

**OFFICE OF POLICY AND LEGAL ANALYSIS**

Date: March 13, 2021

To: Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Commerce

From: Samuel Senft, Legislative Analyst

**LD 440 “An Act To Conserve the Frances Perkins Homestead National Historic Landmark” (Maxmin)**

**SUMMARY**

This bill provides one-time funds in the amount of \$100,000 to the Frances Perkins Center to ensure the public has safe and accessible access to the Frances Perkins Homestead.

**TESTIMONY**

<p><b>Proponents:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Perkins Family Homestead is a 57-acre saltwater farm located on the banks of the Damariscotta River in Newcastle. It is the ancestral home and lsummer residence of Frances Perkins, U.S. Secretary of Labor 1933-45, the nation's first female cabinet secretary.</li><li>• In January 2020, with funding provided by hundreds of private donors, the Frances Perkins Center purchased the Frances Perkins Homestead National Historic Landmark.</li><li>• The house is included in the 1960 Historic American Building Survey. The Homestead was registered as a National Historic Landmark in 2014 and as the Brick House Historic District on the National Register of Historic Placed in 2009.</li><li>• 53 acres were put into conservation status and managed by Coastal Rivers Conservation Trust of Damariscotta and Midcoast Maine in the 1990s.</li><li>• In August 2020, the Center received a \$500,000 Save America’s Treasures grant. It requires matching funds of \$824,000.</li><li>• Have raised 1.1M of 1.5M needed (\$500,000 of that is the grant)</li><li>• Plan is for Center to adapt facilities for lectures, workshops, courses, history tours, regional school programs, internships for undergraduates, and graduate study opportunities. Included will be classrooms, meeting spaces, a library, facilities for archival work, and exhibition spaces.</li><li>• These funds will 1. Leverage the Save America’s Treasures National Park Service \$500,000 grant 2. Partner with local and national alliances already established with the Homestead 3. Make available for public access a state landmark 4. Provide a place-based education and outdoor history center for future generations of Americans.</li><li>• While nonprofit museums can be difficult to finance, this is an exception.</li><li>• The Center has a distinguished Board of Directors that was established over 10 years ago.</li></ul>
<p><b>Opponents:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• None</li></ul>
<p><b>Neither For Nor Against</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• None</li></ul>

**INFORMATION REQUESTS:**

- Information was requested regarding the Center’s schedule and times open to the public. This will be provided at the work session by Center staff.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

- The website for the Frances Perkins Center is [here](#)
- An announcement of the Save America’s Treasures grant award is [here](#)

**FISCAL IMPACT:** The preliminary fiscal note is attached and is copied below.

**Preliminary Fiscal Impact Statement**

	<b>FY 2021-22</b>	<b>FY 2022-23</b>	<b>Projections FY 2023-24</b>	<b>Projections FY 2024-25</b>
<b>Net Cost (Savings)</b>				
General Fund	\$100,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Appropriations/Allocations</b>				
General Fund	\$100,000	\$0	\$0	\$0

**Fiscal Detail and Notes**

This bill includes a one-time General Fund appropriation of \$100,000 in fiscal year 2021-22 to the Maine Historic Preservation Commission to provide funds to the Frances Perkins Center to ensure the public has safe and accessible access to the Frances Perkins Homestead.