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Resolve, Relating to a Review of International Trade Agreements and the Management of Groundwater Resources

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

Whereas, obligations under international trade agreements may compromise the ability of the State to manage its groundwater resources; and

Whereas, an examination of the potential legal impacts of international trade agreements on the State's ability to manage its groundwater resources will enable the Legislature to make informed and timely decisions; 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 Review established. Resolved: That the Water Resources Planning Committee, of the Land and Water Resources Council, established pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 5, section 3331, subsection 8, in coordination with the Office of the Attorney General and the Citizen Trade Policy Commission established in Title 5, section 12004-I, subsection 79-A, shall conduct an examination of the potential legal impacts of international trade agreements on the State's ability to manage its groundwater resources, including, but not limited to, the potential consequences of permitting foreign companies to extract groundwater. The examination may include a review and assessment of the following subjects as they relate to or impact international trade agreement issues and the State's regulation of its groundwater:

1. Property rights related to the ownership of groundwater;
2. The various common law doctrines relating to the use of groundwater, including the absolute dominion rule and the reasonable use rule; and
3. Natural resources other than groundwater; and be it further

Sec. 2 Experts. Resolved: That outside funding accepted by the Citizen Trade Policy Commission pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 10, section 11, subsection 10 may be used to contract with experts in the field of international trade agreements; and be it further

Sec. 3 Report. Resolved: That, by January 1, 2010, the Water Resources Planning Committee, in coordination with the Office of the Attorney General and the Citizen Trade Policy Commission, shall submit a report related to the review to the Joint Standing Committee on Natural Resources. The report must include findings, recommendations and any legislation necessary to implement the recommendations. The Joint Standing Committee on Natural Resources is authorized to report out legislation to the Second Regular Session of the 124th Legislature; and be it further

Sec. 4 Appropriations and allocations. Resolved: That the following appropriations and allocations are made.

LEGISLATURE

Legislature 0081

Initiative: Provides a base allocation in the event that the Citizen Trade Policy Commission receives outside funding to contract with experts in the field of international trade agreements.

OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS	2009-10	2010-11
All Other	\$500	\$0
OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS TOTAL	<hr/> \$500	<hr/> \$0

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