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H.P. 1338

House of Representatives, February 9, 2012

Resolve, To Promote the Expansion of the Maine Maple Sugar Industry

(EMERGENCY)

Reported by Representative EDGECOMB of Caribou for the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry pursuant to Resolve 2011, chapter 48, section 8.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Heather J.R. Priest".

HEATHER J.R. PRIEST
Clerk

1 **Emergency preamble. Whereas,** acts and resolves of the Legislature do not
2 become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

3 **Whereas,** the task force convened in accordance with Resolve 2011, chapter 48 has
4 determined that Maine's forest resource is able to support significant expansion in maple
5 sugar production and has identified obstacles to expansion; and

6 **Whereas,** continuing involvement of stakeholders is vital to facilitate the expansion
7 of this industry; and

8 **Whereas,** in order to provide the task force created in this resolve the most time
9 possible to complete its work, it is necessary that it be convened before the end of the
10 90-day period; and

11 **Whereas,** in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within
12 the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as
13 immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now,
14 therefore, be it

15 **Sec. 1. Task force. Resolved:** That the Commissioner of Agriculture, Food and
16 Rural Resources, referred to in this resolve as "the commissioner," shall convene a task
17 force to develop strategies to address obstacles to the expansion of Maine's maple sugar
18 industry. The commissioner shall invite members of the task force convened under
19 Resolve 2011, chapter 48 to continue to serve. The commissioner shall invite others to
20 serve as needed to ensure that each of the following are represented on the task force:

- 21 1. A statewide association of producers of Maine maple sugar products;
- 22 2. A regional association of producers of maple sugar products in southern Maine;
- 23 3. An association of producers of maple sugar products in Somerset County;
- 24 4. A producer of maple sugar products in Aroostook County;
- 25 5. A producer of maple sugar products with more than 5,000 taps;
- 26 6. A producer of maple sugar products with 1,000 or fewer taps;
- 27 7. A statewide organization of small woodlot owners;
- 28 8. A statewide organization representing the forest products industry;
- 29 9. The University of Maine Cooperative Extension; and
- 30 10. A statewide farming association with a committee actively involved with maple
31 sugar production; and be it further

32 **Sec. 2. Chair; convening of initial meeting. Resolved:** That the
33 commissioner shall designate a person to serve as chair of the task force and shall

1 convene the initial meeting no later than 30 days following the effective date of this
2 resolve; and be it further

3 **Sec. 3. Duties. Resolved:** That the task force shall:

4 1. Monitor and analyze growth in maple sugar production and demand for maple
5 sugar products;

6 2. Work with private landowners, foresters and managers of public lands to develop
7 guidance on and facilitate the leasing of forest lands for maple sugar production;

8 3. Develop strategies to increase educational opportunities for producers;

9 4. Work with education professionals on a curriculum to increase awareness of the
10 maple sugar industry and train workers for the industry;

11 5. Develop recommendations for establishing an ongoing council in statute to guide
12 the expansion of Maine's maple sugar industry and oversee a comprehensive promotion
13 initiative. The task force shall make recommendations as to the membership, terms and
14 responsibilities of the council;

15 6. Identify funding sources to support the maple sugar industry, including
16 recommendations for allocating resources within the Department of Agriculture, Food
17 and Rural Resources and the University of Maine Cooperative Extension; and

18 7. Develop recommendations for a comprehensive promotion program for the maple
19 sugar industry, including a funding source or sources. In developing its recommendations,
20 the task force shall review models that have been successfully employed to promote other
21 Maine food product industries, including marine products and agricultural products such
22 as potatoes and blueberries; and be it further

23 **Sec. 4. Meetings. Resolved:** That the chair, in consultation with the
24 commissioner, shall schedule meetings of the task force as necessary to complete the task
25 force's assigned duties. The commissioner shall notify members of the Joint Standing
26 Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry and other Legislators with a known
27 interest in the maple sugar industry of all meetings of the task force; and be it further

28 **Sec. 5. Staffing and funding. Resolved:** That the Department of Agriculture,
29 Food and Rural Resources shall provide staff support to the task force from existing
30 resources. The Department of Conservation, Bureau of Forestry and Bureau of Parks and
31 Lands shall provide staff from existing resources to assist in discussions relating to
32 landowner education, forest management and leasing land for maple sugar production.
33 The commissioner and the Commissioner of Conservation may use contributions of
34 money, services and supplies accepted under existing authority to support the work of the
35 task force; and be it further

36 **Sec. 6. Agency cooperation. Resolved:** That the commissioner, the
37 Commissioner of Conservation, the Commissioner of Economic and Community
38 Development and the Chief Executive Officer of the Finance Authority of Maine shall

1 each designate a representative from their respective agencies to serve as a resource to the
2 task force, respond to information requests and attend task force meetings upon request;
3 and be it further

4 **Sec. 7. Final report. Resolved:** That, no later than December 4, 2013, the
5 commissioner shall submit a report that includes the findings and recommendations of the
6 task force, including suggested legislation to implement the recommendations, for
7 presentation to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over
8 agriculture matters; and be it further

9 **Sec. 8. Authority to submit legislation. Resolved:** That the joint standing
10 committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over agriculture matters may submit
11 legislation pertaining to the Maine maple sugar industry to the Second Regular Session of
12 the 126th Legislature.

13 **Emergency clause.** In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this
14 legislation takes effect when approved.

15 **SUMMARY**

16 This resolve is the report of the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture,
17 Conservation and Forestry submitted pursuant to Resolve 2011, chapter 48, section 8. It
18 directs the Commissioner of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources to convene a task
19 force to address obstacles that affect the expansion of Maine's maple sugar industry and
20 develop strategies to promote the industry. This task force will continue the work of the
21 task force convened under Resolve 2011, chapter 48.

22 This resolve directs the commissioner to submit a report including the findings and
23 recommendations of the task force to the joint standing committee of the Legislature
24 having jurisdiction over agriculture matters no later than December 4, 2013. It authorizes
25 the committee to submit legislation to the Second Regular Session of the 126th
26 Legislature.