

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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STATE OF MAINE
130TH LEGISLATURE
SECOND REGULAR SESSION



Disposition of bills and summaries of all laws enacted or finally passed

**JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON
MARINE RESOURCES**

July 2022

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JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON MARINE RESOURCES

LD 1916 An Act to Create a Legal Defense Fund for the Maine Lobster Industry

ENACTED LAW SUMMARY

Public Law 2021, chapter 755 creates the Lobster Legal Defense Fund in the Department of Marine Resources to provide money for certain legal actions related to the regulations of the United States Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration implementing the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan. Twenty percent of the license surcharges assessed by the department pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 12, section 6455-A, subsection 11 is deposited into the fund. Until June 30, 2024, the department distributes money from the fund to itself in an amount sufficient to reimburse the department for costs incurred in administering the fund during the preceding 12-month period. Of the remaining balance, 1/2 is distributed to a statewide association of individuals engaged in commercial lobster fishing and 1/2 to the labor union representing individuals engaged in commercial lobster fishing in the State for legal costs incurred and paid in legal proceedings involving the regulations of the United States Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration implementing the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan. Any money remaining in the fund on June 30, 2024 is disbursed as follows:

1. To the Lobster Promotion Fund up to an amount equal to the license surcharges placed in the Lobster Legal Defense Fund; and
2. To the department.

The department is required to submit a report to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over marine resources matters by February 15, 2024 and the committee has the authority to report out a bill in response to the contents of the report during the Second Regular Session of the 131st Legislature. The provisions establishing and governing the Lobster Legal Defense Fund are repealed October 1, 2024.