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Date: (Filing No. S- )

**HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

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**STATE OF MAINE  
SENATE  
132ND LEGISLATURE  
SECOND REGULAR SESSION**

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT “ ” to S.P. 903, L.D. 2216, “An Act to Establish the Maine Blue Economy Center”

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

**Sec. 1. 5 MRSA §15303, sub-§7, ¶D**, as enacted by PL 2017, c. 109, §4, is amended to read:

D. A program, in collaboration with the Maine Innovation Economy Advisory Board under Title 10, section 949, to support the technology transfer activities of the University of Maine System, other postsecondary educational institutions in the State and nonprofit research institutes eligible for funding under an asset technology fund established and administered by the institute, to increase the level of patenting at the University of Maine System, other postsecondary institutions in the State and nonprofit research institutes and to promote the licensing of the patents, especially to new and existing companies with operations in the State. Support under this paragraph may include expenses associated with patenting and licensing. The administrative costs of a program under this paragraph are not management and related operating costs of the institute under section 15305; ~~and~~

**Sec. 2. 5 MRSA §15303, sub-§7, ¶E**, as enacted by PL 2017, c. 109, §4, is amended to read:

E. A program in collaboration with the University of Maine School of Law to support the commercialization and manufacturing of innovations in the State by providing education and assistance with the patent process of the United States Patent and Trademark Office to companies, inventors and entrepreneurs in the State. The administrative costs of a program under this paragraph are not management and related operating costs of the institute under section 15305; ~~and~~

**Sec. 3. 5 MRSA §15303, sub-§7, ¶F** is enacted to read:

F. The Maine Blue Economy Center pursuant to section 15331, subsection 2.

**COMMITTEE AMENDMENT**



- 1            C. To communicate ongoing and emerging trends and performance metrics for  
2            economic activity and the health of ocean resources on which the blue economy  
3            depends through a regular public report on the state of the State's blue economy;
- 4            D. To serve as a statewide navigator and coordinating organization for the State's blue  
5            economy by connecting partners, aligning initiatives, strengthening communication  
6            and reducing unnecessary duplication across public, private and nonprofit efforts;
- 7            E. To coordinate with public and private partners, educational and research institutions,  
8            nonprofit organizations and business stakeholders to strengthen the State's blue  
9            economy and support collaboration across ocean industries;
- 10           F. To ensure that the traditional marine industries of this State, including commercial  
11           fishing and working waterfront activities, remain central to the State's blue economy  
12           and are fully considered in the center's planning, partnerships and recommendations;
- 13           G. To facilitate the creation of a highly skilled workforce and support attraction and  
14           retention of workers in the blue economy sector, including by promoting internships,  
15           apprenticeships and other work-based learning opportunities;
- 16           H. To conduct targeted workforce analyses, including assessments of workforce  
17           barriers, participation, outcomes and future workforce needs in the blue economy  
18           sector;
- 19           I. To support efforts to strengthen awareness about blue economy careers and education  
20           pathways in kindergarten to grade 12 and higher education;
- 21           J. To investigate opportunities for grants, loans and other resources to support blue  
22           economy entities and initiatives;
- 23           K. To develop strategies to attract federal, philanthropic and private investment and to  
24           position this State competitively for external funding;
- 25           L. To identify policy, programmatic and partnership opportunities that can support  
26           sustainable growth across the blue economy sector;
- 27           M. To advise the president of the Maine Technology Institute designated under section  
28           15302 on matters related to the blue economy; and
- 29           N. To report regularly to the Legislature regarding its operations, activities, outcomes  
30           and recommendations.
- 31           **3. Board of directors.** The work of the center must be overseen by a board of directors  
32           composed of 17 members, of whom 4 members are ex officio, nonvoting members as  
33           specified in paragraph A and 13 members are appointed as specified in paragraph B. A  
34           member appointed pursuant to paragraph B is entitled to one vote.
- 35           A. Ex officio members of the board are:
- 36                  (1) The Commissioner of Economic and Community Development or the  
37                  commissioner's designee;
- 38                  (2) The president of the Maine Technology Institute designated under section  
39                  15302 or the president's designee;
- 40                  (3) The Chancellor of the University of Maine System or the chancellor's designee;  
41                  and

