

**2024 LD List**  
**131<sup>st</sup> Legislature – Second Session**

**April 9, 2024**

[LD 2290](#) *An Act to Correct Inconsistencies, Conflicts and Errors in the Laws of Maine* (Reported by Rep. Moonen of Portland) (Emergency) This emergency errors bill corrects several language conflicts in state statute as a result of previously passed legislation. Of municipal interest, the bill: (1) clarifies that a municipal firefighter as defined by in Title 30-A, section 3151, subsection 2, in accordance with policies adopted by the municipality, may administer or dispense intranasal naloxone hydrochloride or another opioid overdose reversing medication as clinically indicated if the municipal firefighter has received medical training in accordance with protocols adopted by the Medical Direction and Practices Board established in Title 32, section 83, subsection 16-B; (2) clarifies that an individual authorized to possess, obtain, store, administer or dispense naloxone hydrochloride is immune from civil liability and professional disciplinary action for the possession or administration of the drug and any resulting adverse outcomes for the individual that it was administered the drug if the person acted in good faith and with reasonable care; (3) requires a cannabis testing facility to obtain and display on demand to a municipal code enforcement officer documentation of the facilities accreditation meeting the International Organization for Standardization by a 3rd-party accrediting body; (4) clarifies the definition of an “assisted housing facility” to include one that is licensed pursuant Title 22 chapter 1663; (5) clarifies that transportation policy be consistent with the purposes goals and policies of the Growth Management Act in Title 30-A, chapter 187, subchapter 2; (6) clarifies that for the purposes of correctional services, a county may not increase its base assessment limit established by the 30-A MRSA §701, sub-§2-C if the county has not reported the revenues, expenses and populations information required by Title 34-A, section 1208-B, subsection 5; (7) clarifies that a licensed emergency medical services provider must administer and dispense naloxone or other opioid overdose-reversing medication in compliance with their license and drugs approved by the federal Food and Drug Administration; and (8) changes the cross reference to which facilities are licensed and able to apply for one-time funding for emergency medical service sustainability grants to the appropriate statute section for the licensing authority.

[LD 2288](#) *An Act to Allow a Member of the Town of Perham Select Board to Facilitate the Election to Vacant Seats on the Select Board and to Approve and Sign Disbursement Warrants* (Presented by President Jackson of Aroostook) (After Deadline) (Emergency) **Passed to be Enacted** This after deadline emergency bill allows a member of the Town of Perham Select Board to take action to facilitate an election to fill empty seats on the Select Board. Until a quorum of members is elected to the Town of Perham Select Board, the bill allows a member to approve and sign disbursement warrants, approve general assistance applications, and perform any necessary functions to administer the Town of Perham’s general assistance program.

[LD 2286](#) *Resolve, Directing the Maine Education Policy Research Institute to Review Certain Components of General Purpose Aid for Local Schools and the Essential Programs and Services Funding Formula* (Reported by Rep. Brennan of Portland) **[Finally Passed; Resolves 2023, c. 164](#)** The committee resolve directs the Maine Education Policy Research Institute, in conjunction with the Department of Education, to conduct a review of certain components of general purpose

aid for local schools and the essential programs and services funding formula that have been identified as driving inequity within the formula, including, but not limited to expenditure-driven components, including special education costs; determination of a municipality's ability to pay; the regional adjustment; and other adjustments to the state share of the total allocation, including, but not limited to, enhancing student performance and opportunity costs and targeted education funds. The Maine Education Policy Research Institute is required to include stakeholder representatives in the review and recommend potential adjustments to the funding formula to be modeled by the Department of Education. The resolve comes with an appropriation not to exceed \$500,000 under the existing Learning Systems Team appropriation.

[LD 2285](#) *Resolve, Directing the Department of Education to Establish the Commission to Study School Construction Policy and Funding* (Emergency) (Reported by Rep. Brennan of Portland) The committee resolve directs the Department of Education to establish the Commission to Study School Construction Policy and Funding and requires the commission to identify the scope of local school construction and renovation needs by reviewing any reports, data and other materials available and inviting comment from those with expertise in school construction. The commission which includes a representative from the Maine Municipal Association, must review and analyze current state law, rules and policies controlling school construction; examine how other states finance school construction and provide school facilities funding; examine the feasibility of establishing a school building finance authority; and determine where changes are needed and provide any recommended revisions to state law, rules and policies and is required to submit a report to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over education and cultural affairs no later than April 1, 2025, which is authorized to report out a bill related to the report.

