

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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126th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2013

Legislative Document

No. 152

H.P. 127

House of Representatives, January 31, 2013

**An Act To Authorize the Commissioner of Agriculture,
Conservation and Forestry To Nominate Certain Rangers in the
Division of Forestry To Become Conservation Law Enforcement
Officers**

Reference to the Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety suggested and ordered printed.

Millicent M. MacFarland
MILLICENT M. MacFARLAND
Clerk

Presented by Representative DION of Portland.
Cosponsored by Representative: McCABE of Skowhegan.

1 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

2 **Sec. 1. 12 MRSA §8901, sub-§1-A** is enacted to read:

3 **1-A. Definitions.** As used in this subchapter, unless the context otherwise indicates,
4 the following terms have the following meanings.

5 A. "Conservation law enforcement officer" means a forest ranger who has received
6 certification as a law enforcement officer from the Maine Criminal Justice Academy
7 and has been designated a conservation law enforcement officer by the Commissioner
8 of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry.

9 **Sec. 2. 12 MRSA §8901, sub-§4** is enacted to read:

10 **4. Training; conservation law enforcement officers.** Beginning in 2014, the
11 Commissioner of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry may nominate a forest ranger as
12 a conservation law enforcement officer candidate. A forest ranger who is a candidate for
13 this designation must successfully meet and maintain the training standards and
14 requirements for other law enforcement officers as established in Title 25, chapter 341 in
15 order to become a conservation law enforcement officer. Upon certification by the Board
16 of Trustees of the Maine Criminal Justice Academy that a forest ranger has successfully
17 completed training under Title 25, chapter 341, the commissioner may designate the
18 forest ranger a conservation law enforcement officer. A conservation law enforcement
19 officer has statewide law enforcement powers equivalent to those of a law enforcement
20 officer. For purposes of this subsection, "law enforcement officer" has the same meaning
21 as in Title 25, section 2801-A, subsection 5.

22 **Sec. 3. Plan for training at Maine Criminal Justice Academy.** If the
23 Commissioner of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry elects to nominate one or more
24 forest rangers as conservation law enforcement officer candidates, the commissioner, in
25 consultation with the Commissioner of Public Safety, shall develop a plan to address the
26 training of forest rangers who are candidates to become conservation law enforcement
27 officers. The plan must ensure the forest rangers receive training that is equivalent to the
28 training and certification requirements of law enforcement officers at the Maine Criminal
29 Justice Academy under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 25, chapter 341. The plan to
30 address the training of forest rangers who are candidates to become conservation law
31 enforcement officers must be completed and made available to potential candidates no
32 later than July 1st of the year in which the first nomination occurs.

33 **SUMMARY**

34 This bill authorizes the Commissioner of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry to
35 nominate forest rangers in the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry,
36 Division of Forestry as candidates to become conservation law enforcement officers with
37 the same powers as law enforcement officers. Candidates nominated to become
38 conservation law enforcement officers must successfully meet and maintain the training
39 standards and requirements for other state law enforcement officers. In the event that the
40 Commissioner of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry nominates one or more forest

1 rangers as conservation law enforcement officers, the bill allows the commissioner, in
2 consultation with the Commissioner of Public Safety, to develop a plan to address the
3 training needs of forest rangers to become conservation law enforcement officers. It also
4 provides a definition of the term "conservation law enforcement officer."