

SECOND REGULAR SESSION

ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTEENTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document

NO. 2276

 H.P. 1664 House of Representatives, February 16, 1988 Approved for introduction by a majority of the
Legislative Council pursuant to Joint Rule 26. Reference to the Committee on Appropriations and
Financial Affairs suggested and ordered printed. EDWIN H. PERT, Clerk
Presented by Representative GREENLAW of Standish.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-EIGHT

1 AN ACT to Require Payment for Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Wardens Out of the General Fund. 2 3 4 Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows: 5 6 12 MRSA §7018 is enacted to read: General Fund appropriation for fish and 7 §7018. 8 wildlife protection

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1 Funding. To ensure that the State's fish and Τ. wildlife resources receive adequate protection 2 and that all Maine citizens contribute financially toward 3 4 the preservation and enhancement of these resources, 5 at least 20% of the total budget of the Bureau of 6 Warden Service shall be financed annually from the 7 General Fund.

8 2. Future appropriation. Beginning with fiscal year 1989-90, and in each subsequent year, it is the intent of the Legislature that a sum of money equal to 9 10 at least 20% of the total warden service budget shall 11 be appropriated. The appropriation referred to in this section shall be placed in the Inland Fisheries 12 13 14 and Wildlife Fund at the beginning of the fiscal year 15 and shall be used by the department to help pay the operational costs of the warden service. 16

STATEMENT OF FACT

18 The Legislature finds that the State's fish and 19 wildlife resources are important to a large majority 20 of the citizens of this State and that these resources 21 are an essential part of the State's heritage, 22 economic stability and general welfare.

It is in the best public interest to preserve and enhance the State's fish and wildlife resources through habitat acquisition, sound management practices and intensive protection programs.

The Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife is charged with the stewardship of all species of inland fish and wildlife for the consumptive and noncomsumptive use and enjoyment of Maine citizens and out-of-state visitors.

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The Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, a dedicated revenue agency, is financed primarily with funds derived from the sale of hunting, fishing and trapping licenses.

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5 Anticipated license revenues will be sufficient to 6 allow the department to carry out its legislative 7 mandates through June 30, 1989. At that time, faced 8 with a new wage contract, dedicated revenue sources 9 will no longer be sufficient to allow the department 10 to continue to provide the current level of services.

11 Warden Service has the primary The Bureau of 12 responsibility for protecting the fish and wildlife 13 statewide law enforcement and, as a resources 14 organization with full police powers, provides numerous other serivces to the people of Maine. 15

16 The citizens of Maine benefit from the State's 17 fish and wildlife resources but many do not assist in 18 funding the agency responsible for protecting these 19 resources.

Therefore, this bill is to provide a General Fund appropriation for the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to pay for 20% of the operational costs of Maine's warden service.

24 The Commission to Study the Impact of Game and Nongame Species on Maine's Economy, a commission 25 created by the Legislature in 1987, recently initiated a study through the University of Maine System to 26 27 analyze the impact of fish and wildlife resources on 28 Maine's economy, to analyze the costs of managing these resources and to evaluate alternative funding 29 30 31 mechanisms for managing these resources. Results of 32 this study will be used to develop a proposal which dress the department's long-term funding However, the final results of this study will 33 will address 34 needs. 35 not be available until the summer of 1990.

The General Fund appropriation associated with this bill will give the department approximately \$1,000,000 in additional money in each of the 2 fiscal years beginning with July 1, 1989. This supplemental appropriation will ensure that a portion of the cost of protecting Maine's fish and wildlife resources is

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1 shared by all Maine citizens. These additional funds 2 will also allow the Department of Inland Fisheries and 3 Wildlife to continue to meet legislative mandates 4 without additional license fee increases through the 5 2-year budget period which begins on July 1, 1989.

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