



132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST SPECIAL SESSION-2025

Legislative Document

No. 1528

S.P. 612

In Senate, April 8, 2025

An Act to Support Farmland Conservation

Reference to the Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry 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 BENNETT of Oxford.

Cosponsored by Senators: BRENNER of Cumberland, HICKMAN of Kennebec,

Representatives: BLIER of Buxton, CRAY of Palmyra, DUCHARME of Madison, HALL of Wilton, PLUECKER of Warren.

1 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

2 **Sec. 1. 7 MRSA §164, sub-§5** is enacted to read:

3 **5. Funding.** A separate nonlapsing, interest-bearing account, administered by the
4 department, is established in the department within the Bureau of Agriculture, Food and
5 Rural Resources to support public-private partnerships to carry out the purposes of the
6 program. The account consists of money appropriated or allocated to it by the Legislature
7 or received from any private or public source.

8 **Sec. 2. Transfer.** Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, on or before
9 June 30, 2026, the State Controller shall transfer \$1,000,000 from the unappropriated
10 surplus of the General Fund to the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry,
11 Bureau of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources, Maine Working Farmland Access and
12 Protection Program established in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 7, section 164 for
13 funding to support farmland conservation efforts.

14 **Sec. 3. Appropriations and allocations.** The following appropriations and
15 allocations are made.

16 **AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY, DEPARTMENT OF**

17 **Bureau of Agriculture 0393**

18 Initiative: Provides funding for farmland conservation efforts under the Maine Working
19 Farmland Access and Protection Program established in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title
20 7, section 164.

21 OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS	2025-26	2026-27
22 All Other	\$1,000,000	\$0
23		
24 OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS TOTAL	\$1,000,000	\$0

25 **Bureau of Agriculture 0393**

26 Initiative: Establishes one Resource Management Coordinator position and provides
27 funding for associated All Other costs.

28 GENERAL FUND	2025-26	2026-27
29 POSITIONS - LEGISLATIVE COUNT	1.000	1.000
30 Personal Services	\$114,286	\$120,766
31 All Other	\$3,500	\$3,500
32		
33 GENERAL FUND TOTAL	\$117,786	\$124,266

34 **DACF Administration 0401**

35 Initiative: Establishes one Resource Management Coordinator position and provides
36 funding for associated All Other costs.

37 GENERAL FUND	2025-26	2026-27
38 All Other	\$3,292	\$3,292
39		
40 GENERAL FUND TOTAL	\$3,292	\$3,292

41

1	OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS	2025-26	2026-27
2	All Other	\$647	\$647
3			
4	OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS TOTAL	<u>\$647</u>	<u>\$647</u>
5			
6	AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND		
7	FORESTRY, DEPARTMENT OF		
8	DEPARTMENT TOTALS	2025-26	2026-27
9			
10	GENERAL FUND	\$121,078	\$127,558
11	OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS	\$1,000,647	\$647
12			
13	DEPARTMENT TOTAL - ALL FUNDS	<u>\$1,121,725</u>	<u>\$128,205</u>

14 **SUMMARY**

15 This bill establishes a separate nonlapsing, interest-bearing account administered by
16 the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry to support public-private
17 partnerships to carry out the purposes of the Maine Working Farmland Access and
18 Protection Program. The account consists of money appropriated or allocated to the
19 program account by the Legislature or received from any private or public source.

20 The bill establishes and provides ongoing funding for one full-time, permanent position
21 within the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Bureau of Agriculture,
22 Food and Rural Resources.

23 The bill also transfers \$1,000,000 from the unappropriated surplus of the General Fund
24 to fund farmland conservation efforts under the Department of Agriculture, Conservation
25 and Forestry, Bureau of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources, Maine Working Farmland
26 Access and Protection Program.