14                  (8) A representative who is a member of a federally recognized Indian nation, tribe  
15                  or band in this State. The appointment of the member of a federally recognized  
16                  Indian nation, tribe or band in this State must be based on the joint recommendation  
17                  of the tribal governments of the Mi'kmaq Nation, the Houlton Band of Maliseet  
18                  Indians, the Passamaquoddy Tribe at Motahkomikuk, the Passamaquoddy Tribe at  
19                  Sipayik and the Penobscot Nation. If the tribal governments do not make a  
20                  recommendation or a unanimous joint recommendation, the Speaker of the House  
21                  shall appoint a member of a federally recognized Indian nation, tribe or band in  
22                  this State and rotate the appointment among members of each federally recognized  
23                  Indian nation, tribe or band in this State.

24                  **2. Terms; quorum; meetings.** Except for the member appointed under subsection 1,  
25                  paragraph C, subparagraph (1), members serve for a term of 3 years. At the end of a term  
26                  an outgoing member serves until a successor has been appointed. A member may serve  
27                  multiple terms. The board shall meet at least 4 times a year to conduct business and to elect  
28                  officers. A quorum consists of at least 11 members. The affirmative vote of a majority of  
29                  the members present is necessary to decide any business brought before the board.

30                  **3. Duties of board.** The board shall:

31                  A. Advise the bureau on conditions and trends in the forests of the State;

32                  B. Facilitate dialogue among diverse interests involving forestry matters;

33                  C. Promote cooperation among state agencies involving forestry matters;

34                  D. Advise the bureau on forestry policy development and implementation;

35                  E. Ensure public participation in the development of forestry policy;

36                  F. Provide input in the development, updating and implementation of the state forest  
37                  action plan required under the federal Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008,  
38                  Public Law 110-234 and Public Law 110-246; and

39                  G. Submit annual reports to the Legislature on its work under this section.

1           **Sec. 3. Maine Forest Advisory Board report.** No later than December 6, 2023,  
2 the Maine Forest Advisory Board, as established in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 5,  
3 section 12004-I, subsection 24-H, shall submit a report outlining conditions and trends in  
4 the State's forests to the Second Regular Session of the 131st Legislature.

#### 5   **SUMMARY**

6           This bill creates the Maine Forest Advisory Board to advise the Department of  
7 Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Bureau of Forestry on a variety of forestry issues  
8 and to provide input on the state forest action plan required under the federal Food,  
9 Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008. The board is directed to submit annual reports to  
10 the Legislature, including a report outlining conditions and trends in the State's forests to  
11 be submitted by December 6, 2023 to the Second Regular Session of the 131st Legislature.