

SUPPORT

LD 548 -An Act to Provide Regular Funding for the Land for Maine's Future Fund

Sponsor: Representative Moulton of YORK.

Co-Sponsors: None.

Summary: This bill proposes to establish a mechanism for regular funding from additional sources for the Land for Maine's Future Fund.

Explanation: Historically, the Land for Maine's Future Fund has received funding for the purpose of protecting land in Maine only from bonds that have been approved by the Legislature and the voters. When funds from any given bond have been expended, then no additional funding is available until another bond is authorized.

Having a regular, ongoing source of funding for LMF, in addition to periodic land bonds, would help ensure that Maine can take advantage of land conservation opportunities at times when bond funding has been committed. Even if it were a smaller amount than traditionally has been provided through bonds, such funding would provide a dependable revenue source that could enhance what the LMF program can accomplish. Such funds could be used to help leverage significant matching funds raised by local land trusts.

It often takes several years for a land conservation project to come to fruition. Landowners often do not want to spend the time negotiating unless they have a reasonable degree of certainty that funding will be available once all the details of the project are worked out. Site work, appraisals, deed research, and legal drafting generally are required to conclude a project once an agreement has been reached with the landowner. With a regular, on-going source of funding, LMF would be in a better position to act when negotiations are completed and final details have all been worked out.

NRCM supports LD 548.