

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2025

Legislative Document

No. 183

H.P. 116

House of Representatives, January 14, 2025

**An Act to Cap Publicly Owned Land Area at No More than 50
Percent of Any County**

Reference to the Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry suggested and ordered printed.

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

ROBERT B. HUNT

Clerk

Presented by Representative FAULKINGHAM of Winter Harbor.
Cosponsored by Senator MOORE of Washington and
Representatives: MCINTYRE of Lowell, MINGO of Calais, QUINT of Hodgdon, STROUT of
Harrington, TUELL of East Machias.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 12 MRSA §1829-A** is enacted to read:

3 **§1829-A. Limitation on publicly owned land**

4 **1. Public ownership limited.** Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary,
5 publicly owned land in this State may not exceed 50% of the land area of a county. For
6 purposes of this section, "publicly owned land" means land in which the Federal
7 Government, the State, a county or a municipality holds property rights, including
8 easements, development rights, trust rights or other ownership interests.

9 With the approval of 2/3 of each House of the Legislature, the State, a county or a
10 municipality may exceed the limits of this subsection.

11 **2. Report.** The department shall, beginning April 15, 2026, report biannually to the
12 joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over public lands matters
13 on the percentage of publicly owned land statewide and by county.

14 **SUMMARY**

15 This bill limits publicly owned land in the State to no more than 50% of the land area
16 in any county. The bill also allows the State, a county or a municipality to exceed the limits
17 with the approval of 2/3 of each House of the Legislature.

18 The Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry is required to report
19 biannually beginning April 15, 2026 to the joint standing committee of the Legislature
20 having jurisdiction over public lands matters on the percentage of federal, state, county and
21 municipal property ownership statewide and by county.