



# 131st MAINE LEGISLATURE

## FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2023

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Legislative Document

No. 1286

S.P. 523

In Senate, March 23, 2023

**Resolve, to Establish the Blue Economy Task Force to Support  
Maine's Emergence as a Center for Blue Economy Innovation and  
Opportunity in the 21st Century**

(EMERGENCY)

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Reference to the Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Business suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D M Grant'.

DAREK M. GRANT  
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator DUSON of Cumberland.  
Cosponsored by Representative RIELLY of Westbrook and  
Senators: BENNETT of Oxford, CARNEY of Cumberland, CURRY of Waldo, MOORE of  
Washington, RENY of Lincoln, Representatives: BOYER of Poland, DAVIS of East Machias,  
MATLACK of St. George.

1           **Emergency preamble. Whereas,** acts and resolves of the Legislature do not  
2 become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

3           **Whereas,** the blue economy, which is the sustainable use of the ocean's resources for  
4 economic health, improved livelihoods and jobs and ecosystem health, is one of the fastest  
5 growing global economic sectors; and

6           **Whereas,** Maine is attracting the interest of blue economy entrepreneurs and investors  
7 due to the State's clean and cold waters, high-quality, sustainably harvested seafood  
8 industry, marine research institutions and deep reservoir of maritime expertise; and

9           **Whereas,** the work of the Blue Economy Task Force to Support Maine's Emergence  
10 as a Center for Blue Economy Innovation and Opportunity in the 21st Century needs to  
11 begin prior to 90 days after adjournment in order for the task force to have enough time to  
12 engage stakeholders, identify barriers and propose policies to attract and support the  
13 responsible and efficient growth of the blue economy in Maine; and

14           **Whereas,** in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within  
15 the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as  
16 immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now,  
17 therefore, be it

18           **Sec. 1. Task force established. Resolved:** That the Blue Economy Task Force to  
19 Support Maine's Emergence as a Center for Blue Economy Innovation and Opportunity in  
20 the 21st Century, referred to in this resolve as "the task force," is established.

21           **Sec. 2. Task force membership. Resolved:** That, notwithstanding Joint Rule 353,  
22 the task force consists of 23 members appointed as follows:

23           1. The President of the Senate shall appoint one member of the Senate and the Speaker  
24 of the House shall appoint 2 members of the House of Representatives to serve on the task  
25 force. Members appointed by the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House  
26 serve at the pleasure of their respective appointing authorities; and

27           2. The Governor shall appoint 20 members to serve on the task force, who serve at the  
28 pleasure of the Governor. Members must be appointed as follows:

29           A. One member from the Department of Economic and Community Development;

30           B. One member from the Department of Marine Resources;

31           C. Two representatives of the aquaculture industry, including one representative from  
32 the Maine Aquaculture Association;

33           D. One member who is an investor in or lender to businesses involved in ocean  
34 resources;

35           E. One representative of the marine construction industry;

36           F. One representative of the marine engineering industry;

37           G. Two representatives of the marine technology industry;

38           H. Two representatives of the wild seafood industry;

39           I. One representative from Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Sciences;

- 1 J. One representative from Coastal Enterprises, Inc.;
- 2 K. One representative from Downeast Institute;
- 3 L. One representative from Gulf of Maine Research Institute;
- 4 M. One representative from Island Institute;
- 5 N. One representative from the Maine Maritime Academy;
- 6 O. One representative from Roux Institute at Northeastern University;
- 7 P. One representative from the University of Maine; and
- 8 Q. One representative from the University of New England.

9 **Sec. 3. Chairs. Resolved:** That, notwithstanding Joint Rule 353, the Governor shall  
10 appoint 2 cochairs from among the task force's members, one who is employed by a state  
11 agency and one who is a private citizen. The chairs shall set the schedule and agenda for  
12 task force meetings and preside at the meetings.

13 **Sec. 4. Appointments. Resolved:** That appointments to the task force must occur  
14 no later than August 31, 2023.

