

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# 132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

## FIRST SPECIAL SESSION-2025

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Legislative Document

No. 1601

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H.P. 1059

House of Representatives, April 10, 2025

### **An Act to Create Parity in Poultry Processing and Farming Licenses and Inspections**

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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 COLLAMORE of Pittsfield.

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

2           **Sec. 1. 7 MRSA §449** is enacted to read:

3       **§449. Stakeholder group to develop uniform interpretation of United States**  
4       **Department of Agriculture's regulations and exemptions**

5           The commissioner shall convene a stakeholder group to develop a uniform  
6       interpretation of the United States Department of Agriculture's regulations and exemptions  
7       to ensure the uniformity of interpretation of the regulations and exemptions by an employee  
8       or official of the State or an employee or official of the Federal Government or of any other  
9       governmental entity of this State authorized by the commissioner to perform inspection  
10       functions related to agricultural products under an agreement between the commissioner  
11       and the governmental entity.

12           **1. Membership.** The stakeholder group must consist of 16 members, and each county  
13       must be represented by a member of the stakeholder group. Of the required members, 14  
14       must be representatives of nonorganic farms and 2 must be representatives of farms  
15       certified as organic by an organization accredited by the United States Department of  
16       Agriculture. The stakeholder group must consist of the following members to be appointed  
17       by the Governor:

18           A. A representative of a small farm with an annual gross income between \$50,000 and  
19       \$250,000;

20           B. A representative of a medium-sized farm with an annual gross income between  
21       \$250,000 and \$1,000,000;

22           C. A representative of a large farm with an annual gross income greater than  
23       \$1,000,000;

24           D. A pork or beef livestock farmer;

25           E. A dairy farmer;

26           F. A poultry farmer;

27           G. A farmer of fruits;

28           H. A farmer of vegetables;

29           I. A farmer of wild blueberries;

30           J. A farmer of potatoes;

31           K. A livestock processor;

32           L. A poultry processor; and

33           M. Four farmers representing the counties in the State not represented by the members  
34       in paragraphs A to L.

35           **2. Election of chair; vice-chair.** At the first meeting of the stakeholder group the  
36       members shall elect from the membership a chair and a vice-chair and shall determine their  
37       duties.

38           **3. Existing license holders; application of regulations and exemptions.** A licensed  
39       processor or producer, as defined in section 423, subsections 10 and 11, respectively, has  
40       5 years to comply with any change of interpretation made by the stakeholder group of the

1 United States Department of Agriculture's regulations and exemptions pursuant to this  
2 section.

3 **Sec. 2. Report.** On or before December 3, 2025, the Commissioner of Agriculture,  
4 Conservation and Forestry shall submit to the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture,  
5 Conservation and Forestry a report describing the strategies, findings and  
6 recommendations, including any necessary legislation, of the stakeholder group under the  
7 Maine Revised Statutes, Title 7, section 449. After reviewing the report, the committee  
8 may report out legislation relating to the report to the Second Regular Session of the 132nd  
9 Legislature.

## 10 SUMMARY

11 This bill requires the Commissioner of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry to  
12 convene a stakeholder group to develop a uniform interpretation of the United States  
13 Department of Agriculture's regulations and exemptions to ensure the uniformity of  
14 interpretation of the regulations and exemptions by the State's agricultural inspectors. On  
15 or before December 3, 2025, the commissioner is required to submit a report describing the  
16 strategies, findings and recommendations, including any necessary legislation, of the  
17 stakeholder group to the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and  
18 Forestry, which may report out legislation relating to the report to the Second Regular  
19 Session of the 132nd Legislature.