

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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N I N E T Y - E I G H T H L E G I S L A T U R E

Legislative Document

No. 837

H. P. 588

House of Representatives, February 19, 1957.

Referred to the Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs. Sent up for concurrence and 750 copies ordered printed.

HARVEY R. PEASE, Clerk

Presented by Mr. Brewer of Caribou.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED
FIFTY-SEVEN

RESOLVE, Authorizing Forestry Resource Survey.

Forestry Resource Survey; authorized. Resolved: That in the interest of perpetuating, preserving and promoting the progressive economic development of the forest resources of the State of Maine and for that purpose encouraging and developing comprehensive forestry programs as best secure for the people of the State the future and undiminished productivity of forest resources, a general survey be made of the size, composition and disposition of such resources; the survey shall appraise, evaluate and provide accurate estimates of all mature forest growth, including determinable rates of obsolescence of such growth based on over-age, blowdowns and insect damage; further, such survey shall determine through appropriate means present economic losses resulting from factors of inaccessibility and under-exploitation; the survey shall include, but not be limited to, consideration of conservation measures consistent with economic development of the resource and briefly report on the Tree Farm system of selective cutting as a possible means of providing for conservation and augmented growth; the study shall investigate those sections of the Maine Forestry District heavily dominated by waterways, lakes and mountains, designating such section, which, in the opinion of competent authorities afford greater possibilities for recreational land-use than for timber production; such study shall include an appraisal of current local and state methods of taxation of state forested lands and the total annual collection of such state taxes and their use, together with accurate estimates of the annual per-acre tax liability of forested lands in the Maine Forestry District as compared with the annual per-acre tax liability of forested lands in the organized towns; the study shall examine and consider the matter of severance taxes in states having large forest resources, the amount of state taxes collected and how used, making a detailed analysis and evaluation of the New Hampshire State forest severance tax; the study shall evaluate the present

research activities of the forestry department and the University of Maine, including an evaluation of current wood-use research programs being conducted in other states and source of funds irrespective of the forest resources of the State in comparison with Maine; such study shall further investigate and provide facts relating to the cutting and exportation of Maine forest resources in the Quebec border region of Maine, extending from Highway Route 27 north to the Black river tributary of the St. John river, and the methods used; and such study shall provide statistics presenting the latest available figures on the amount of timber annually cut and sold in Maine, its destination-use, such figures to be divided according to the methods of harvesting, further on the basis of species, by county and by ownership based on 50,000 or more acres; and be it further

Resolved: That a report, or reports, of the survey be prepared including the recommendations made and the reasons therefore, and that five copies of said report or reports be delivered to the Governor; and be it further

Resolved: That all State officers and employees be directed to cooperate fully with the staff making the general survey of state forestry resources and to afford to them prompt access to all necessary records and reports; and be it further

Resolved: That the Governor be authorized, with the advice and consent of the Council, to employ an organization well qualified in such work to make such a general state forestry survey, and that the Governor be authorized to appoint such committees as may be necessary to cooperate in the preparation of such a general state survey, such committees to include members of the Legislature and representatives of the public generally; and be it further

Resolved: That there be, and hereby is, appropriated from the unappropriated surplus of the general fund of the State the sum of \$25,000 to carry out the purposes of this resolve. Such appropriation shall not lapse but shall remain a continuing carrying account until the purposes of this resolve have been accomplished.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

The forestry resources of the State of Maine are inherently liable to economic loss attributable to causes of inaccessibility and under-exploitation. Essential scientific data comprehending size, composition and disposition of such forest resources is unavailable, incomplete or otherwise insufficient.

No reasonable estimates are possible as to the extent of rate of obsolescence of such forest resources predicated on existing data.

Wood-use research programs conducted in the State of Maine are both quantitatively and qualitatively inferior in contrast to those of other states with substantially less forest resources.

An immediate need exists in the State of Maine for accurate data reflecting the objective condition of such forest resources for the purpose of formulating and encouraging the development of long-range forestry management programs to counteract prevailing economic losses to the State in forestry resources.