15 **Sec. 5. Duties. Resolved:** That the task force shall develop a strategy and  
16 recommend a specific action plan to accelerate the State's emergence as an important  
17 contributor to the sustainable use of the ocean's resources for economic health, improved  
18 livelihoods and jobs and ecosystem health, referred to in this resolve as "the blue economy."  
19 The strategy must identify the State's current and potential future opportunities and  
20 challenges in the blue economy. The action plan must identify and recommend solutions  
21 to leverage the State's competitive advantages and overcome potential technical, economic,  
22 regulatory and other challenges to expand the blue economy. In developing its strategy and  
23 recommending its action plan, the task force shall consider and make recommendations  
24 regarding the following:

25 1. The State's opportunity to expand the blue economy and attract blue economy  
26 investment to the State by:

- 27 A. Identifying the components of the blue economy relevant to the State;
- 28 B. Describing and quantifying the scale of the State's existing blue economy;
- 29 C. Identifying the State's current and potential future competitive advantages in the  
30 blue economy; and
- 31 D. Quantifying the State's blue economy growth opportunity by 2035 and 2050;

32 2. Constraints to the growth of the blue economy by:

- 33 A. Reviewing relevant local, state and federal environmental and investment rules and  
34 regulations to identify regulatory constraints to the growth of the blue economy;
- 35 B. Reviewing state agency structure, staff resources and administrative processes to  
36 identify agency constraints to the growth of the blue economy; and
- 37 C. Developing recommendations to amend environmental and investment rules and  
38 regulations, and alter state agency structure, enhance staff resources and improve  
39 administrative processes to facilitate the growth of the blue economy; and

1 3. Strategies to attract blue economy investment to the State and expand the blue  
2 economy in the State by:

3 A. Considering the cumulative recommendations in the reports of SEAMaine, the  
4 Maine Aquaculture Roadmap and the Maine's Offshore Wind Roadmap to inform a  
5 unified vision for blue economy growth in Maine;

6 B. Identifying the threats of climate change to the State's seafood economy and making  
7 recommendations to ameliorate the threats through modernization and technology  
8 improvements, decarbonization strategies and other means of diversification and  
9 adaptation to changing conditions;

10 C. Identifying the State's current assets and areas of competitive advantage in the  
11 emerging blue economy and making recommendations to support existing and new  
12 businesses in those areas;

13 D. Identifying the State's potential future competitive opportunities in the blue  
14 economy and making recommendations to attract investment to develop those  
15 opportunities;

16 E. Identifying blue economy growth goals, such as revenues, jobs and metrics related  
17 to the growth goals, including intellectual property and multiplier effects for 2035 and  
18 2050;

19 F. Identifying the State's institutional capacities to support the growth of the blue  
20 economy, opportunities to coordinate or integrate such capacities and needs and  
21 opportunities to invest in and strengthen those capacities;

22 G. Identifying the State's working waterfront and industry support infrastructure  
23 capacities and evolving needs to accommodate the emerging blue economy;

24 H. Identifying current and future workforce development needs to support the growth  
25 of the blue economy in the State; and

26 I. Identifying current or future public and private investment vehicles, including state  
27 and federal funding and private investment, required to expand the State's blue  
28 economy.

29 **Sec. 6. Staff assistance. Resolved:** That the Office of Policy Innovation and the  
30 Future, the Department of Economic and Community Development, the Department of  
31 Environmental Protection, the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry and  
32 the Department of Marine Resources shall provide staff assistance to the task force. At the  
33 request of the task force, other state agencies and state entities shall provide information  
34 and analysis to assist the task force in its deliberations and reporting.

35 **Sec. 7. Report. Resolved:** That the task force shall prepare and submit a written  
36 report to the Governor and the Legislature on its interim findings no later than December  
37 6, 2023. The task force shall prepare and submit a written report of its final  
38 recommendations to the Governor, the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House  
39 no later than November 6, 2024.

40 **Emergency clause.** In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this legislation  
41 takes effect when approved.

**SUMMARY**

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This resolve establishes the Blue Economy Task Force to Support Maine’s Emergence as a Center for Blue Economy Innovation and Opportunity in the 21st Century to develop a strategy and recommend a specific action plan to accelerate the State's emergence as an important contributor to the sustainable use of the ocean's resources for economic health, improved livelihoods and jobs and ecosystem health.