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Date: (Filing No. H-)

AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY

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**STATE OF MAINE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
132ND LEGISLATURE
SECOND REGULAR SESSION**

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT “ ” to H.P. 199, L.D. 299, “An Act to Support Investment in Agriculture”

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

'An Act to Build a Viable Future for Maine Agriculture by Transferring a Portion of Real Estate Transfer Tax Revenue to the Maine Agriculture, Food and Forest Products Investment Fund'

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

'Sec. 1. 7 MRSA §320-A, sub-§1, ¶A-1 is enacted to read:

A-1. "Aquacultural" means the practices, techniques or products associated with aquaculture as defined in Title 12, section 6001, subsection 1.

Sec. 2. 7 MRSA §320-A, sub-§1, ¶C, as enacted by PL 2021, c. 483, Pt. KK, §2, is amended to read:

C. "Producer" means a person in the State that grows, manufactures, harvests or otherwise creates agricultural, aquacultural, food or forest products and value-added products, including a person engaged in farming, sea farming, harvesting or other agricultural, aquacultural and forestry manufacturing activities.

Sec. 3. 7 MRSA §320-A, sub-§1, ¶C-1 is enacted to read:

C-1. "Sea farming" means the breeding, rearing and harvesting of aquatic plants and animals in aquatic environments.

Sec. 4. 36 MRSA §4641-B, sub-§4-B, ¶E-2, as enacted by PL 2025, c. 388, Pt. V, §6 and affected by §10, is amended by amending subparagraph (2), division (d) to read:

(d) Deposit 20% in the General Fund, except that 50% of the amount deposited must be transferred to the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, which shall deposit the funds in the Maine Agriculture, Food and Forest Products Investment Fund established in Title 7, section 320-B until the

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT

1 total amount paid for the fiscal year equals \$5,000,000. The Maine
2 Agriculture, Food System and Forest Products Infrastructure Investment
3 Advisory Board established in Title 7, section 320-C shall use the funds
4 deposited into the Maine Agriculture, Food and Forest Products Investment
5 Fund pursuant to this division to provide grants and low-interest revolving
6 loans to a producer as defined in Title 7, section 320-A, subsection 1,
7 paragraph C who has demonstrated gross business income of at least \$10,000,
8 as evidenced by state or federal tax filings or other documentation acceptable
9 to the board, in any one of the 4 taxable years immediately preceding the date
10 of the application for a grant or loan.

11 **Sec. 5. Appropriations and allocations.** The following appropriations and
12 allocations are made.

13 **AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY, DEPARTMENT OF**
14 **Maine Agriculture, Food and Forest Products Investment Fund Z384**

15 Initiative: Provides allocations to allow for the disbursement of loans to applicants who
16 meet qualification criteria.

17 OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS	2025-26	2026-27
18 All Other	\$0	\$5,000,000
19		
20 OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS TOTAL	\$0	\$5,000,000

21 '
22 Amend the bill by relettering or renumbering any nonconsecutive Part letter or section
23 number to read consecutively.

24 **SUMMARY**

25 This amendment replaces the bill, which is a concept draft, and changes the title. The
26 amendment amends the definition of "producer" in the provisions of law relating to the
27 Maine Agriculture, Food and Forest Products Investment Fund to include a person who
28 grows, manufactures, harvests or otherwise creates aquacultural products, including a
29 person who is engaged in sea farming.

30 The amendment requires the transfer of a portion of the revenue from the real estate
31 transfer tax up to \$5,000,000 each fiscal year to the Department of Agriculture,
32 Conservation and Forestry. The department must deposit the funds in the Maine
33 Agriculture, Food and Forest Products Investment Fund to provide grants and low-interest
34 revolving loans to producers who have demonstrated gross business income of at least
35 \$10,000, as evidenced by state or federal tax filings or other documentation acceptable to
36 the administering agency, in any one of the 4 taxable years immediately preceding the date
37 of the application for a grant or loan.

38 **FISCAL NOTE REQUIRED**
39 **(See attached)**