

OFFICE OF POLICY AND LEGAL ANALYSIS

To: Members, Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
From: Karen S. Nadeau, Legislative Analyst
Date: February 23, 2021
Subj: **LD 30 Resolve, Authorizing the Director of the Bureau of Parks and Lands To Convey a Parcel of Land in Augusta to the Maine Veterans' Homes**

SUMMARY:

- Authorizes the Director of the Bureau of Parks and Lands within the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry to transfer state property to the Maine Veterans' Homes.
- As required by Resolve 1989, chapter 29 and the deed to the Maine Veterans' Homes, it grants approval to the Maine Veterans' Homes to sell its structure with the land it is located on at the corner of Cony Road and Piggery Road in Augusta, County of Kennebec.

NOTES:

- Maine Veterans' Homes (MVH) provides care at six homes in Augusta, Bangor, Caribou, Machias, Scarborough and South Paris. MVH offers rehabilitative and therapy services and long-term, short-term and skilled nursing care for veterans.

TESTIMONY

Proponents: *Bureau of Parks and Lands, Maine Veterans' Homes (MVH)*

- 8.9 acres of non-reserved public land; current MVH facility on Cony Road in Augusta.
- MVH is an independent, non-profit organization and does not receive any state funding.
- Resolve 1989, chapter 29 – BPL conveyed conditional rights of the state-owned parcel in order to serve as collateral for the issuance of bonds to finance the construction of MVH facility.
- When the bonds are paid off, the land reverts back to the State; therefore, MVH owns the structures but does not have full, permanent ownership of the land.
- Original nursing home is nearly 40 years old; a new facility is under construction on Route 3 in Augusta - small-house model campus that will provide modern, resident-focused care for veterans (across from MaineGeneral Medical Center)
- The sale of this state land to MVH will consolidate the structures and land under the same ownership – facilitating the sale of the property.
- MVH has agreed to pay fair market value for the land; proceeds from the sale will be deposited into a dedicated account to acquire conservation land elsewhere in Kennebec County.

Opponents: *None*

NFNA: *None*

Constitution of Maine - Article IX

Section 23. State park land. State park land, public lots or other real estate held by the State for conservation or recreation purposes and designated by legislation implementing this section may not be reduced or its uses substantially altered except on the vote of 2/3 of all the members elected to each House. The proceeds from the sale of such land must be used to purchase additional real estate in the same county for the same purposes.

PRELIMINARY FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT: *Not yet received.*