



132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

SECOND REGULAR SESSION-2026

Legislative Document

No. 2141

S.P. 859

In Senate, January 7, 2026

**An Act to Direct a Portion of Unclaimed Beverage Container
Deposits to the Lake Water Quality Restoration and Protection
Fund, the Maine Working Farmland Access and Protection
Program and Public Defender Office Staffing**

Approved for introduction by a majority of the Legislative Council pursuant to Joint Rule 203.

Reference to the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "DAREK M. GRANT".

DAREK M. GRANT
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator BRENNER of Cumberland.

Cosponsored by Representative BRIDGEO of Augusta and

Senator: TEPLER of Sagadahoc, Representatives: DOUDERA of Camden, MOONEN of Portland.

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

Sec. 1. 38 MRSA §3108-A, sub-§2, ¶B, as amended by PL 2023, c. 529, §§2 to 4 and affected by §7, is further amended by amending subparagraph (4-A), division (c) to read:

(c) Outreach to manufacturers, retailers, restaurants and consumers regarding the benefits of refillable beverage containers and the methods available for ensuring such containers may be safely reused; and

Sec. 2. 38 MRSA §3108-A, sub-§2, ¶B, as amended by PL 2023, c. 529, §§2 to 4 and affected by §7, is further amended by amending subparagraph (5) to read:

(5) Payment of \$500,000 annually to the department for deposit into and use in accordance with the Cost and Carbon Efficient Technology Fund established in section 3114-A.

The cooperative shall include in its annual report required under section 3107, subsection 3-B, paragraph E any recommendations for a reduction in or other amendment to the payment required under this subparagraph that the cooperative believes necessary due to a reduction in the amount of unclaimed deposits available for expenditure in accordance with paragraph C, a surplus of undistributed funding within the Cost and Carbon Efficient Technology Fund established in section 3114-A or for other reasons specified by the cooperative.;

Sec. 3. 38 MRSA §3108-A, sub-§2, ¶B, as amended by PL 2023, c. 529, §§2 to 4 and affected by §7, is further amended by enacting a new subparagraph (6) to read:

(6) Beginning October 1, 2026, payment of \$2,000,000 annually to the department for deposit and use in accordance with the Lake Water Quality Restoration and Protection Fund under section 480-N;

Sec. 4. 38 MRSA §3108-A, sub-§2, ¶B, as amended by PL 2023, c. 529, §§2 to 4 and affected by §7, is further amended by enacting a new subparagraph (7) to read:

(7) Beginning October 1, 2026, payment of \$2,000,000 annually to the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for deposit and use in accordance with the Maine Working Farmland Access and Protection Program under Title 7, section 164; and

Sec. 5. 38 MRSA §3108-A, sub-§2, ¶B, as amended by PL 2023, c. 529, §§2 to 4 and affected by §7, is further amended by enacting a new subparagraph (8) to read:

(8) Beginning August 1, 2026, payment of \$2,000,000 annually to the Maine Commission on Public Defense Services under Title 4, section 1801 to support regional public defender office staffing.

SUMMARY

This bill directs a portion of unclaimed beverage container deposits toward investment in the Lake Water Quality Restoration and Protection Fund and the Maine Working Farmland Access and Protection Program beginning October 1, 2026 and toward the Maine Commission on Public Defense Services to support regional public defender office staffing beginning August 1, 2026.