



132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST SPECIAL SESSION-2025

Legislative Document

No. 1252

H.P. 827

House of Representatives, March 25, 2025

**An Act to Amend the Laws Governing the Maine Agriculture, Food
System and Forest Products Infrastructure Investment Advisory
Board**

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 HEPLER of Woolwich.
Cosponsored by Senator BRENNER of Cumberland and
Representatives: BUNKER of Farmington, COOPER of Windham, CRAY of Palmyra, DILL
of Old Town, FROST of Belgrade, GUERRETTE of Caribou, JACKSON of Oxford,
PLUECKER of Warren.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 7 MRSA §320-C, sub-§7** is enacted to read:

3 7. Uses of disbursements limited. Disbursements from the funds are limited to
4 producers that have a processing or manufacturing facility that is located in the State or
5 producers that are seeking to establish a new processing or manufacturing facility in the
6 State. A producer receiving a disbursement pursuant to this section shall use the
7 disbursement to support the operations of a processing or manufacturing facility located in
8 this State for the purposes described in this subsection, including but not limited to
9 obtaining equipment and investing in supply chain infrastructure to grow, harvest, process
10 or manufacture agricultural, food or forest products used in commercial products. In
11 carrying out these purposes, the producer shall obtain, to the extent practicable,
12 agricultural, food or forest products from a farm or a forest or waters in the State or from
13 offshore waters to be collected in the State.

14 **Sec. 2. 7 MRSA §320-C, sub-§8** is enacted to read:

15 8. Board member conflicts of interest. If a member of the board has a conflict of
16 interest with regard to a vote the board is holding, the member may not participate in that
17 vote. For the purposes of this subsection, "conflict of interest" means that the member of
18 the board or the member's immediate family member has or would acquire a direct and
19 substantial personal financial interest, distinct from that of the general public, in an
20 enterprise that would be financially benefited by a proposed fund allocation. For the
21 purposes of this subsection, "immediate family member" means an individual's spouse,
22 domestic partner or child.

23 **SUMMARY**

24 This bill modifies provisions of the law governing the Maine Agriculture, Food System
25 and Forest Products Infrastructure Investment Advisory Board and disbursements from the
26 Maine Agriculture, Food and Forest Products Investment Fund, which the advisory board
27 oversees.

28 The bill requires that disbursements may be made only to a producer of agricultural,
29 food or forest products that has or is seeking to establish a processing or manufacturing
30 facility located in the State. A producer receiving a disbursement must use the disbursement
31 to support the operations of a processing or manufacturing facility located in this State for
32 the following purposes, including, but not limited to, obtaining equipment and investing in
33 supply chain infrastructure to grow, harvest, process or manufacture agricultural, food or
34 forest products used in commercial products. In carrying out these purposes, the producer
35 must obtain, to the extent practicable, agricultural, food or forest products from a farm or
36 a forest or waters in the State or from offshore waters to be collected in the State.

37 The bill also prohibits a member of the advisory board from participating in any vote
38 when that member has a conflict of interest. A conflict of interest exists when the board
39 member or a member of the board member's immediate family has or would acquire a direct
40 and substantial personal financial interest, distinct from that of the general public, in an
41 enterprise that would be financially benefited by a proposed fund allocation.