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Date: (Filing No. S- )

**AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY**

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**STATE OF MAINE  
SENATE  
128TH LEGISLATURE  
SECOND REGULAR SESSION**

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT “ ” to S.P. 646, L.D. 1747, “Resolve, To Establish a Task Force To Examine Agricultural Issues”

Amend the resolve by striking out the title and substituting the following:

**'Resolve, To Direct the Commissioner of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry To Establish a Departmental Task Force To Examine Agricultural Issues'**

Amend the resolve by striking out everything after the emergency preamble and before the emergency clause and inserting the following:

**'Sec. 1. Commissioner to establish a departmental task force. Resolved:** That the Commissioner of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, referred to in this resolve as "the commissioner," shall convene a departmental task force to study agricultural issues in the State. The commissioner shall invite representatives from each of the following to participate in the departmental task force:

1. Two members representing value-added manufacturers, recommended by the Maine Potato Board and the Wild Blueberry Commission of Maine;
2. A farmer representing the wild blueberry industry;
3. A farmer representing the dairy industry;
4. A farmer representing the potato industry;
5. A farmer representing the aquaculture industry;
6. A farmer representing the interests of the small fruit or vegetable growers;
7. A farmer appointed by the Agricultural Council of Maine;
8. A farmer appointed by the Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association;
9. A contractor or owner representing the Professional Logging Contractors of Maine;
10. A member of Maine Woodland Owners;

**COMMITTEE AMENDMENT**

- 1 11. A member of the Maine Farm Bureau;
- 2 12. A member representing a national food retailer;
- 3 13. A member with expertise in international trade policy; and
- 4 14. An economist from the University of Maine Cooperative Extension Service or, if
- 5 unavailable, an economist from the University of Maine System; and be it further

6 **Sec. 2. Chair; convening of initial meeting. Resolved:** That the  
7 commissioner shall designate the economist from the University of Maine Cooperative  
8 Extension Service or the economist from the University of Maine System to serve as  
9 chair of the departmental task force. If no economist from the University of Maine  
10 System is available, the commissioner shall designate another member of the  
11 departmental task force to serve as chair. The commissioner shall convene the initial  
12 meeting of the departmental task force no later than 30 days following the effective date  
13 of this resolve; and be it further

14 **Sec. 3. Duties. Resolved:** That the departmental task force shall examine with  
15 reference to agricultural issues:

- 16 1. Barriers to economic prosperity in rural parts of the State, including investment  
17 and development challenges, workforce training, labor shortages and marketing and  
18 branding opportunities, such as the "Made in Maine" initiative;
- 19 2. How innovation, infrastructure and technology may play a role in long-term,  
20 sustainable agricultural and rural success;
- 21 3. The potential impact of requiring state facilities to use a certain percentage of  
22 agriculturally derived biofuel;
- 23 4. The effect of international trade policy on state agricultural commodities; and
- 24 5. The recommendations of the report of the 2003 Blaine House Conference on  
25 Maine's Natural Resource-based Industry: Charting a New Course; and be it further

26 **Sec. 4. Meetings. Resolved:** That the chair, in consultation with the  
27 commissioner, shall schedule meetings of the departmental task force as necessary to  
28 complete the departmental task force's assigned duties. The commissioner shall notify  
29 members of the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over  
30 agriculture, conservation and forestry matters and other Legislators with a known interest  
31 in agricultural issues of all meetings of the departmental task force; and be it further

32 **Sec. 5. Staffing and funding. Resolved:** That the Department of Agriculture,  
33 Conservation and Forestry shall provide staff support to the departmental task force from  
34 existing resources. The commissioner may use contributions of money, services and  
35 supplies accepted under existing authority to support the work of the departmental task  
36 force; and be it further

37 **Sec. 6. Agency cooperation. Resolved:** That the commissioner, the  
38 Commissioner of Economic and Community Development and the Chief Executive  
39 Officer of the Finance Authority of Maine shall each designate a representative from their  
40 respective agencies to serve as a resource to the departmental task force, respond to

1 information requests and attend departmental task force meetings upon request; and be it  
2 further

3 **Sec. 7. Report. Resolved:** That, no later than January 15, 2019, the departmental  
4 task force shall submit a report that includes its findings and recommendations, including  
5 suggested legislation to implement the recommendations, for presentation to the joint  
6 standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over agriculture, conservation  
7 and forestry matters; and be it further

8 **Sec. 8. Authority to submit legislation. Resolved:** That the joint standing  
9 committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over agriculture, conservation and  
10 forestry matters may submit a bill pertaining to the report submitted pursuant to section 7  
11 to the First Regular Session of the 129th Legislature.'

12 **SUMMARY**

13 This amendment, which is the majority report of the committee, directs the  
14 Commissioner of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry to convene a departmental task  
15 force to study agricultural issues in the State, including the recommendations presented in  
16 the 2003 Blaine House Conference on Maine's Natural Resource-based Industry: Charting  
17 a New Course report.

18 **FISCAL NOTE REQUIRED**

19 **(See attached)**