



129th MAINE LEGISLATURE

LD 1474

LR 2016(02)

An Act To Ensure Water Equity and Accountability for the People of the State

Fiscal Note for Bill as Amended by Committee Amendment " "

Committee: Environment and Natural Resources

Fiscal Note Required: Yes

Fiscal Note

Current biennium cost increase - General Fund
Current biennium cost increase - Other Special Revenue Funds

Fiscal Detail and Notes

This bill requires certain governmental entities when issuing permits or licenses and setting rates to evaluate the negative externalities resulting from unique uses of water, such as the bulk exportation of water out of a region. The Department of Health and Human Services is charged with staffing, creating, implementing and administering a regulatory structure for determining “inequities” and defending decisions from appeals, including the costs associated with support from the Attorney General during appeals and potential litigation. Although no cost estimate can be made until the DHHS has developed a plan to implement the provisions of the bill, the costs are expected to be significant.

The Public Utilities Commission, the Department of Environmental Protection and the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry have indicated that provisions in the bill related to consideration of externalities may be difficult to quantify in the regulatory process and may require additional expenditures to incorporate. Again, no cost estimate can be made until a more concrete plan of implementation is developed.