

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# 132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

## FIRST SPECIAL SESSION-2025

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Legislative Document

No. 1525

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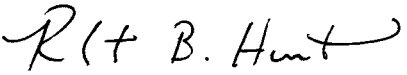
H.P. 1010

House of Representatives, April 8, 2025

### An Act to Promote Firewood Banks in Maine

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

  
ROBERT B. HUNT  
Clerk

Presented by Representative RAY of Lincolnville.  
Cosponsored by Senator FARRIN of Somerset and  
Representatives: BOYER of Poland, FAULKINGHAM of Winter Harbor, HASENFUS of  
Readfield, HEPLER of Woolwich, PLUECKER of Warren, SACHS of Freeport, SINCLAIR  
of Bath, STOVER of Boothbay.

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

2 Sec. 1. 12 MRSA c. 810 is enacted to read:

3 **CHAPTER 810**

4 **FIREWOOD BANKS**

5 **§9731. Firewood banks**

6 The bureau shall promote the development and public awareness of firewood banks in  
7 this State in accordance with this section.

8 **1. Definition.** A "firewood bank" is an organization that accepts donations of firewood  
9 and makes firewood available free of charge to individuals and families in need of heating  
10 assistance.

11 **2. Public promotion; maintain list of operating firewood banks.** The bureau shall:

12 A. Provide information to the public for the purpose of increasing awareness of the  
13 resources available at firewood banks and the charitable efforts needed to maintain  
14 firewood banks in this State; and

15 B. Develop and maintain, on the bureau's publicly accessible website, a list of all  
16 firewood banks operating in the State.

17 In fulfilling its obligations under this subsection, the bureau may consult with the  
18 University of Maine Cooperative Extension Service.

19 **3. Informational resources for firewood banks.** The bureau shall develop and  
20 dispense informational resources to promote the successful operation of firewood banks in  
21 this State. In fulfilling its obligations under this subsection, the bureau may collaborate  
22 with the University of Maine Cooperative Extension Service.

23 **4. Forest harvesting of state-owned land; offer to donate firewood required.** When  
24 timber or forest harvesting operations are conducted on state-owned land and any part of  
25 that land is located within 50 miles from a firewood bank that is listed on the statewide list  
26 of firewood banks maintained pursuant to subsection 2, paragraph B, the State shall offer  
27 as a donation to that firewood bank at least 8 but not more than 13 cords of hardwood. The  
28 bureau shall determine how many cords of hardwood the State is required to offer with  
29 respect to a particular timber or forest harvesting operation.

30 **5. Liability.** A firewood bank and the municipality or county in which a firewood bank  
31 is operating is not liable for any damages caused by the taking or use of firewood from the  
32 firewood bank.

33 Sec. 2. 38 MRSA §342, sub-§18 is enacted to read:

34 **18. Guidance to firewood banks.** The commissioner shall provide guidance to  
35 municipalities or counties in this State operating firewood banks concerning management  
36 of environmental impacts and solid-waste disposal associated with the operation of a  
37 firewood bank. For the purposes of this subsection, "firewood bank" has the same meaning  
38 as in Title 12, section 9731, subsection 1.

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The bill requires the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Bureau of Forestry to provide information to the public to increase awareness of firewood banks and to maintain a list on the bureau's publicly accessible website that lists all of the operating firewood banks in this State. The bureau must also develop informational resources to promote the successful operation of firewood banks in this State. In fulfilling these obligations, the bureau may consult with the University of Maine Cooperative Extension Service.

The bill clarifies that a firewood bank and the municipality or county in which a firewood bank is located is not liable for any damages caused by the taking or use of firewood obtained from a firewood bank. The bill also requires the Commissioner of Environmental Protection to provide guidance to municipalities and counties concerning management of environmental impacts and solid-waste disposal associated with the operation of a firewood bank.