

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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117th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-1995

Legislative Document

No. 1505

H.P. 1070

House of Representatives, May 9, 1995

Resolve, to Identify Priorities for Public Acquisition of Interests in Land.

Reference to the Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joseph W. Mayo".

JOSEPH W. MAYO, Clerk

Presented by Representative MARTIN of Eagle Lake.
Cosponsored by Representatives: AHEARNE of Madawaska, BARTH of Bethel, BERRY of Livermore, GOULD of Greenville, HEESCHEN of Wilton, HICHBORN of Lagrange, SHIAH of Bowdoinham, Senators: MICHAUD of Penobscot, O'DEA of Penobscot, PARADIS of Aroostook, PINGREE of Knox.

2 **Sec. 1. Identification of acquisition priorities. Resolved:** That the
Land For Maine's Future Program, the Forest Legacy Program and
4 other state, federal and private conservation initiatives have in
the past acquired, and in the future will continue to acquire,
6 land and interests in land for public use and enjoyment. This
resolve requires the State to identify priorities for future
8 public acquisition of land or interests in land to enable those
programs to function in a coordinated manner and to guide future
acquisition efforts; and be it further

10
12 **Sec. 2. Priorities. Resolved:** That the State Planning Office
shall identify and set statewide priorities for lands recommended
14 for acquisition or on which less-than-fee interests may be
acquired.

16 In determining priorities, the office shall consider the
results of related planning processes, including the Wildlands
18 Lakes Assessment, the Maine Rivers Study and the Ecological
Reserves System Report and shall consider all natural resource
20 inventory information available, including, but not limited to,
information from the Natural Areas Program, the Department of
22 Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, the Department of Conservation,
the Land for Maine's Future Program and the Northern Forest Lands
24 Council. The office shall coordinate this planning process with
ongoing efforts to identify ecological reserves for the State;
26 and be it further

28 **Sec. 3. Criteria. Resolved:** That the office shall use the
following criteria when establishing priorities:

30 1. Places offering outstanding public recreational
32 opportunities including hunting, fishing, trapping, hiking,
camping and other forms of back-country recreation;

34 2. Recreational access to river and lake shorelines;

36 3. Land supporting vital ecological functions and values;

38 4. Habitats for rare, threatened or endangered natural
40 communities, plants or wildlife;

42 5. Areas of outstanding scenic value and significant
geological features; and

44 6. Working private forest lands that are of such
46 significance or so threatened by conversion that conservation
easements must be purchased.

48 In addition, the office shall consider which geographic
50 areas must be given priority and whether large parcels meeting

2 multiple criteria are preferable to smaller parcels containing
only one criterion. The office shall establish a goal for the
4 amount of land or interests in land that should be acquired for
these purposes over a 10-year period. The office shall also
6 recommend one or more funding sources for land acquisition; and
be it further

8 **Sec. 4. Advisory committee. Resolved:** That the office shall
work with an advisory committee including representatives of the
10 Land for Maine's Future Board, large and small landowners,
environmental organizations, sportsmen's organizations,
12 recreation and tourism interests, land trusts, local governments,
wildlife and plant specialists and state land management
14 agencies; and be it further

16 **Sec. 5. Process. Resolved:** That within 2 months of the
effective date of this resolve, the office shall hold public
18 meetings in at least each of the following general areas:
Augusta, Bangor, Portland and Presque Isle. The office shall
20 seek recommendations from the public about which areas should be
considered priorities, which types of land should be given
22 priority, whether larger areas meeting multiple criteria are
preferable to smaller areas meeting only one criterion and the
24 10-year goal for acquisition.

26 The office shall prepare recommendations for priorities by
January 1, 1996. It shall then hold another set of public
28 meetings in the areas listed in this resolve to receive public
comment on the proposed priorities. Following the public
30 meetings, the office shall revise the priorities, if necessary,
and present them to the Governor and the Legislature no later
32 than June 1, 1996.

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STATEMENT OF FACT

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This resolve establishes a process to identify priorities
38 for the acquisition of land or interests in land. The priorities
established will enable acquisition programs such as the Land for
40 Maine's Future Program, the Forest Legacy Program and other
public and private conservation initiatives to function in a
42 coordinated manner.