STATE OF MAINE

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IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD

TWO THOUSAND AND SIXTEEN

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JOINT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING AND COMMENDING THE
UNIVERSITY OF MAINE'S WORK IN DEVELOPING A NEW
VISION AND STRATEGIC PLAN FOR MAINE'S FOREST-BASED
ECONOMY

WHEREAS, eighty-nine percent of Maine's land is forested, making it the most forested state by proportion in the United States; and

WHEREAS, the forest products sector plays a vital role in the economic health and future of Maine's rural communities; and

WHEREAS, fifty-three percent of the State's forestland, about 9,400,000 acres, is under 3rd-party sustainable forest certification; and

WHEREAS, Maine's forest products sector provides nearly 38,800 jobs, provides $1,900,000,000 in employee compensation, accounts for one out of every 20 jobs in the State, provides $1 of every $16 of total state gross domestic product and has an $8,000,000,000 impact on Maine's economy annually; and

WHEREAS, Maine's working forests play an important role in providing a wide array of ecosystem services, including providing for clean air, clean water, wildlife habitat and biodiversity; and

WHEREAS, Maine forests contain a large variety of tree species capable of yielding a wide array of forest products; and

WHEREAS, Maine has one of the most diverse forest products industries in the United States, with a highly integrated processing and transportation system; and

WHEREAS, Maine's 100,000 woodland owners play a vital role in the future of the forest industry; and

WHEREAS, the recent closure of 5 pulp and paper mills has had a negative effect on the people and economies of Maine; and

WHEREAS, future business opportunities in Maine's forest products sector have not been identified in a strategic context to attract major capital investments; and

WHEREAS, there is a tremendous opportunity, with vision and leadership, to encourage investment in new business and economic development opportunities in Maine's forest products sector; and

WHEREAS, action is needed to remove obstacles and encourage investment to develop Maine's future forest-based economy; and

WHEREAS, the University of Maine and the State's woodland owners, wood-using mills and businesses and loggers are working together to craft and implement solutions that will strengthen the State's economy for future generations; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That We, the Members of the One Hundred and Twenty-seventh Legislature now assembled in the Second Regular Session, on behalf of the people we represent, acknowledge and commend the collaboration between the University of Maine Center for Research on Sustainable Forests and representatives of Maine's forest-based industry, including woodland owners, wood-using mills and businesses and loggers, to develop and implement a strategic vision and road map to increase economic development in the State's forest products sector.