- 1           (4) The Commissioner of Marine Resources or the commissioner's designee.
- 2           B. The members of the board who are not ex officio members are appointed by the  
3           Governor and are subject to confirmation by the Senate and must be individuals or  
4           representatives of organizations that are in a position to advance the purposes and goals  
5           of the center and are able to have a significant effect on improving the State's blue  
6           economy sector. When making appointments under this paragraph, the Governor shall  
7           consider the multidisciplinary nature of the State's blue economy sector and the  
8           importance of diverse representation from coastal and rural communities and from  
9           businesses and shall consult with the board of directors of the Maine Technology  
10           Institute and the board of directors of the Finance Authority of Maine to ensure the  
11           alignment of those appointments with the State's economic development strategies.  
12           Membership under this paragraph must include:
- 13                   (1) A representative of a business in the State with fewer than 25 employees that  
14                   is involved in the blue economy sector;
- 15                   (2) A representative of a business in the State with 25 or more employees that is  
16                   involved in the blue economy sector;
- 17                   (3) A representative of a nonprofit marine or ocean science research institution  
18                   based in the State that is involved in research and development in the blue economy  
19                   sector;
- 20                   (4) A representative of a university, community college or trade school in the State  
21                   that is involved in the blue economy sector, including marine or coastal  
22                   environmental research in the Gulf of Maine;
- 23                   (5) A representative recommended by a federally recognized Indian tribe in the  
24                   State;
- 25                   (6) Two representatives of trade associations or nonprofit organizations that  
26                   support the blue economy sector, at least one of which collaborates directly with  
27                   private sector marine industries;
- 28                   (7) A representative of business investors or the banking or finance sectors;
- 29                   (8) A representative of a privately owned commercial fishing or working  
30                   waterfront business in the State;
- 31                   (9) A municipal official of a coastal community in the State;
- 32                   (10) A representative from the private sector with experience in sustainable  
33                   aquaculture or marine vegetation cultivation in the State;
- 34                   (11) A representative with expertise in emerging ocean industries; and
- 35                   (12) A representative of a privately owned marine recreational tourism business or  
36                   trade association.
- 37           Members of the board who are not ex officio members serve 3-year terms and may be  
38           reappointed.
- 39           C. The Governor shall designate a chair from among the board's members who shall  
40           preside at, set the agenda for and schedule meetings of the board.

1 D. Board members shall disclose any direct or indirect pecuniary interest in any matter  
2 brought to the center and recuse themselves from any participation in the consideration  
3 of such matters.

4 E. The board shall meet as often as it considers necessary to perform its work and, to  
5 the extent practicable, the board shall conduct its work in a manner that is open and  
6 accessible to the public. The board may conduct its work through subcommittees.

7 **4. Operations of the center.** The following provisions govern the operations of the  
8 center.

9 A. The center shall coordinate its activities with relevant state agencies, marine  
10 industry organizations, research institutions and regional economic development  
11 organizations in order to strengthen collaboration and avoid duplication of effort across  
12 the State's blue economy initiatives.

13 B. The center shall coordinate its activities with the other programs under the  
14 jurisdiction of the Maine Technology Institute, including any programs that promote  
15 life sciences and innovation in the State.

16 C. The center shall develop and implement a database composed of data that monitors  
17 the economic performance, workforce composition and environmental and resource  
18 trends in the Gulf of Maine that are relevant to the blue economy sector. The center  
19 shall assess economic performance by evaluating employment data of businesses  
20 within the blue economy sector, including wages paid to employees, the number of  
21 businesses operating within the blue economy sector and the revenue generated by  
22 those businesses.

