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Resolve, To Ensure Transparency in Funding Certain Programs within the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife

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 current economic downturn threatens to undermine the ability of the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to continue programs vital to the conservation of the State's natural resources; and

Whereas, the immediate restructuring of some programs within the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife is necessary to safeguard its core functions; 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

Sec. 1 Commissioner of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to create a new division within the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife. Resolved: That the Commissioner of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife shall identify programs and functions within the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife that are not directly related to an activity for which the department issues a license, permit or registration and develop a plan to create a new division within the department to house those programs and functions. The commissioner shall develop draft legislation needed to implement the plan and include as part of that plan language to require the Governor to fund the new division with General Fund revenues not subject to the Constitution of Maine, Article IX, Section 22. The draft legislation must provide that, if the Governor submits a budget that does not fully fund the new division, the Governor must identify specific reductions within that division to offset the reduction in funding; and be it further

Sec. 2 Report to the Joint Standing Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife. Resolved: That the Commissioner of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife shall report the plan and draft legislation under section 1 to the Joint Standing Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife no later than 20 days from the effective date of this resolve. The Joint Standing Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife may submit legislation to the 124th Legislature to implement the plan developed pursuant to this resolve.

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

SUMMARY

This resolve directs the Commissioner of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to identify programs and functions within the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife that are not directly related to an activity that requires a license, permit or registration issued by the department and to develop a plan to create

a new division within the department to house those programs and functions. It also provides that the commissioner shall develop draft legislation to implement the plan and to specify that funding for the new division must come from General Fund revenues not subject to the Constitution of Maine, Article IX, Section 22. The plan and draft legislation must be submitted to the Joint Standing Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife no later than 20 days from the effective date of this resolve.