



129th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2019

Legislative Document

No. 649

H.P. 470

House of Representatives, February 7, 2019

**An Act To Enhance Collaboration among State Agencies To
Improve Landowner Relations**

Reference to the Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife suggested and ordered printed.

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

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative COREY of Windham.
Cosponsored by Senator BREEN of Cumberland and
Representatives: BRYANT of Windham, FAY of Raymond, KESCHL of Belgrade, MAREAN
of Hollis, NADEAU of Winslow, STEARNS of Guilford, Senators: DIAMOND of
Cumberland, DILL of Penobscot.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 12 MRSA §10108, sub-§4-A**, as enacted by PL 2011, c. 576, §3, is
3 amended to read:

4 **4-A. Landowner relations program.** The commissioner shall develop and
5 implement a landowner relations program, referred to in this ~~section~~ subsection as "the
6 program."

7 A. The program must:

8 (1) Encourage landowners to allow outdoor recreationists access to their
9 property to hunt, fish or engage in other outdoor recreational pursuits;

10 (2) Foster good relationships between landowners and outdoor recreationists;
11 and

12 (3) Promote high standards of courtesy, respect and responsibility by outdoor
13 recreationists in their relations with landowners.

14 B. The commissioner shall appoint a landowner relations coordinator to oversee the
15 program and any other landowner relations activities of the department.

16 C. To the extent resources allow, the program must include the following elements:

17 (1) Building and maintaining an educated and motivated group of outdoor
18 recreationists who meet and promote high standards of courtesy, respect and
19 responsibility in their relations with landowners and who are willing to volunteer
20 in program-related projects or efforts to improve landowner relations;

21 (2) Issuing a certificate to persons wishing to support or participate in the
22 program. The commissioner may establish a fee for the certificate, which may not
23 exceed \$20. All proceeds from the fees must be deposited in the Landowner
24 Relations Fund established in section 10265;

25 (3) Developing and disseminating to outdoor recreationists a code of ethics or
26 other information promoting high standards of courtesy, respect and
27 responsibility in their relations with landowners;

28 (4) Developing an outreach program that provides educational materials and
29 signs and that disseminates information to landowners and land users about
30 landowner rights, landowner liability protections, the tradition of allowing
31 outdoor recreationists to use private land and law enforcement resources
32 available to landowners;

33 (5) Engaging organizations and companies representing landowners,
34 conservation groups, recreationists, land trusts and other organizations involved
35 in outdoor recreation in developing, implementing and publicizing the program;

36 (6) Organizing or otherwise promoting landowner appreciation events;

37 (7) Working with representatives of various state agencies to promote and
38 broaden public access to private lands for recreational use and to enhance
39 enforcement of applicable laws; and

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(8) Seeking and developing sources of funding to support the program.

D. All state agencies and in particular the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, the Department of Marine Resources and the Department of Economic and Community Development shall collaborate with the department to implement the program. The department shall organize the collaboration to distribute as evenly as practicable the burden experienced by the various agencies arising from the public use of private lands.

SUMMARY

This bill directs all state agencies and in particular the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, the Department of Marine Resources and the Department of Economic and Community Development to collaborate with the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to implement the landowner relations program. This bill directs the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to organize the collaboration to distribute as evenly as practicable the burden experienced by the various agencies arising from the public use of private lands.