



## **131st MAINE LEGISLATURE**

## **SECOND REGULAR SESSION-2024**

**Legislative Document** 

No. 2231

S.P. 956

In Senate, February 27, 2024

Resolve, to Promote Access to Education and Workforce Development by Transferring Ownership of the Hutchinson Center Property in Belfast to the City of Belfast

(AFTER DEADLINE)

(EMERGENCY)

Approved for introduction by a majority of the Legislative Council pursuant to Joint Rule 205.

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

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DAREK M. GRANT Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator CURRY of Waldo. Cosponsored by Representative DODGE of Belfast and Senators: BEEBE-CENTER of Knox, DAUGHTRY of Cumberland, DUSON of Cumberland, GROHOSKI of Hancock, VITELLI of Sagadahoc, Representatives: ANKELES of Brunswick, WORTH of Ellsworth.

- 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**, the Hutchinson Center in Belfast was purpose-built to increase access to 4 higher education and workforce development in midcoast communities; and
- 5 **Whereas,** the vast majority of funds expended to build the Hutchinson Center came 6 from donors that were local or had strong midcoast connections; and

Whereas, the University of Maine System has closed the Hutchinson Center and has
initiated a process of disposing of the property in a manner that fails to ensure that the
facility is used to increase access to education and workforce development; and

10 **Whereas,** officials of the City of Belfast have expressed a desire that the property 11 transaction described in this legislation be executed as soon as possible to enable the 12 redevelopment of the Hutchinson Center in a manner that maintains the original mission of 13 the facility; and

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

18 Sec. 1. University of Maine System directed to convey certain land and 19 property in Belfast. Resolved: That, notwithstanding any provision of law to the 20 contrary, the University of Maine System shall convey without compensation, by quitclaim deed without covenant, to the City of Belfast in Waldo County the University of Maine 21 System's interest in the parcel of land identified as 80 Belmont Avenue and depicted on the 22 23 City of Belfast Tax Assessor's tax map 5 as Lot 29 and recorded in the Waldo County Registry of Deeds in Book 3100, Page 236 along with any buildings located on that 24 25 property, including the building commonly known as the University of Maine Hutchinson 26 Center.

27 Sec. 2. City of Belfast to ensure property is used to provide access to 28 education and workforce development. Resolved: That, after the transfer of the 29 property to the City of Belfast under section 1, the City of Belfast shall ensure it is used to 30 provide access to education and workforce development for a minimum of 5 years.

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

33 SUMMARY
 34 This resolve directs the University of Maine System to convey to the City of Belfast
 35 the University of Maine System's interest in the land and any buildings, including the
 36 building commonly known as the University of Maine Hutchinson Center, located at 80
 37 Belmont Avenue in Belfast. After the transfer of the property, the City of Belfast must
 a8 ensure it is used to provide access to education and workforce development for a minimum
 39 of 5 years.

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