

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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LAWS
OF THE
STATE OF MAINE

AS PASSED BY THE

ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE

SECOND REGULAR SESSION
JANUARY 7, 2026 to APRIL 29, 2026

THE GENERAL EFFECTIVE DATE FOR
SECOND REGULAR SESSION
NONEMERGENCY LAWS IS
JULY 29, 2026

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

Augusta, Maine
2026

CHAPTER 147
S.P. 862 - L.D. 2144

**Resolve, to Establish the
Working Group to Prioritize
Wellness and Mental Health
Resources for Heritage
Industries**

Preamble. Whereas, struggles with mental health and wellness are common within Maine's heritage industries, with many individuals and family members reporting high levels of stress, burnout, depression and anxiety; and

Whereas, a July 2025 survey conducted by the University of Maine Cooperative Extension and partners revealed 61% of respondents from the agriculture, aquaculture and wild harvest fisheries industries identified the need for increased public education to raise awareness and reduce stigma around mental health issues and access to industry-specific and culturally competent supportive services; and

Whereas, Vermont, Colorado, Rhode Island, Massachusetts and other states have recognized this critical need and implemented solutions; and

Whereas, Maine held its first Maine Land and Sea Farmer Wellness Forum in September 2025, at which over 200 people were in attendance; and

Whereas, the 2021 suicide rate among persons of working age in the United States is approximately 33% higher than it was 2 decades ago, with the agriculture, forestry, logging and fishing industries remaining among occupation groups with higher suicide rates; and

Whereas, the purpose of the working group under this legislation is to convene a group of leaders and experts in heritage industries and mental health and wellness care and wellness programs to improve access to mental health and wellness and wellness care for those involved in agriculture, fisheries, forestry and logging and their families; now, therefore, be it

Sec. 1. Working group established. Resolved: That the Working Group to Prioritize Wellness and Mental Health Resources for Heritage Industries, referred to in this resolve as "the working group," is established.

Sec. 2. Working group membership. Resolved: That the working group consists of 11 members as follows:

1. The Commissioner of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, or the commissioner's designee, who serves as a cochair of the working group;
2. The Commissioner of Marine Resources, or the commissioner's designee, who serves as a cochair of the working group;

3. The Commissioner of Health and Human Services, or the commissioner's designee, who serves as a cochair of the working group;

4. One member representing the University of Maine Cooperative Extension, appointed by the co-chairs of the working group;

5. One member representing the State's agriculture industry, appointed by the cochairs of the working group;

6. One member representing the State's fishing industry, appointed by the cochairs of the working group;

7. One member representing the State's logging sector, appointed by the cochairs of the working group;

8. One member representing a statewide mental health services provider organization, appointed by the cochairs of the working group;

9. One member representing an occupational health and safety organization, appointed by the co-chairs of the working group;

10. One member with expertise in rural health or public health services, appointed by the cochairs of the working group; and

11. One member representing a statewide organization that delivers community services, appointed by the cochairs of the working group.

Sec. 3. Duties. Resolved: That the working group shall:

1. Review existing mental health, primary care and wellness resources available to individuals in the State's heritage industries, including agriculture, fishing, forestry and logging;

2. Consider the specific challenges for individuals with serious brain disorders and traumatic brain injuries working in heritage industries;

3. Identify gaps in the provision of services and barriers to accessing existing resources;

4. Identify issues facing migrant workers;

5. Examine successful models from other states and jurisdictions;

6. Develop recommendations for establishing sustainable funding mechanisms and service delivery models; and

7. Explore opportunities for public education to reduce stigma around mental health issues and increase awareness of mental health services.

Sec. 4. Report. Resolved: That, no later than December 1, 2026, the working group shall submit a report that includes its findings and recommendations based on its review under section 3, including suggested legislation, for presentation to the joint standing com-

mittees of the Legislature having jurisdiction over agriculture, conservation and forestry matters, marine resources matters and health and human services matters. The joint standing committees may each submit legislation based on the findings and recommendations in the report to the 133rd Legislature in 2027.

See title page for effective date.

CHAPTER 148

S.P. 889 - L.D. 2184

Resolve, to Name a Bridge Between the Town of Hiram and the Town of Cornish Warren's Bridge

Sec. 1. Bridge between Hiram and Cornish named. Resolved: That the Department of Transportation shall designate Bridge 5088 on South Hiram Road between the Town of Hiram and the Town of Cornish Warren's Bridge.

See title page for effective date.

CHAPTER 149

H.P. 1376 - L.D. 2052

Resolve, to Study the Use of Technology in Classrooms and Study Safeguards Related to Its Use

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

Whereas, this resolve directs the Maine Education Policy Research Institute to develop a survey to gather and analyze information from school administrative units, schools in the unorganized territory and private schools approved for the receipt of public funds under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A, chapter 117, subchapter 2 that enroll 60% or more publicly funded students regarding the use of technology in the classroom, safety policies and procedures in place and the means employed to ensure compliance with those policies and procedures and to gather information on current guidance about best practices for safe instructional technology use for children from state and national experts; and

Whereas, the survey and analysis must be initiated before the 90-day period expires in order that the work may be completed and a report submitted in time for submission to the next legislative session; 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. Maine Education Policy Research Institute study. Resolved: That the Maine Education Policy Research Institute shall develop a survey as described under section 2 to gather and analyze information from school administrative units, schools in the unorganized territory and private schools approved for the receipt of public funds under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A, chapter 117, subchapter 2 that enroll 60% or more publicly funded students regarding the use of technology in the classroom, safety policies and procedures in place and the means employed to ensure compliance with those policies and procedures. In developing the survey, the Maine Education Policy Research Institute may consult with the Department of Education, the Maine School Management Association, the Maine Principals' Association, the Maine Education Association, the Association of Computer Technology Educators of Maine and other stakeholders as appropriate.

Sec. 2. Survey requirements. Resolved: That the Maine Education Policy Research Institute shall survey educators from all 16 counties in the State on the use of technology in the classroom. The survey parameters must include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. The amount of average instruction time per grade level spent on school-issued technology devices;
2. The safeguards undertaken before introducing new school-issued technology products, such as enabling screen time settings, blocking access to social media applications and websites and configuring default privacy settings to the highest level;
3. The policies regarding allowed use or prohibition of gamification, leader boards, push notification alerts, advertising, geolocation, generative and conversational artificial intelligence, use of free online tools and use of unlicensed educational websites or online tools that are not certified as safe for schools under the federal Children's Online Privacy Protection Act of 1998;
4. The compliance measures to ensure that school policies under subsection 3 are followed;
5. The timeline for school review of education technology products;
6. Adherence to the provisions of the Student Information Privacy Act;
7. The policies in place for prohibiting artificial intelligence use in grading, teacher evaluations and any other education or administrative areas;