

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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Date: 6/5/25

## MINORITY

(Filing No. S-298)

## HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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## STATE OF MAINE

## SENATE

## 132ND LEGISLATURE

## FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "B" to S.P. 441, L.D. 1023, "Resolve, to Reestablish and Continue the Work of the Blue Economy Task Force"

Amend the resolve by striking out the title and substituting the following:

**'Resolve, to Reestablish the Blue Economy Task Force to Support Maine's Emergence as a Center for Blue Economy Innovation and Opportunity in the 21st Century'**

Amend the resolve by striking out everything after the title and inserting the following:

**'Sec. 1. Task force established. Resolved:** That the Department of Economic and Community Development shall convene the Blue Economy Task Force, referred to in this resolve as "the task force," to support the State's emergence as a center for blue economy innovation and opportunity in the 21st century.

As used in this resolve, "blue economy" means business sectors that rely on the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic health, improved livelihoods, jobs or ecosystem health, and "sustainable" means practices that support the economic growth of a community while maintaining or improving the health of marine ecosystems and without negatively impacting social, environmental and cultural aspects of the community.

**Sec. 2. Task force membership. Resolved:** That the task force consists of 23 members as follows.

1. The President of the Senate shall appoint one member of the Senate and the Speaker of the House shall appoint 2 members of the House of Representatives, including a member from each of the 2 parties holding the largest number of seats in the Legislature. Members appointed by the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House serve at the pleasure of their respective appointing authority.

2. The Commissioner of Economic and Community Development shall appoint 19 members.

A. Members appointed by the commissioner serve at the pleasure of the commissioner and must include representatives of public and private research institutions, businesses that are innovating in various blue economy sectors, fisheries businesses, aquaculture

**COMMITTEE AMENDMENT**

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businesses and equity investors in blue economy businesses. The commissioner shall ensure that a majority of the members of the task force membership appointed pursuant to this subsection represent a blue economy business or an entity directly involved in the commercialization of blue economy-related research and innovation.

B. The commissioner shall to the greatest extent practicable ensure that members who served on the Blue Economy Task Force, as established by Resolve 2023, chapter 119 and referred to in this resolve as "the prior task force," are provided an opportunity to serve on the task force established by this resolve. If a member of the prior task force is unable or unwilling to serve on the task force established in section 1, the commissioner shall ensure that the member appointed to serve on the task force in that prior member's place represents the same interests or background as the prior member.

3. The President of the Maine Technology Institute or the president's designee shall serve as a member of the task force.

The appointing authorities identified in this section shall ensure that all appointments are made no later than June 30, 2025.

**Sec. 3. Chairs. Resolved:** That the Commissioner of Economic and Community Development shall appoint 2 cochairs from among the task force's members, one who is employed by a state agency and one who is not employed by a state agency. The cochairs shall set the schedule and agenda for task force meetings and preside at the meetings.

**Sec. 4. Duties. Resolved:** That the task force has, but is not limited to, the following duties.

1. The task force shall develop recommendations for the establishment of the Center for the Blue Economy, referred to in this section as "the center," which must include, but is not limited to:

A. An organizational structure and budget for the ongoing funding of the center;

B. A requirement that the center be either housed within an existing institution, such as the University of Maine System, or as a stand-alone, independent entity; and

C. The scope of the authorities and responsibilities of the center, which may include, but are not limited to:

(1) Supporting businesses and other institutions in the State to build on the blue economy advantages of and reduce the obstacles to further development of the blue economy in the State identified by the prior task force in its report submitted pursuant to Resolve 2023, chapter 119, section 6;

(2) Advancing research and development and supporting innovation in the blue economy, including the financing of innovations and growth in blue economy output and employment;

(3) Promoting communication and collaboration among blue economy institutions and businesses;

(4) Providing common services to blue economy businesses and institutions, including research support and access to journals and technologies such as laboratories, 3-D printing and data management; and

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(5) Supporting the development of blue economy sectors as outlined in current or future sector-specific development plans and roadmaps.

2. The task force shall recommend improvements and expansions of blue economy workforce education and training to encompass the elementary and secondary school system and public and private institutions of higher education.

**Sec. 5. Staff assistance. Resolved:** That the Department of Economic and Community Development shall provide necessary staffing assistance to the task force. At the request of the task force, other state agencies and state entities shall provide information and analysis to assist the task force in its deliberations and reporting.

**Sec. 6. Funding. Resolved:** That the task force may accept grants, private contributions and any other outside funding to support the task force in carrying out its duties.

