

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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Date: 4/12/26

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STATE OF MAINE  
SENATE  
132ND LEGISLATURE  
SECOND REGULAR SESSION

SENATE AMENDMENT "A" to COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" to S.P. 903,  
L.D. 2216, "An Act to Establish the Maine Blue Economy Center"

Amend the amendment by striking out all of section 4 and inserting the following:  
'Sec. 4. 5 MRSA c. 407, sub-c. 5 is enacted to read:

SUBCHAPTER 5

MAINE BLUE ECONOMY CENTER

§15341. Maine Blue Economy Center

1. Definitions. As used in this subchapter, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms have the following meanings.

A. "Blue economy" means the aggregate of persons engaged in any economic activity that depends upon the sustainable use of ocean, coastal or marine resources that optimizes innovation to retain and expand economic opportunities in the State while maintaining or improving the long-term health of marine ecosystems, including, but not limited to, business, manufacturing, research and education relating to commercial fishing, sustainable aquaculture and marine vegetation cultivation, marine biotechnology, ocean data and marine research, marine and coastal environmental science, resilient coastal infrastructure, working waterfront access and infrastructure, coastal ecosystem restoration and stewardship, marine recreation and tourism and sustainable boat building or marine propulsion or other industries grounded in the State's marine heritage, research expertise, location or traditional activities.

B. "Board" means the board of directors for the center established in subsection 3.

C. "Center" means the Maine Blue Economy Center established in subsection 2.

D. "Commercial fishing" means the harvesting or processing, or both, of wild marine organisms from natural habitats with the intent of disposing of them for profit or trade in commercial channels.

2. Establishment; purpose. The Maine Blue Economy Center is established within the Maine Technology Institute to serve as the State's central coordinating entity for blue

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1 economy sector initiatives and to work in collaboration with governmental entities, trade  
2 associations, institutions of higher education, research institutions, nonprofit organizations,  
3 businesses and other entities to provide for the growth of the blue economy sector. The  
4 center shall support the sustainable development of ocean-based industries while  
5 recognizing the importance of the Gulf of Maine ecosystem and the marine resources upon  
6 which coastal communities and traditional marine industries depend. The center is  
7 established to serve the following purposes:

8 A. To expand the State's blue economy by supporting collaborative research,  
9 workforce training, entrepreneurial ventures, private sector investment and  
10 commercialization of ocean-based innovations;

11 B. To gather and analyze data that inform decisions, measure progress, identify new  
12 opportunities for the blue economy and monitor the health of ocean resources on which  
13 the blue economy depends, including through the development of a blue economy  
14 database and accessible public tools, such as an online portal and other public resources  
15 that improve understanding of the State's blue economy;

16 C. To communicate ongoing and emerging trends and performance metrics for  
17 economic activity and the health of ocean resources on which the blue economy  
18 depends through a regular public report on the state of the State's blue economy;

19 D. To serve as a statewide navigator and coordinating organization for the State's blue  
20 economy by connecting partners, aligning initiatives, strengthening communication  
21 and reducing unnecessary duplication across public, private and nonprofit efforts;

22 E. To coordinate with public and private partners, educational and research  
23 institutions, nonprofit organizations and business stakeholders to strengthen the State's  
24 blue economy and support collaboration across ocean industries;

25 F. To ensure that the traditional marine industries of this State, including commercial  
26 fishing and working waterfront activities, remain central to the State's blue economy  
27 and are fully considered in the center's planning, partnerships and recommendations;

28 G. To facilitate the creation of a highly skilled workforce and support attraction and  
29 retention of workers in the blue economy sector, including by promoting internships,  
30 apprenticeships and other work-based learning opportunities;

31 H. To conduct targeted workforce analyses, including assessments of workforce  
32 barriers, participation, outcomes and future workforce needs in the blue economy  
33 sector;

34 I. To support efforts to strengthen awareness about blue economy careers and  
35 education pathways in kindergarten to grade 12 and higher education;

36 J. To investigate opportunities for grants, loans and other resources to support blue  
37 economy entities and initiatives;

38 K. To develop strategies to attract federal, philanthropic and private investment and to  
39 position this State competitively for external funding;

