**An Act to Provide Funding for the Fund to Address Food Insecurity and Provide Nutrition Incentives**

**Emergency preamble. Whereas,** acts and resolves of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

**Whereas,** the 90‑day period may not terminate until after the beginning of the next fiscal year; and

**Whereas,** nutrition incentives and nutrition assistance programs benefit Maine residents in all 16 counties, and state funding will allow further expansion to rural and underserved communities in Maine; and

**Whereas,** in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now, therefore,

**Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

**Sec.** **1. 7 MRSA §219-B, sub-§1,** as enacted by PL 2021, c. 468, §1, is amended to read:

**1.** **Fund established.**  The Fund To Address Food Insecurity and Provide Nutrition Incentives, referred to in this section as "the fund," is established in the department to provide incentives to federal food and nutrition assistance program participants for the purchase of locally grown fruits and vegetables and to support outreach for and administration of programs that offer nutrition incentives to participants of federal food and nutrition assistance programs. The fund is established to match contributions from private and public sources ~~of up to $50,000 annually~~ to further the purposes of this section. The fund, to be accounted within the department, must be held separate and apart from all other money, funds and accounts. Eligible investment earnings credited to the assets of the fund become part of the assets of the fund. Any unexpended balances remaining in the fund at the end of any fiscal year do not lapse and must be carried forward to the next fiscal year. For purposes of this section, "local" means within the State.

**Sec.** **2. Appropriations and allocations.**  The following appropriations and allocations are made.

**AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY, DEPARTMENT OF**

**Fund To Address Food Insecurity and Provide Nutrition Incentives Z329**

Initiative: Provides ongoing appropriations to fund nutrition incentives and nutrition assistance programs.

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| **GENERAL FUND** | **2023-24** | **2024-25** |
| All Other | $600,000 | $600,000 |
|   | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| GENERAL FUND TOTAL | $600,000 | $600,000 |

**Emergency clause.** In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this legislation takes effect when approved.

**SUMMARY**

This bill provides ongoing General Fund appropriations of $600,000 to the Fund To Address Food Insecurity and Provide Nutrition Incentives within the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry. The bill also removes the $50,000 limit on matching contributions from the fund criteria.