



128th MAINE LEGISLATURE

LD 1844

LR 2867(02)

An Act To Provide the State the Right of First Refusal for the Purchase of Certain Land on Which a Subsidy Has Been Paid

Fiscal Note for Bill as Amended by Committee Amendment " "

Committee: Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Fiscal Note Required: Yes

Fiscal Note

Contingent current biennium cost increase - General Fund

Contingent current biennium cost increase - Other Special Revenue Funds

Contingent current biennium revenue increase - Other Special Revenue Funds

Fiscal Detail and Notes

This bill establishes the State's right of first refusal over property offered for sale that is over 5,000 acres and that is subject to the Maine Tree Growth Tax Law program. Any land purchases under this bill will require additional appropriations to the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry (ACF). As this bill does not require the ACF to act on any options to purchase land, no appropriation is required at this time and no costs are incurred.

If the State chooses to execute a right of first refusal, the lands acquired would be classified as public nonreserved land managed by ACF. As public nonreserved lands, ACF is permitted to sell the resources present on those lands or in certain situations assess user fees for access to the land. Under current law, 25% of revenue generated from public nonreserved land is returned to the municipality in which the land is located. This bill requires that ACF also make payments in lieu of taxes in an amount equal to what a private landowner would have paid to the assessing authority. The State does not currently make such payments to municipalities for public nonreserved lands. These payments would require ongoing General Fund appropriations.