40 L. To identify policy, programmatic and partnership opportunities that can support  
41 sustainable growth across the blue economy sector;

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1 M. To advise the president of the Maine Technology Institute designated under section  
2 15302 on matters related to the blue economy; and

3 N. To report regularly to the Legislature regarding its operations, activities, outcomes  
4 and recommendations.

5 **3. Board of directors.** The work of the center must be overseen by a board of directors  
6 composed of 17 members, of whom 4 members are ex officio, nonvoting members as  
7 specified in paragraph A and 13 members are appointed as specified in paragraph B. A  
8 member appointed pursuant to paragraph B is entitled to one vote.

9 A. Ex officio members of the board are:

10 (1) The Commissioner of Economic and Community Development or the  
11 commissioner's designee;

12 (2) The president of the Maine Technology Institute designated under section  
13 15302 or the president's designee;

14 (3) The Chancellor of the University of Maine System or the chancellor's designee;  
15 and

16 (4) The Commissioner of Marine Resources or the commissioner's designee.

17 B. The members of the board who are not ex officio members are appointed by the  
18 Governor and are subject to confirmation by the Senate and must be individuals or  
19 representatives of organizations that are in a position to advance the purposes and goals  
20 of the center and are able to have a significant effect on improving the State's blue  
21 economy sector. When making appointments under this paragraph, the Governor shall  
22 consider the multidisciplinary nature of the State's blue economy sector and the  
23 importance of diverse representation from coastal and rural communities and from  
24 businesses and shall consult with the board of directors of the Maine Technology  
25 Institute and the board of directors of the Finance Authority of Maine to ensure the  
26 alignment of those appointments with the State's economic development strategies.  
27 Membership under this paragraph must include:

28 (1) A representative of a business in the State with fewer than 25 employees that  
29 is involved in the blue economy sector;

30 (2) A representative of a business in the State with 25 or more employees that is  
31 involved in the blue economy sector;

32 (3) A representative of a nonprofit marine or ocean science research institution  
33 based in the State that is involved in research and development in the blue economy  
34 sector;

35 (4) A representative of a university, community college or trade school in the State  
36 that is involved in the blue economy sector, including marine or coastal  
37 environmental research in the Gulf of Maine;

38 (5) A representative recommended by a federally recognized Indian tribe in the  
39 State;

40 (6) Two representatives of trade associations or nonprofit organizations that  
41 support the blue economy sector, at least one of which collaborates directly with  
42 private sector marine industries;

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- 1                   (7) A representative of business investors or the banking or finance sectors;
- 2                   (8) A representative of a privately owned commercial fishing or working
- 3                   waterfront business in the State;
- 4                   (9) A municipal official of a coastal community in the State;
- 5                   (10) A representative from the private sector with experience in sustainable
- 6                   aquaculture or marine vegetation cultivation in the State;
- 7                   (11) A representative with expertise in emerging ocean industries; and
- 8                   (12) A representative of a privately owned marine recreational tourism business
- 9                   or trade association.

10                   Members of the board who are not ex officio members serve 3-year terms and may be

11                   reappointed.

12                   C. The Governor shall designate a chair from among the board's members who shall

13                   preside at, set the agenda for and schedule meetings of the board.

14                   D. Board members shall disclose any direct or indirect pecuniary interest in any matter

15                   brought to the center and recuse themselves from any participation in the consideration

16                   of such matters.

17                   E. The board shall meet as often as it considers necessary to perform its work and, to

18                   the extent practicable, the board shall conduct its work in a manner that is open and

19                   accessible to the public. The board may conduct its work through subcommittees.

20                   4. Operations of the center. The following provisions govern the operations of the

21                   center.

22                   A. The center shall coordinate its activities with relevant state agencies, marine

23                   industry organizations, research institutions and regional economic development

24                   organizations in order to strengthen collaboration and avoid duplication of effort across

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1 5. Staff and administrative support. The Maine Technology Institute shall provide  
2 staff as may be necessary to fulfill the center's mission and may seek assistance from other  
3 state agencies and private entities to accomplish the goals and work of the center.

