



STATE OF MAINE
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
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AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333-0001

Paul R. LePage
GOVERNOR

10 January 2014

The 126th Legislature of the State of Maine
State House
Augusta, ME

Dear Honorable Members of the 126th Legislature:

Under the authority vested in me by Article IV, Part Third, Section 2 of the Constitution of the State of Maine, I hereby veto LD 1254, "An Act To Increase Consumption of Maine Foods in All State Institutions."

Let there be no mistake – I believe that the goals of this bill are laudable ones. It seeks to support the sale of Maine products and produce by Maine farmers and fishermen. The way by which it seeks to achieve these goals, however, is misguided. The bill is an unfunded mandate on state government; it sets arbitrary standards that may be difficult or impossible for state agencies to meet and will lead to significant cost increases or disruption of core agency missions. Noteworthy is that State law already requires the State to purchase local food when practicable. The obstacles experienced by the State to date in achieving that outcome have arisen when the quantity of food required is simply not available due to seasonality of crops, the food is not suitable for the purpose intended, or the food available is cost prohibitive from a State procurement standpoint. Despite these obstacles, State agencies continue to aim for the goal of expanded purchase of Maine-derived products but the bill goes too far in its implementation.

In addition, the bill is incongruent with the constitutional principle of separation of powers as the decision-making, management and purchase of food for prisoners is an executive function. To that end, I will be notifying all of my Commissioners that I do support purchase of Maine sourced foods and insist that they continue to do so when practicable, however, this mandate must not stand.

For these reasons, I return LD 1254 unsigned and vetoed. I strongly urge the Legislature to sustain it.

Sincerely,

Paul R. LePage
Governor



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