

Office of Policy and Legal Analysis

Date: May 5, 2021
To: Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
From: Deirdre Schneider, Legislative Analyst
Re: LD 1367, An Act To Create a Grant Program To Promote Innovation in Municipal Carbon Reduction Initiatives

Summary

This bill establishes the Maine Municipal Carbon Reduction Initiatives Program, within the Department of Economic and Community Development, for the purpose of providing competitive grants for towns and cities to help fund technology and innovation projects that will reduce carbon emissions and that are in line with Maine's climate action plan. It establishes the Maine Municipal Carbon Reduction Initiatives Fund. It also requires that DECD adopt routine technical rules relating to the competitive application process that will be used to provide grants to municipalities under this program.

List of People that Submitted Written Testimony and/or Spoke at the Hearing

Proponents: Representative Bailey (Sponsor); Mark Draper, Aroostook Waste Solutions; Sarah Fitzpatrick; and Patricia Rubert-Nason, Sierra Club

Opponents: None

Neither for nor against: Brian Ambrette, Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future; and Neal Goldberg, MMA

Amendments Offered in Testimony

- **Mark Draper, Aroostook Waste Solutions** – Amend the bill to expand the eligibility of the grant funds to include quasi-municipal organizations, regional municipal associations, and special districts.

Notes/Issues

- Typically, when a fund is established in statute, language is included detailing how the fund is funded, or from which sources funds can be accepted. In this bill it appears this grant program is established including the creation of a nonlapsing fund but there is no funding mechanism identified.
 - Brian Ambrette from the GOPIF indicated the administration is considering federal American Rescue Plan allocations that may support some municipal infrastructure, economic, and energy needs.

- In addition, it requires DECD to solicit applications, regardless of the availability of funds. If moving forward, the committee may want to consider adding language that specifies the department shall solicit applications, to the extent funds are available. . .

Fiscal Impact

- Not yet determined.