4 6. Annual report. The center shall submit annually to the Governor, the Executive  
5 Director of the Legislative Council and the joint standing committee of the Legislature  
6 having jurisdiction over economic development matters, no later than 120 days after the  
7 close of the center's fiscal year, a complete report on the activities of the center. The report  
8 must also be made available to the public. The report must include the following for that  
9 fiscal year:

10 A. A description of the center's operations and an assessment of trends and  
11 performance in the State's blue economy sector, including details on the methods used  
12 to assess and measure the center's economic development impacts on the blue economy  
13 sector;

14 B. An accounting of the center's receipts and expenditures, assets and liabilities at the  
15 end of its fiscal year;

16 C. A listing of all investments, grants, loans and incentives provided by the center  
17 during its fiscal year;

18 D. A statement of the center's proposed and projected activities for its ensuing fiscal  
19 year;

20 E. An analysis of workforce trends, investment activity and emerging opportunities in  
21 the State's blue economy sector;

22 F. The most recent data available on the size, composition and growth trends in the  
23 State's marine economy and environment that is compiled in the center's database  
24 pursuant to subsection 4, paragraph C; and

25 G. Recommendations regarding further actions that may be suitable for achieving the  
26 purposes of this subchapter.

27 After reviewing the report under this subsection, the joint standing committee of the  
28 Legislature having jurisdiction over economic development matters may report out  
29 legislation relating to the report.'

30 Amend the amendment in section 5 in the 3rd line (page 6, line 15 in amendment) by  
31 striking out the following: "15331" and inserting the following: '15341'

32 Amend the amendment in section 5 in the 6th line (page 6, line 18 in amendment) by  
33 striking out the following: "15331" and inserting the following: '15341'

34 Amend the amendment in section 6 in the 2nd line (page 6, line 28 in amendment) by  
35 striking out the following: "15331" and inserting the following: '15341'

36 Amend the amendment by striking out all of section 7 and inserting the following:

37 **'Sec. 7. Transfer.** Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the State  
38 Controller shall transfer \$160,000 from the Administration - Attorney General, Other  
39 Special Revenue Funds account within the Department of the Attorney General from funds  
40 received from settlement agreements to the unappropriated surplus of the General Fund no  
41 later than June 30, 2027.

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SENATE AMENDMENT "A" to COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" to S.P. 903, L.D. 2216(s691)

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**Sec. 8. Appropriations and allocations.** The following appropriations and allocations are made.

**ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, DEPARTMENT OF  
Maine Blue Economy Center N569**

Initiative: Provides one-time funding to support the operations of the Maine Blue Economy Center.

<b>GENERAL FUND</b>	<b>2025-26</b>	<b>2026-27</b>
All Other	\$0	\$160,000
<b>GENERAL FUND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$160,000</b>

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

**SUMMARY**

This amendment replaces the appropriations and allocations section, adds transfer language and makes technical changes.

**SPONSORED BY:** Rotundo Jr

(Senator ROTUNDO, M.)

**COUNTY:** Androscoggin

**FISCAL NOTE REQUIRED  
(See attached)**



# 132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

LD 2216

LR 3009(04)

## An Act to Establish the Maine Blue Economy Center

Fiscal Note for Senate Amendment "A" to Committee Amendment "A" (S. 691.)  
 Sponsor: Sen. Rotundo of Androscoggin  
 Fiscal Note Required: Yes

### Fiscal Note

	FY 2025-26	FY 2026-27	Projections FY 2027-28	Projections FY 2028-29
<b>Net Cost (Savings)</b>				
General Fund	\$0	(\$500,000)	\$0	\$0
<b>Appropriations/Allocations</b>				
General Fund	\$0	(\$340,000)	\$0	\$0
<b>Transfers</b>				
General Fund	\$0	\$160,000	\$0	\$0
Other Special Revenue Funds	\$0	(\$160,000)	\$0	\$0

#### Fiscal Detail and Notes

This amendment reduces the one-time General Fund appropriation to the Department of Economic and Community Development from \$500,000 to \$160,000 in fiscal year 2026-27. The amendment also transfers funds from an Other Special Revenue Funds account within the Department of the Attorney General to the unappropriated surplus of the General Fund to offset the General Fund appropriation provided.