

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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OFFICE OF
THE GOVERNOR

NO. 22 FY 04/05
DATE July 13, 2004

**AN ORDER TO DEVELOP METHODS OF FINANCING CIVIC, CONVENTION
AND CULTURAL FACILITIES STATEWIDE**

WHEREAS, tourism accounts for 15% of our gross state product and the State needs to invest in tourism as a single industry; and

WHEREAS, the Blaine House Conference on the Creative Economy has identified quality of life, arts, cultural events, tourism, and other components of the Creative Economy as key components of job growth; and

WHEREAS, the state's existing convention and civic centers, located in our major downtowns, are in need of additional investment to renovate existing facilities or build new facilities in order to attract high value visitors and create new jobs in the tourism industry; and

WHEREAS, municipal and public authorities have proposed substantial new convention and recreation facilities; and

WHEREAS, many of the benefits of these facilities are statewide and the cost of construction shouldn't be entirely borne by the property taxpayers in host communities; and

WHEREAS, a state funded study entitled "Feasibility and Siting Study of Statewide Meeting and Convention Facilities", March 12, 2001, provides a basis for market supportable initiatives in six regions of Maine; and

WHEREAS, the state's economic health and prosperity is inextricably tied to the vitality of our downtowns that serve the local and regional needs of our citizens and businesses; and

WHEREAS, our vision for a high quality of life in Maine requires that we have strong service center communities;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, John E. Baldacci, Governor of the State of Maine, do hereby direct the State Planning Office, the Department of Economic and Community Development, and Maine Revenue Services to engage stakeholders, to undertake the following duties:

1. Duties

The agencies should broadly investigate general and regionally specific methods of public and private financing for civic, convention and cultural facilities, including but not limited to:

- a. methods to capture the net growth in local and state tax revenues resulting from increased economic activity generated by the investment in such facilities through creation of special Civic, Convention and Cultural Facility Investment Districts; including methods to pass through benefits of Tax Increment Financing (TIF), Employment Tax Increment Financing (ETIF) and State Tax Increment Financing (STIF) derived from private investments within such districts to public entities which own and operate civic, convention and cultural facilities;
- b. other tools modeled upon -- or amending -- Pine Tree Zones, Development Districts, Tax Increment Financing (TIF), and Employment Tax Increment Financing (ETIF);
- c. other methods of public or private financing such as general fund bond financing; revenue bond financing; dedicated local option taxes or any other applicable sources of financing for civic, convention and cultural facilities;
- d. methods of financing for similar types of facilities being built in other jurisdictions around the country; and
- e. statutory and related legal revisions or new authority to enable municipal and other public entities to build and operate facilities and receive public and private revenues derived from potential sources described above.

The agencies should consider and support the work of:

- f. The Office of Tourism as it looks more broadly at tourism infrastructure planning and tourism strategic planning, including partnerships and planning of destination resort infrastructure;
- g. The Blaine House Conference on the Creative Economy and resulting reports, actions, and committees;
- h. The Maine Downtown Center, the Community Preservation Advisory Committee, and the State Planning Office as they look at strengthening and restoring the vitality of Maine's downtowns;
- i. The Blaine House Conference on Natural Resource Based Industries and resulting reports, actions and committees; and
- j. Any Task Forces charged with implementing tax reform.

2. Stakeholder Outreach

In developing recommendations, the agencies shall consult with those entities that the agencies believe are interested in the development of civic and convention centers including but not limited to:

Representatives of the City of Portland
Representatives of the City of Bangor
Representatives of the City of Lewiston
Representatives of the City of Auburn
Representatives of the City of Augusta
Representatives of the City of Presque Isle
Representatives of rural communities exploring the development of major resorts
Representatives of regional development commissions
Representatives of the Maine Merchants Association
Representatives of the Maine Tourism Association
Representatives of the Maine Tourism Commission
Representatives of the Maine Restaurant Association
Representatives of the Maine Innkeepers Association
Representatives of state and regional chambers of commerce
Representatives of regional visitor bureaus and regional tourism organizations
Representatives of the Cumberland County Civic Center

3. Staff

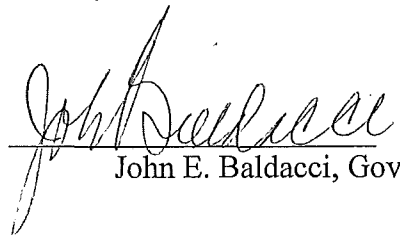
The State Planning Office, the Department of Economic and Community Development and Maine Revenue Services shall provide all necessary staff, from existing resources.

4. Final Report

The agencies shall submit a final report to the Governor by December 15, 2004. The final report must include recommendations for providing specific methods of public financing for civic, convention and cultural facilities, including draft legislation as necessary to implement the recommendations. Upon submission of the final report, the Task Force and the authority of this Executive Order will dissolve.

5. Effective Date

The effective date of this Executive Order is July 13, 2004.


John E. Baldacci, Governor