

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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124th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2009

Legislative Document

No. 1140

H.P. 784

House of Representatives, March 23, 2009

**Resolve, Directing the Department of Education and the
Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources To Convene
a Work Group To Strengthen Farm-to-school Efforts in the State**

(EMERGENCY)

Reference to the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs suggested and ordered printed.

Millicent M. MacFarland

MILLICENT M. MacFARLAND
Clerk

Presented by Representative McCABE of Skowhegan.

Cosponsored by Representative KENT of Woolwich, Senator RAYE of Washington and Representatives: ADAMS of Portland, BECK of Waterville, BERRY of Bowdoinham, BOLAND of Sanford, BRIGGS of Mexico, BUTTERFIELD of Bangor, CAIN of Orono, CAREY of Lewiston, CASAVANT of Biddeford, CLARK of Millinocket, CLEARY of Houlton, COHEN of Portland, CONNOR of Kennebunk, CORNELL du HOUX of Brunswick, CRAY of Palmyra, CUSHING of Hampden, DOSTIE of Sabattus, DRISCOLL of Westbrook, EBERLE of South Portland, EDGECOMB of Caribou, EVES of North Berwick, FLEMINGS of Bar Harbor, GIFFORD of Lincoln, GILBERT of Jay, GOODE of Bangor, HARLOW of Portland, HARVELL of Farmington, HILL of York, HUNT of Buxton, WALSH INNES of Yarmouth, KRUGER of Thomaston, LEGG of Kennebunk, MARTIN of Orono, MAZUREK of Rockland, MORRISON of South Portland, NELSON of Falmouth, O'BRIEN of Lincolnville, PIEH of Bremen, Speaker PINGREE of North Haven, PINKHAM of Lexington Township, PRATT of Eddington, RANKIN of Hiram, RUSSELL of Portland, SANBORN of Gorham, SCHATZ of Blue Hill, SHAW of Standish, SIROIS of Turner, SMITH of Monmouth, STEVENS of Bangor, STRANG BURGESS of Cumberland, STUCKEY of Portland, WAGNER of Lyman, Senators: BLISS of Cumberland, NUTTING of Androscoggin, SHERMAN of Aroostook.

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

3 **Whereas,** farm-to-school initiatives are effective and innovative approaches to help
4 youth eat healthier and more nutritious foods, improve academic performance, introduce
5 learning opportunities with regard to food production and preparation and provide hands-
6 on experiential education; and

7 **Whereas,** farm-to-school initiatives help preserve working farmland, invigorate
8 local economies, rebuild and revitalize communities and promote environmental
9 stewardship; and

10 **Whereas,** the State's public schools are tax-supported and the purchase by schools
11 of local products strengthens the local tax base; and

12 **Whereas,** this legislation establishes a process to review and strengthen farm-to-
13 school initiatives throughout the State; and

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

18 **Sec. 1. Convene work group. Resolved:** That the Department of Education and
19 the Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources, referred to in this resolve as
20 "the departments," shall convene a work group to study farm-to-school initiatives and
21 programs in the State and develop recommendations for strengthening farm-to-school
22 efforts in the State; and be it further

23 **Sec. 2. Participants. Resolved:** That, in conducting the review and developing
24 recommendations, the departments shall invite the participation of the following agencies,
25 groups and organizations:

- 26 A. The Department of Health and Human Services;
- 27 B. The University of Maine Cooperative Extension;
- 28 C. The Maine School Food Service Association;
- 29 D. The Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association;
- 30 E. The Maine Center for Public Health;
- 31 F. The Maine Nutrition Network;
- 32 G. The Maine Agriculture in the Classroom Program Association;
- 33 H. Healthy Acadia;
- 34 I. Healthy Oxford Hills;

- 1 J. Focus on Agriculture in Rural Maine Schools;
- 2 K. Maine Harvest Lunch Program;
- 3 L. Western Mountains Alliance;
- 4 M. The Eat Local Foods Coalition of Maine; and
- 5 N. Other statewide organizations involved in supporting Maine agriculture, public
- 6 health, the environment and the Maine economy; and be it further

7 **Sec. 3. Duties. Resolved:** That the departments, with input from and in
8 consultation with the participants set forth in section 2, shall:

9 A. Assess the status of regional and statewide farm-to-school efforts throughout the
10 State, including policies, practices and curricula;

11 B. Review the existing capacities of and barriers to facilitating the purchase and use
12 of local products;

13 C. Review the status of networking channels that connect farm-to-school efforts
14 throughout the State;

15 D. Review best practices and evaluate methods from other farm-to-school programs
16 outside the State; and

17 E. Prepare recommendations for strengthening farm-to-school initiatives and
18 programs within the State; and be it further

19 **Sec. 4. Report. Resolved:** That the departments shall submit a report on the study
20 conducted pursuant to section 1 to the Joint Standing Committee on Education and
21 Cultural Affairs, the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
22 and the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services by February 1, 2010.

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

25 **SUMMARY**

26 This resolve requires the Department of Education and the Department of
27 Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources to convene a work group consisting of agencies,
28 groups and organizations involved in supporting Maine agriculture, public health, the
29 environment and the Maine economy to study farm-to-school initiatives and programs in
30 the State and develop recommendations for strengthening farm-to-school efforts in the
31 State.