



STATE OF MAINE
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
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AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333-0001

Paul R. LePage
GOVERNOR

18 April 2018

The 128th Legislature of the State of Maine
State House
Augusta, ME

Dear Honorable Members of the 128th Legislature:

Under the authority vested in me by Article IV, Part Third, Section 2 of the Constitution of the State of Maine, I am hereby vetoing LD 1747, "Resolve, To Establish a Task Force To Examine Agricultural Issues."

This resolve is an emergency measure directing the Commissioner of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry to convene a task force to study agricultural issues in the State, including the recommendations presented in the 2003 "Blaine House Conference on Maine's Natural Resource-based Industry: Charting a New Course" report.

The creation of a task force to study an issue does not rise to the level of an Emergency Measure. As I reject this loose definition of what constitutes an emergency, I cannot support this resolve being classified as such.


Maine does not need another task force to study a problem for which there is an existing study already completed. This matter would seem to be a topic that either the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry or, if it wishes, a sub-committee could update using the 2003 report as a starting point and by requesting additional input from stakeholder groups.

This resolve will also place a heavy burden on the natural resources departments in terms of staff time, which comes at a cost to the departments. Passing a resolve without allocating resources means that those funds for staff time and materials will need to come from the departments' budgets. Since departments having finite resources, each diversion of funds will necessarily come at the expense of some other essential functions or duties. While each individual task force or study group may not by itself divert significant funds from a department, the cumulative effect of all the studies, resolves and task forces does.

Government cannot use money that it has not first taken from citizens and businesses in the form of taxes and fees. For Mainers to prosper, we need to lower the burden that state government places upon them.

For these reasons, I return LD 1747 unsigned and vetoed. I strongly urge the Legislature to sustain it.

Sincerely,


Paul R. LePage
Governor



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