23 D. To support its activities under this section, the center may seek outside funds,  
24 through direct solicitation or other fundraising methods, alone or with other groups,  
25 and may accept gifts, grants and bequests from individuals, corporations, foundations,  
26 governmental agencies and public and private organizations and may expend those  
27 funds for purposes consistent with this section.

28 **5. Staff and administrative support.** The Maine Technology Institute shall provide  
29 staff as may be necessary to fulfill the center's mission and may seek assistance from other  
30 state agencies and private entities to accomplish the goals and work of the center.

31 **6. Annual report.** The center shall submit annually to the Governor, the Executive  
32 Director of the Legislative Council and the joint standing committee of the Legislature  
33 having jurisdiction over economic development matters, no later than 120 days after the  
34 close of the center's fiscal year, a complete report on the activities of the center. The report  
35 must also be made available to the public. The report must include the following for that  
36 fiscal year:

37 A. A description of the center's operations and an assessment of trends and performance  
38 in the State's blue economy sector, including details on the methods used to assess and  
39 measure the center's economic development impacts on the blue economy sector;

40 B. An accounting of the center's receipts and expenditures, assets and liabilities at the  
41 end of its fiscal year;

42 C. A listing of all investments, grants, loans and incentives provided by the center  
43 during its fiscal year;

1 D. A statement of the center's proposed and projected activities for its ensuing fiscal  
2 year;

3 E. An analysis of workforce trends, investment activity and emerging opportunities in  
4 the State's blue economy sector;

5 F. The most recent data available on the size, composition and growth trends in the  
6 State's marine economy and environment that is compiled in the center's database  
7 pursuant to subsection 4, paragraph C; and

8 G. Recommendations regarding further actions that may be suitable for achieving the  
9 purposes of this subchapter.

10 After reviewing the report under this subsection, the joint standing committee of the  
11 Legislature having jurisdiction over economic development matters may report out  
12 legislation relating to the report.

13 **Sec. 5. Maine Blue Economy Center; interim report.** The Maine Blue  
14 Economy Center, established pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 5, section  
15 15331, shall submit an interim report to the joint standing committee of the Legislature  
16 having jurisdiction over economic development matters no later than 60 days after all  
17 members of the board of directors of the center have been appointed pursuant to Title 5,  
18 15331, subsection 3. The interim report must include, but is not limited to, the following:

19 1. A strategic plan, including proposed measures of success, for the center covering the  
20 subsequent 5-year period;

21 2. An operational plan identifying anticipated staff and partnership resources, proposed  
22 tasks and expected accomplishments; and

23 3. A finance plan identifying general operating expenditures, anticipated task-related  
24 and project-related expenditures and funding.

25 After reviewing the report under this section, the joint standing committee may report  
26 out legislation relating to the report.

27 **Sec. 6. Staggered terms.** Notwithstanding the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 5,  
28 section 15331, subsection 3, paragraph B, with regard to the initial appointments of the  
29 members of the board of directors of the Maine Blue Economy Center, the Governor shall  
30 appoint 4 members to a one-year term, 5 members to a 2-year term and 4 members to a 3-  
31 year term.

32 **Sec. 7. Appropriations and allocations.** The following appropriations and  
33 allocations are made.

34 **ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, DEPARTMENT OF**  
35 **Maine Blue Economy Center N569**

36 Initiative: Provides one-time funding to support the operations of the Maine Blue Economy  
37 Center.

38 <b>GENERAL FUND</b>	<b>2025-26</b>	<b>2026-27</b>
39 All Other	\$0	\$500,000
40		
41 GENERAL FUND TOTAL	\$0	\$500,000

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

**SUMMARY**

This amendment, which is the majority report of the committee, replaces the bill. The amendment establishes the Maine Blue Economy Center within the Maine Technology Institute. The amendment directs the center to submit an interim report within 60 days after all members have been appointed to its board of directors to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over economic development matters and provides a \$500,000 allocation for start-up operation costs of the center.

**FISCAL NOTE REQUIRED**

**(See attached)**