

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

The following document is provided by the
LAW AND LEGISLATIVE DIGITAL LIBRARY
at the Maine State Law and Legislative Reference Library
<http://legislature.maine.gov/lawlib>



Reproduced from electronic originals
(may include minor formatting differences from printed original)

LAWS
OF THE
STATE OF MAINE

AS PASSED BY THE

ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION
December 4, 2024 to March 21, 2025

FIRST SPECIAL SESSION
March 25, 2025 to June 25, 2025

THE GENERAL EFFECTIVE DATE FOR
FIRST REGULAR SESSION
NONEMERGENCY LAWS IS
JUNE 20, 2025

THE GENERAL EFFECTIVE DATE FOR
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION
NONEMERGENCY LAWS IS
SEPTEMBER 24, 2025

PUBLISHED BY THE REVISOR OF STATUTES
IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE MAINE REVISED STATUTES ANNOTATED,
TITLE 3, SECTION 163-A, SUBSECTION 4.

Augusta, Maine
2025

1. Review the findings of any previous studies of hydroelectric power facilities in the State, including, but not limited to, the February 2015 report prepared for the office and titled "Maine Hydropower Study," to identify dam sites within the State that have the greatest potential to be efficiently expanded or upgraded;

2. Review new technologies being used in hydroelectric power facilities in other states and evaluate whether those technologies could be used in this State to improve or expand the hydroelectric power industry through the expansion or upgrading of the dam sites identified under subsection 1. In carrying out this review, the office shall consult with at least one hydroelectric power facility in Alaska and at least one hydroelectric power facility in each of 2 other states that the office determines has similar geographic and topographical characteristics to Maine; and

3. Identify locations within the State that may be suitable for the development of pumped storage hydropower systems because of geographic, technical and economic factors and evaluate the existing barriers to establishing such hydroelectric energy storage systems.

Sec. 3. Study; geothermal systems. Resolved: That the office shall conduct a study for the purpose of evaluating the potential for the development of a geothermal power plant or other geothermal power plant generation system or space heating and cooling system in this State based on an assessment of geographic, technical and economic factors. For the purposes of this resolve, "geothermal power plant" means a power plant that uses heat from the earth to generate electricity or thermal energy for heating or cooling. The study must summarize research and analysis of opportunities for the development of geothermal systems in the State while taking into consideration the greenhouse gas emissions associated with such systems. The office is not required to include specific cost data or a technical economic assessment of individual sites in the study. In conducting this study, the office shall:

1. Consult with persons with expertise in the geologic engineering field, including persons employed by State Government or Federal Government, regarding the feasibility of establishing a geothermal power plant in the State. Using the existing resources of the office, the office may seek a formal opinion or report from such persons. If the office concludes, as a result of the office's consultation, that a geothermal power plant could be developed in the State in a cost-effective way, as determined by the office, the office shall develop recommendations for the development of a geothermal power plant in the State; and

2. Assess the potential for developing district geothermal systems:

A. On brownfield sites in the State, as determined by the office in consultation with the Department of Environmental Protection; and

B. At state-owned facilities or on state-owned properties.

Sec. 4. Reports. Resolved: That, no later than January 15, 2027, the office shall submit a report based on each study under this resolve, including any recommendations, to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over energy matters. The joint standing committee may report out legislation related to the reports to the 133rd Legislature in 2027.

See title page for effective date.

CHAPTER 40

H.P. 475 - L.D. 733

Resolve, to Require the Maine State Housing Authority to Submit a Report on the Pilot Project to Improve Access to Credit for Low-income Individuals

Sec. 1. Report. Resolved: That, by June 30, 2026, the Maine State Housing Authority shall submit a report to the Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development with details on the authority's pilot project to facilitate rent payment history reporting to credit reporting agencies for purposes of establishing or improving the credit ratings of low-income residential tenants through voluntary participation of residential landlords and tenants in the State in submitting rent payment histories of tenants. The report must include details on the effectiveness of collecting and reporting rent payment histories, an analysis of any improvement in the credit ratings of tenant participants and recommended legislation to make the pilot project permanent. The joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over housing and economic development matters may report out legislation based upon the report to the 133rd Legislature in 2027.

See title page for effective date.

CHAPTER 41

S.P. 487 - L.D. 1198

Resolve, Directing the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry to Assess Its Current Meat and Poultry Inspection Programs

Emergency preamble. Whereas, acts and resolves of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

Whereas, Maine's meat and poultry inspection programs exist to protect the health and welfare of consumers by ensuring that livestock and poultry used in the production of meat and poultry products, respectively, are humanely handled and disease-free and the resulting products are wholesome, not adulterated and correctly labeled and packaged; and

Whereas, this legislation must take effect before the expiration of the 90-day period to allow the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry to begin its review of Maine's meat and poultry inspection programs as soon as possible; and

Whereas, in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now, therefore, be it

Sec. 1. Meat and poultry inspection study.

Resolved: That, within existing budgeted resources, the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry shall conduct a review of programs and processes related to meat and poultry inspections, including processes related to exemptions from inspections, to determine areas for possible improvements, efficiencies and enhanced flexibility to benefit agricultural producers, processors and retail and public customers. In conducting the review under this section, the department shall consult with livestock and poultry producers and processors, the United States Department of Agriculture, the University of Maine Cooperative Extension and other stakeholders that the department determines necessary to assess existing programs' statutory authorities, rules, regulations, policies and practices, including those involving investigations, enforcement and staff training. As part of the review under this section, the department shall conduct a survey of meat and poultry producers and processors to obtain feedback on rules, regulations, policies and practices affecting the regulated community. The department shall also review the existing exemptions that relate to poultry processors that process certain numbers of poultry per year and the department's existing cooperative agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture, Food Safety and Inspection Service and that agreement's related requirements. The department shall develop strategies to ensure uniform interpretation of the United States Department of Agriculture's regulations and exemptions.

Sec. 2. Report. Resolved: That, by January 15, 2026, the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry shall submit a report based on its review in section 1 describing strategies, findings and recommendations, including suggested legislation, to the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry. The Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry may submit legislation

related to the report to the Second Regular Session of the 132nd Legislature.

Emergency clause. In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this legislation takes effect when approved.

Effective May 30, 2025.

CHAPTER 42

S.P. 291 - L.D. 758

Resolve, to Conduct a Study to Update Flood Hazard Data in the Sandy River Watershed

Sec. 1. Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Maine Geological Survey to conduct Sandy River watershed geomorphic study. Resolved: That, in coordination with the United States Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency; the Department of Transportation; the Department of Environmental Protection; the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife; the Maine Office of Community Affairs; the Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management, Maine Emergency Management Agency; and other relevant state agencies, the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Bureau of Resource Information and Land Use Planning, Division of Geology, Natural Areas and Coastal Resources, Maine Geological Survey shall contract for a geomorphic study within the Sandy River watershed to update flood hazard data within the watershed. The study must include an assessment of river movement, erosion and sedimentation and the impacts of those factors on flood risk and river health. The study must also provide individuals who reside within the Sandy River watershed and individuals who reside within the watershed of similar river systems with information about flood risks and options to manage those risks. The Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, in collaboration with relevant state agencies, shall seek funding to support the costs of the study.

See title page for effective date.
