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AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY

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STATE OF MAINE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES 128TH LEGISLATURE FIRST REGULAR SESSION

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT “ ” to H.P. 839, L.D. 1203, Bill, “An Act To Increase Transparency in Cooperative Agreements within the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry”

Amend the bill in section 1 in §9 by striking out all of subsections 1 to 4 (page 1, lines 15 to 37 in L.D.) and inserting the following:

1. Public posting. The department shall annually post a description of each cooperative agreement or arrangement entered into in accordance with this section during the previous fiscal year on the department's publicly accessible website. The description must include the expected benefits to the State, the department, the regulated community and the public.

2. Biennial report. Beginning in 2019, and every odd-numbered year thereafter, the department shall report no later than March 1st to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over agricultural matters regarding the cooperative agreements and arrangements entered into in accordance with this section during the 2 previous fiscal years.'

SUMMARY

This amendment removes the requirements in the bill that the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry provide public notice of each cooperative agreement or arrangement, solicit public comments, provide responses to public comments and consider requests submitted in writing to decline to receive future funding from a cooperative agreement or arrangement. It also changes the requirement to report to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over agricultural matters regarding the cooperative agreements and arrangements entered into from an annual requirement to a biennial requirement. The amendment also requires the department to post on its publicly accessible website a description of each cooperative agreement or arrangement entered into during the previous fiscal year, including the expected benefits to the State, the department, the regulated community and the public.