

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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129th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2019

Legislative Document

No. 796

H.P. 584

House of Representatives, February 12, 2019

**An Act To Reestablish the Department of Agriculture, Food and
Rural Resources and the Department of Conservation**

(EMERGENCY)

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

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "R B. Hunt".

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative HICKMAN of Winthrop.
Cosponsored by Senator BLACK of Franklin and
Representative: DUNPHY of Old Town.

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

2 **CONCEPT DRAFT**

3 **SUMMARY**

4 This bill is a concept draft pursuant to Joint Rule 208.

5 This emergency bill proposes to reestablish the Department of Agriculture, Food and
6 Rural Resources and the Department of Conservation, or "the departments," which were
7 merged into the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry pursuant to Public
8 Law 2011, chapter 657. In addition to reestablishing the departments as separate entities
9 with separate commissioners, this bill would:

- 10 1. Reestablish the original missions of the Department of Agriculture, Food and
11 Rural Resources and the Department of Conservation;
- 12 2. Reestablish critical administrative and program positions in the departments,
13 including positions charged with responsibilities associated with economic development;
- 14 3. Address deficiencies in the departments in staffing and funding;
- 15 4. Address stagnation in the departments in program development and planning;
- 16 5. Allow the reestablished Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources the
17 ability to devote resources to aid farmers and to devise solutions to present-day
18 challenges facing agricultural industries in the State;
- 19 6. Establish new goals for promoting and protecting Maine's natural beauty and the
20 unique character of its land, waterways, wildlife habitats and wilderness resources;
- 21 7. Establish new goals for improving the agricultural economy in Maine, maintaining
22 and strengthening rural life and values and enhancing the preservation of the rural skills,
23 food supply, health and nutrition of the people of the State; and
- 24 8. Demonstrate Maine's commitment to its goal of becoming the "bread basket" for
25 New England.