

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD
TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-FIVE

H.P. 820 - L.D. 1245

An Act to Establish a Fund and Council to Support Working Waterfronts

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

Sec. 1. 5 MRSA §3207 is enacted to read:

§3207. Working Waterfront Information and Technical Assistance Fund

The Working Waterfront Information and Technical Assistance Fund, referred to in this section as "the fund," is established. Balances in the fund may not lapse and must be carried forward and used for the purposes of this section. The fund is administered by the office, and the office may accept and deposit in the fund money from private and public sources. In carrying out the purposes of the fund, the office shall work with the Department of Economic and Community Development, Office of Tourism; the Department of Marine Resources; coastal municipal and regional governments; and organizations and coalitions that have experience advocating for developing and protecting working waterfronts in the State and experience working with persons who use working waterfronts in the State. In collaboration with the entities listed in this section, the office shall use the fund in the production of working waterfront information campaigns and the provision of technical assistance to encourage protection and development of working waterfronts. As used in this section, "working waterfront" means a parcel of land abutting water subject to tidal influence or land located in the intertidal zone that is used primarily or predominantly to provide access to or support the conduct of commercial fishing and marine activities.

Sec. 2. 5 MRSA §3208 is enacted to read:

§3208. Working Waterfront Advisory Council

The Working Waterfront Advisory Council, established by section 12004-I, subsection 57-I and referred to in this section as "the council," is established to address issues facing the State's working waterfronts.

1. Membership. The director shall appoint up to 15 members to the council who, to the greatest extent possible, must represent federally recognized Indian nations, tribes or bands in the State, municipalities, nonprofit organizations, trade organizations, educational institutions, individuals and industries that represent or use working waterfronts in the

State. To the greatest extent possible, the membership of the council must reflect a geographic distribution along the coast.

In making appointments, the director shall consider and appoint residents of the State who have knowledge of problems facing working waterfronts in the State, have experience in advocacy relating to working waterfront issues or provide leadership in programs or activities that create and improve opportunities or spread awareness related to working waterfronts and persons that use them.

2. Term. A member's term is for 3 years. If a member is unable to complete the term, the director shall appoint a member pursuant to subsection 1 to serve out the unexpired portion of the term.

3. Officers; staff. The officers of the council are the chair and the vice-chair. The term of the officers is one year. The council shall elect a member of the council for each officer position at the first regular meeting of each year. The council is staffed by the office.

4. Meetings. The council shall meet at least 4 times per year. It may meet at other times at the call of the chair or the director.

5. Council report. By February 1, 2026 and annually thereafter, the council shall submit a report to the joint standing committees of the Legislature having jurisdiction over economic and community development matters and marine resources matters on the status of the condition of, the current and future challenges concerning and recommendations related to working waterfronts in the State, including, but not limited to:

A. How to best use state agencies, municipal governments, working waterfront industries and citizen groups to protect and improve access to working waterfronts in the State;

B. Matters of interest to working waterfront industries and communities in the State, including, but not limited to, geographic information systems mapping and inventory, climate and resilience, preservation and access, affordable workforce housing, climate-driven relocation, water quality and ecosystems, workforce development, health care access, the marine resources economy and economic development, including public-private partnerships, decarbonization and electrification and developing new working waterfronts; and

C. Information on relevant existing federal, state, municipal, educational organization and nonprofit organization data, plans, recommendations and studies that relate to working waterfronts in the State and updates on progress made in state plans that include references to working waterfronts.

After reviewing the report, either joint standing committee may report out legislation to implement any recommendations contained in the report.

6. Director report. By February 1, 2026 and annually thereafter, the director shall submit a report to the joint standing committees of the Legislature having jurisdiction over matters related to the office on the status of initiatives regarding working waterfronts, including information from coalitions, task forces and engagements with municipal and tribal governments. After reviewing the report, either joint standing committee may report out legislation to implement any recommendations contained in the report.

Sec. 3. 5 MRSA §12004-I, sub-§57-I is enacted to read:

57-I.

<u>Marine</u>	<u>Working Waterfront</u>	<u>Not Authorized</u>	<u>5 MRSA §3208</u>
<u>Resources</u>	<u>Advisory Council</u>		

Sec. 4. Working Waterfront Advisory Council initial membership appointments. Notwithstanding the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 5, section 3208, subsection 2, in making the initial membership appointments to the Working Waterfront Advisory Council established pursuant to Title 5, section 12004-I, subsection 57-I, the Director of the Maine Office of Community Affairs shall make the initial membership appointment terms staggered so that approximately 1/3 of the members are appointed for a term of 3 years, approximately 1/3 of the members are appointed for a term of 2 years and approximately 1/3 of the members are appointed for a term of one year.

Sec. 5. Appropriations and allocations. The following appropriations and allocations are made.

MAINE OFFICE OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

Working Waterfront Information and Technical Assistance Fund N542

Initiative: Provides ongoing allocations to establish the Working Waterfront Information and Technical Assistance Fund.

OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS	2025-26	2026-27
All Other	\$500	\$500
OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS TOTAL	\$500	\$500