



127th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2015

Legislative Document

No. 656

H.P. 437

House of Representatives, March 3, 2015

An Act To Enhance Forest Ranger Safety

Reference to the Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert B. Hunt".

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative NADEAU of Winslow.
Cosponsored by Senator CYRWAY of Kennebec and
Representatives: DION of Portland, DUNPHY of Embden, Speaker EVES of North Berwick,
LONG of Sherman, MARTIN of Eagle Lake, McCABE of Skowhegan, SANDERSON of
Chelsea, SHORT of Pittsfield.

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

2 **Sec. 1. PL 1999, c. 352, §§3 and 4** are repealed.

3 **Sec. 2. Law enforcement training for forest rangers policy.** The Director of
4 the Bureau of Forestry within the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
5 shall develop and institute a policy that requires all forest rangers appointed by the
6 director pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 12, section 8901, subsection 1 to
7 attend a law enforcement training course at the Maine Criminal Justice Academy as a
8 condition of employment. The policy must exempt those forest rangers who have
9 previously attended a preservice law enforcement training course or a basic law
10 enforcement course at the Maine Criminal Justice Academy. The policy must require
11 forest rangers to attend and complete at least 7 hours of firearms classroom work and at
12 least 40 hours of firearms training on a firing range taught by a firearms instructor
13 certified by the Maine Criminal Justice Academy. In addition, forest rangers shall
14 complete at least 8 hours of training regarding the use of force taught by the Office of the
15 Attorney General and at least another 8 hours of training on weapon retention and
16 use-of-force scenarios taught by a Maine Criminal Justice Academy instructor.

17 **Sec. 3. Firearms training and equipment plans.** The state supervisor of the
18 forest protection unit of the Bureau of Forestry within the Department of Agriculture,
19 Conservation and Forestry and the Director of the Maine Criminal Justice Academy
20 jointly shall develop a plan to provide training to forest rangers in the use of firearms,
21 bulletproof vests and other related equipment. The state supervisor shall develop a plan
22 to furnish firearms and equipment to those forest rangers who have completed the
23 training course developed jointly by the state supervisor and the Director of the Maine
24 Criminal Justice Academy for the performance of those forest rangers' law enforcement
25 duties. The plans developed pursuant to this section are subject to the requirements of the
26 Maine Revised Statutes, Title 25, section 2803-B, subsection 1 and must be submitted to
27 the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry and the Joint
28 Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety for review no later than
29 November 1, 2015. The plans must be implemented no later than January 1, 2017.

30 **Sec. 4. Appropriations and allocations.** The following appropriations and
31 allocations are made.

32 **AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY, DEPARTMENT OF**

33 **Division of Forest Protection Z232**

34 Initiative: Provides funding for firearms, vests and other related equipment in fiscal year
35 2015-16.

36			
37	GENERAL FUND	2015-16	2016-17
38	All Other	\$60,861	\$0
39			
40	GENERAL FUND TOTAL	<u>\$60,861</u>	<u>\$0</u>

1 **Division of Forest Protection Z232**

2 Initiative: Provides funding in fiscal year 2015-16 for training and overtime incurred
3 while the forest rangers are training.

4

5	GENERAL FUND	2015-16	2016-17
6	Personal Services	\$18,909	\$0
7	All Other	\$7,049	\$0
8			
9	GENERAL FUND TOTAL	<u>\$25,958</u>	<u>\$0</u>

10 **Division of Forest Protection Z232**

11 Initiative: Recognizes Personal Services savings from managing vacancies and salary
12 savings.

13

14	GENERAL FUND	2015-16	2016-17
15	Personal Services	(\$86,819)	\$0
16			
17	GENERAL FUND TOTAL	<u>(\$86,819)</u>	<u>\$0</u>

18

19 **AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND**
20 **FORESTRY, DEPARTMENT OF**
21 **DEPARTMENT TOTALS**

22		2015-16	2016-17
23	GENERAL FUND	\$0	\$0
24			
25	DEPARTMENT TOTAL - ALL FUNDS	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>

26 **SUMMARY**

27 This bill repeals 2 provisions of Public Law 1999, chapter 352 that require the
28 Commissioner of Conservation to sell all bulletproof vests, firearms and related
29 equipment and that prohibit the commissioner from purchasing bulletproof vests, firearms
30 or related equipment without specific authorization by the Legislature. This bill requires
31 the Director of the Bureau of Forestry within the Department of Agriculture,
32 Conservation and Forestry to develop and institute a policy that requires all forest rangers
33 to attend and complete a law enforcement training course at the Maine Criminal Justice
34 Academy as a condition of employment. A forest ranger who has already attended a law
35 enforcement training course at the Maine Criminal Justice Academy is exempt.

36 The bill also requires the state supervisor of the forest protection unit in the Bureau of
37 Forestry and the Director of the Maine Criminal Justice Academy to develop a plan to
38 provide training to forest rangers in the use of firearms, bulletproof vests and other
39 related equipment. The state supervisor is directed to develop a plan to furnish such

1 firearms and equipment to those forest rangers for the performance of their law
2 enforcement duties. The plans must be submitted to the Joint Standing Committee on
3 Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry and the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal
4 Justice and Public Safety for review no later than November 1, 2015 and implemented,
5 including furnishing firearms and related equipment, no later than January 1, 2017.