

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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**LAWS**  
**OF THE**  
**STATE OF MAINE**

**AS PASSED BY THE**

**ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE**

**FIRST REGULAR SESSION**  
**December 6, 2006 to June 21, 2007**

**THE GENERAL EFFECTIVE DATE FOR**  
**FIRST REGULAR SESSION**  
**NON-EMERGENCY LAWS IS**  
**SEPTEMBER 20, 2007**

**PUBLISHED BY THE REVISOR OF STATUTES**  
**IN ACCORDANCE WITH MAINE REVISED STATUTES ANNOTATED,**  
**TITLE 3, SECTION 163-A, SUBSECTION 4.**

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**Penmor Lithographers**  
**Lewiston, Maine**  
**2007**

**CHAPTER 11**

**H.P. 365 - L.D. 481**

**Resolve, Directing the Department of Education To Review and Assess Distance Learning Opportunities for High School Students**

**Sec. 1. Review and assessment. Resolved:** That the Department of Education shall review and assess distance learning opportunities for public high school students in the State. The department shall gather data on current state and local spending on and student enrollment in distance learning initiatives, including, but not limited to, the Maine Distance Learning Program, and shall consider options for optimizing the range of distance learning opportunities available to students in the State, including, but not limited to, increased support for online learning; and be it further

**Sec. 2. Report. Resolved:** That the department shall report to the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs by January 15, 2008 with the department's findings under section 1 and any necessary implementing legislation. The Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs may submit legislation based on the report to the Second Regular Session of the 123rd Legislature implementing the recommendation of the department.

See title page for effective date.

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**CHAPTER 12**

**H.P. 1304 - L.D. 1871**

**Resolve, Authorizing Municipalities To Consolidate Voting Districts for a Special Election**

**Emergency preamble. Whereas,** acts and resolves of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

**Whereas,** it is possible that a special election for bond issues may be called before the expiration of that 90-day period; and

**Whereas,** voter turnout is often low for a special election; and

**Whereas,** it is costly for municipalities to staff all voting places during an election; 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 preserva-

tion of the public peace, health and safety; now, therefore, be it

**Sec. 1. Municipalities authorized to consolidate voting districts. Resolved:** That, notwithstanding the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 21-A, section 631, a municipality may consolidate voting districts for the purpose of holding a special election on bond issues in 2007. A municipality that chooses to consolidate voting districts shall hold a public hearing on the planned consolidation. Plans to consolidate districts must be submitted to the Secretary of State at least 35 days prior to the special election.

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

Effective May 3, 2007.

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**CHAPTER 13**

**H.P. 666 - L.D. 876**

**Resolve, To Study Maine's Agricultural Creative Economy Sector**

**Sec. 1. Departments to study the value-added agricultural creative economy sector of the State's economy. Resolved:** That the Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources, in collaboration with the Department of Labor, Department of Economic and Community Development and Department of Conservation, shall undertake a study of the value-added agricultural creative economy sector of the State's economy. The study, which may be referred to as "the ACES study," must include consideration of:

1. The economic impact of farmers in the State expanding their businesses and diversifying their products to meet local demand for locally grown produce, meats, artisan and specialty food products, the use of shared-use kitchens and farm-to-school programs;

2. Barriers to small-scale food production that cater to the tourist trade and local demand;

3. Creation of a cabinet-level advisory board comprising representatives of the Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources, Department of Labor, Department of Economic and Community Development and Department of Conservation to develop long-term strategies in agriculture and agricultural value-added businesses in all aspects of economic development;

4. Creation of positions in the Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources to develop and nurture the agricultural creative economy, including