

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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STATE OF MAINE

ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY

March 20, 2006

The Honorable Beth Edmonds
President of the Senate
The Honorable John Richardson
Speaker of the House of Representatives
122nd Legislature
State House
Augusta, ME 04333

Dear Madam President and Mr. Speaker

Pursuant to Title 3 Maine Revised Statutes, chapter 35, we are pleased to submit the findings of the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry from the review and evaluation of the Wild Blueberry Commission of Maine and the Wild Blueberry Advisory Committee under the State Government Evaluation Act. In its review, the Committee found that the Commission is operating within its statutory authority.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John M. Nutting".

Senator John M. Nutting
Senate Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John F. Piotti".

Representative John F. Piotti
House Chair

cc: David Bell, Executive Director, Wild Blueberry Commission of Maine
Patrick Norton, Director, Office of Policy and Legal Analysis

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ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY

March 20, 2006

To: The Honorable John Richardson, Chair
The Honorable Beth Edmonds, Vice-Chair
Legislative Council, 122nd Maine Legislature

From: Senator John M. Nutting, Senate Chair *JAN*
Representative John F. Piotti, House Chair *JFP*
Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Subject: Government Evaluation Act Review of the Wild Blueberry Commission of
Maine and the Wild Blueberry Advisory Committee

This memorandum is to inform you that the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry has submitted its findings and recommendations from the review and evaluation of the Wild Blueberry Commission of Maine and the Wild Blueberry Advisory Committee under the State Government Evaluation Act to the Legislature pursuant to Title 3 Maine Revised Statutes, chapter 35.

cc: Members, Legislative Council
David Boulter, Executive Director, Legislative Council

Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Review of the Wild Blueberry Commission of Maine and the Wild Blueberry Advisory Committee under the Government Evaluation Act March 2006

The Government Evaluation Act

The Government Evaluation Act provides for a system of periodic review of the efficacy and performance of state government agencies (3 MRSA §951 et seq). The keystone of the Act is the agency's program evaluation report that consists of a number of components required by the statute. Essentially, the report is an agency self-assessment, which the committee of jurisdiction uses as a starting point for its evaluation of the agency's effectiveness, efficiency and performance.

Review Process

In May of 2005, the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry notified the Wild Blueberry Commission of Maine and the Wild Blueberry Advisory Committee of its intent to review these entities pursuant to the schedule established in 3 MRSA, §959. The commission and council submitted a program evaluation report as requested in November of 2005.

On January 18, 2006, David Bell gave an oral presentation of the report. The committee held its final meeting on the GEA review on March 6, 2006.

Findings and Recommendation

The Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry has reviewed the Wild Blueberry Commission of Maine and finds that the commission is operating within its statutory authority. The commission is doing a commendable job of promoting the wild blueberry industry and assisting blueberry growers and processors. The Wild Blueberry Advisory Council is meeting its responsibilities for guiding research and obtaining grants for blueberry research. The blueberry industry is a vital sector in Maine agriculture. The commission and advisory council are critical to its continuing success.

Detailed information about the Wild Blueberry Commission of Maine and the Wild Blueberry Advisory Committee can be found in the department's Program Evaluation Report, which meets the criteria set in statute (3 MRSA §956). The Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry is recommending that the commission and council be reviewed again in 2011.