**Sec. 7. Report. Resolved:** That the task force shall prepare and submit a written report containing its initial findings and recommendations to the Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development no later than December 3, 2025. After reviewing the initial report, the committee may report out legislation relating to the report to the Second Regular Session of the 132nd Legislature. The task force shall prepare and submit a written report containing its final findings and recommendations to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over economic development matters no later than November 4, 2026. After reviewing the final report, the committee may report out legislation relating to the report to the 133rd Legislature in 2027.

**Sec. 8. Appropriations and allocations. Resolved:** That the following appropriations and allocations are made.

**ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, DEPARTMENT OF**

**Blue Economy Task Force N546**

Initiative: Provides base allocations to authorize expenditures of money received from public or private sources.

<b>OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS</b>	<b>2025-26</b>	<b>2026-27</b>
All Other	\$500	\$500
<b>OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS TOTAL</b>	<b>\$500</b>	<b>\$500</b>

**Maine Technology Capacity Fund N545**

Initiative: Provides one-time funds to match funds in support of blue economy-related research, economic development and education and training.

<b>GENERAL FUND</b>	<b>2025-26</b>	<b>2026-27</b>
All Other	\$100,000	\$0
<b>GENERAL FUND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$100,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>

**ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT, DEPARTMENT OF  
DEPARTMENT TOTALS**

**2025-26                      2026-27**

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2	GENERAL FUND	\$100,000	\$0
3	OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS	\$500	\$500
4			
5	DEPARTMENT TOTAL - ALL FUNDS	<u>\$100,500</u>	<u>\$500</u>

6

7 Amend the resolve by relettering or renumbering any nonconsecutive Part letter or  
8 section number to read consecutively.

9

### SUMMARY

10 This resolve, which is the minority report of the committee, replaces the resolve and  
11 changes the title. The amendment directs the Department of Economic and Community  
12 Development to convene the Blue Economy Task Force to develop recommendations for  
13 the establishment of the Center for the Blue Economy and other recommendations. The  
14 task force is directed to submit its report to the Joint Standing Committee on Housing and  
15 Economic Development no later than December 3, 2025 and the committee may report out  
16 legislation relating to that initial report. The task force is directed to submit its final report  
17 to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over economic  
18 development matters no later than November 4, 2026 and the committee may report out  
19 legislation relating to that final report. The amendment also provides an appropriation of  
20 \$100,000 in fiscal year 2025-26 to support the Maine Technology Capacity Fund to provide  
21 matching funds in support of blue economy-related research, economic development, and  
22 education and training.

23

### FISCAL NOTE REQUIRED

24

(See attached)

**132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE****LD 1023****LR 2011(03)****Resolve, to Reestablish and Continue the Work of the Blue Economy Task Force**

**Fiscal Note for Bill as Amended by Committee Amendment "B" (S-298)**  
**Committee: Housing and Economic Development**  
**Fiscal Note Required: Yes**

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**Fiscal Note****Legislative Cost/Study**

	<b>FY 2025-26</b>	<b>FY 2026-27</b>	<b>Projections FY 2027-28</b>	<b>Projections FY 2028-29</b>
<b>Net Cost (Savings)</b>				
General Fund	\$100,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Appropriations/Allocations</b>				
General Fund	\$100,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other Special Revenue Funds	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500

**Legislative Cost/Study**

The general operating expenses of this study are projected to be \$2,100 in fiscal year 2025-26 and \$2,100 in fiscal year 2026-27. The Legislature's proposed budget for the 2026-2027 biennium includes \$22,196 in each of fiscal years 2025-26 and 2026-27 for the costs of legislative studies, as well as \$8,265 in projected balances from fiscal year 2024-25 and \$33,073 of balances carried over from prior years for this purpose. Whether these amounts are sufficient to fund all studies will depend on the number of studies authorized by the Legislative Council and the Legislature.

**Fiscal Detail and Notes**

This bill includes a one-time General Fund appropriation to the Maine Technology Capacity Fund within the Department of Economic and Community Development to provide matching funds in support of blue economy-related research, economic development and education and training. This bill also includes ongoing Other Special Revenue Funds base allocations of \$500 per year beginning in fiscal year 2025-26 to the Blue Economy Task Force to authorize the expenditure of any monies received from public and private sources.

Any additional costs to the other various agencies affected by the provisions of this bill are anticipated to be minor and can be absorbed within existing budgeted resources.