

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# 131st MAINE LEGISLATURE

## FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2023

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Legislative Document

No. 427

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H.P. 260

House of Representatives, February 2, 2023

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**An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Invest in  
Research, Development and Commercialization in Maine's Marine  
Technology and Aquaculture Sector**

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Reference to the Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs suggested and ordered printed.

*Robert B. Hunt*

ROBERT B. HUNT  
Clerk

Presented by Representative RIELLY of Westbrook.  
Cosponsored by Senator DAUGHTRY of Cumberland and  
Representatives: CRAFTS of Newcastle, DOUDERA of Camden, GOLEK of Harpswell,  
HEPLER of Woolwich, SACHS of Freeport, WARREN of Scarborough, Senators: DUSON of  
Cumberland, MOORE of Washington.

1           **Preamble.** Two thirds of both Houses of the Legislature deeming it necessary in  
2 accordance with the Constitution of Maine, Article IX, Section 14 to authorize the issuance  
3 of bonds on behalf of the State of Maine to provide funds as described in this Act,

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

5           **Sec. 1. Authorization of bonds.** The Treasurer of State is authorized, under the  
6 direction of the Governor, to issue bonds in the name and on behalf of the State in an  
7 amount not exceeding \$25,000,000 for the purposes described in section 5 of this Act. The  
8 bonds are a pledge of the full faith and credit of the State. The bonds may not run for a  
9 period longer than 10 years from the date of the original issue of the bonds.

10          **Sec. 2. Records of bonds issued; Treasurer of State.** The Treasurer of State  
11 shall ensure that an account of each bond is kept showing the number of the bond, the name  
12 of the successful bidder to whom sold, the amount received for the bond, the date of sale  
13 and the date when payable.

14          **Sec. 3. Sale; how negotiated; proceeds appropriated.** The Treasurer of State  
15 may negotiate the sale of the bonds by direction of the Governor, but no bond may be  
16 loaned, pledged or hypothecated on behalf of the State. The proceeds of the sale of the  
17 bonds, which must be held by the Treasurer of State and paid by the Treasurer of State  
18 upon warrants drawn by the State Controller, are appropriated solely for the purposes set  
19 forth in this Act. Any unencumbered balances remaining at the completion of the project  
20 in this Act lapse to the Office of the Treasurer of State to be used for the retirement of  
21 general obligation bonds.

22          **Sec. 4. Interest and debt retirement.** The Treasurer of State shall pay interest  
23 due or accruing on any bonds issued under this Act and all sums coming due for payment  
24 of bonds at maturity.

25          **Sec. 5. Disbursement of bond proceeds from General Fund bond issue.** The  
26 proceeds of the sale of the bonds authorized under this Act must be expended as designated  
27 in the following schedule under the direction and supervision of the agencies and entities  
28 set forth in this section.

29           **DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES**

30           Provides funds, to be awarded through a competitive process to Maine-based public and  
31 private entities and leveraging other funds in a one-to-one ratio, to invest in research,  
32 development and commercialization in the State's marine technology and aquaculture  
33 sector to be used for infrastructure, equipment and technology upgrades to enable  
34 organizations to gain and hold market share and to expand employment or preserve jobs.

35           Total \$25,000,000

36          **Sec. 6. Contingent upon ratification of bond issue.** Sections 1 to 5 do not  
37 become effective unless the people of the State ratify the issuance of the bonds as set forth  
38 in this Act.

39          **Sec. 7. Appropriation balances at year-end.** At the end of each fiscal year, all  
40 unencumbered appropriation balances representing state money carry forward. Bond  
41 proceeds that have not been expended within 10 years after the date of the sale of the bonds

1 lapse to the Office of the Treasurer of State to be used for the retirement of general  
2 obligation bonds.

3 **Sec. 8. Bonds authorized but not issued.** Any bonds authorized but not issued  
4 within 5 years of ratification of this Act are deauthorized and may not be issued, except  
5 that the Legislature may, within 2 years after the expiration of that 5-year period, extend  
6 the period for issuing any remaining unissued bonds for an additional amount of time not  
7 to exceed 5 years.

8 **Sec. 9. Referendum for ratification; submission at election; form of**  
9 **question; effective date.** This Act must be submitted to the legal voters of the State at  
10 a statewide election held in the month of November following passage of this Act. The  
11 municipal officers of this State shall notify the inhabitants of their respective cities, towns  
12 and plantations to meet, in the manner prescribed by law for holding a statewide election,  
13 to vote on the acceptance or rejection of this Act by voting on the following question:

14 "Do you favor a \$25,000,000 bond issue to provide funds, to be awarded  
15 through a competitive process to Maine-based public and private entities  
16 and leveraging other funds in a one-to-one ratio, for investments in  
17 research, development and commercialization in the State's marine  
18 technology and aquaculture sector to be used for infrastructure, equipment  
19 and technology upgrades to enable organizations to gain and hold market  
20 share and to expand employment or preserve jobs?"

21 The legal voters of each city, town and plantation shall vote by ballot on this question  
22 and designate their choice by a cross or check mark placed within a corresponding square  
23 below the word "Yes" or "No." The ballots must be received, sorted, counted and declared  
24 in open ward, town and plantation meetings and returns made to the Secretary of State in  
25 the same manner as votes for members of the Legislature. The Governor shall review the  
26 returns. If a majority of the legal votes are cast in favor of this Act, the Governor shall  
27 proclaim the result without delay and this Act becomes effective 30 days after the date of  
28 the proclamation.

29 The Secretary of State shall prepare and furnish to each city, town and plantation all  
30 ballots, returns and copies of this Act necessary to carry out the purposes of this  
31 referendum.

## 32 SUMMARY

33 The funds provided by this bond issue, in the amount of \$25,000,000, to be awarded  
34 through a competitive process to Maine-based public and private entities and leveraging  
35 other funds in a one-to-one ratio, will be used to invest in research, development and  
36 commercialization in the State's marine technology and aquaculture sector to be used for  
37 infrastructure, equipment and technology upgrades to enable organizations to gain and hold  
38 market share and to expand employment or preserve jobs.