#### **April 1, 2024**

[LD 2284](#) *An Act to Implement Recommendations in the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife's Report on Wake Boats* (Reported by Rep. Landry of Farmington) [Enacted; PL 2023, c. 611](#) This bill defines “wakesurfing activity” and requires that information regarding boat safety and education courses be provided at the time of purchase of a motorboat from a dealer in the state of Maine at the time of purchase. The bill also prohibits the operation of a motorboat with a wakesurf activity in tow in less than 15 feet of water or within 300 feet of the shoreline and directs the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to develop an outreach program for wakesurfing and report out to legislative committee with jurisdiction of inland fisheries and wildlife no later than February 1, 2027 which is then authorized to report out a bill in the 133<sup>rd</sup> Legislature.

#### **March 28, 2024**

[LD 2283](#) *An Act to Enact the Crisis Intervention Order Act to Protect the Safety of the Public* (Sponsored by Speaker Talbot Ross of Portland) (After Deadline) This bill creates the Crisis Intervention Order Act, that would enable a family or household member of a person suspected of posing a significant danger of causing severe harm to the person or another person, or law enforcement agency, including a municipal department, to seek a written order, signed by the court, that prohibits the individual from purchasing, possessing, or receiving a firearm or having or attempting to get custody or control of a firearm. The bill provides procedures to address both

emergency and non-emergency intervention orders, which include a hearing, in cases of a non-emergent orders, as well as the information contained in the order, the duration of the order, and processes for terminating and renewing orders. An individual required to relinquish a firearm is required to do so immediately to a law enforcement agency or a federally licensed firearm dealer, which is required to take a photograph, catalog, and store the seized firearms. An agency or dealer in possession of a firearm subject to an intervention order is prohibited from releasing the firearm without a court order, and if the courts authorize the release, it must be completed within three days. The bill also directs that no later than October 1, 2025, and annually thereafter, the State Court Administrator to submit a report regarding the application of the intervention order to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over civil rights matters.

### **March 25, 2024**

[LD 2278](#) *An Act to Require Public Safety Answering Point and Dispatch Center Cost Reporting and to Direct the Formation of a Staffing and Recruiting Stakeholder Group* (Committee Bill Reported by Sen. Lawrence of York Cty) [Enacted; PL 2023, c. 609](#) This bill is reported out by the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology does the following requires: (1) each public safety answering point and dispatch center to annually provide a report to the Public Utilities Commission, Emergency Services Communication Bureau on the costs they incur for the provision of enhanced 9-1-1 services; (2) the bureau to contract with one or more third-party vendors, using revenues in the E-9-1-1 fund, to provide quality assurance review related to the provision of emergency medical dispatch services and answering fire 9-1-1 calls by public safety answering points and; (3) the bureau to convene a stakeholder group to develop a coordinated 9-1-1 staffing and recruiting effort for all public safety answering points. The bureau must ensure that there is representation on the stakeholder group from state, county and municipal public safety answering points and submit a report to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over utilities and energy matters including any recommendations and is provided an additional position to manage the new obligations.

[LD 2277](#) *Resolve, Authorizing the Commissioner of Administrative and Financial Services to Convey by Sale the Interests of the State in 3 Properties Located in Biddeford, Sanford and York* (Presented by Rep. Gere of Kennebunkport) (Governor's Bill) This Resolve transfers the State's interests in three former courthouses located in the City of Biddeford, the City of Sanford and the Town of York, pursuant to the procedures set out in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 30-A, section 4754-A, for use as residential housing. The bill provides a contingency that if any of the parcels comprising the state property is not transferred to the Maine State Housing Authority or a local public housing authority for residential housing under an option to purchase, it is required to be sold using a competitive process via sale or auction.

### **March 21, 2024**

[LD 2276](#) *An Act to Increase Funding for the Snowmobile Trail Fund and the ATV Recreational Management Fund* (Committee bill reported by Rep. Landry of Farmington) **On Highway Table** This committee reported bill makes several changes to the gasoline tax allocation to provide additional funding to the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Bureau of Parks and Lands' Snowmobile Trail Fund and ATV Recreational Management Fund. Specifically the bill reduces the allocations of the gasoline tax to the TransCap Trust Fund of the Municipal Bond

Bank in Highway Fund allocations by \$80,000, increases the ATV tax allocation from .1525% to .4593% while reducing the ATV Enforcement Grant and Aid Program which receives 50% of the current allocation to 16.60% of the new allocation, and increases the ATV Recreational Management Fund from 50% of the former allocation to 83.40% of the new allocation. The bill proposes that gasoline tax allocation to snowmobiles increase from .9045% to 1.0068% with a reduction of the revenue that was formerly 14.93% to the Commissioner of Inland Fishers and Wildlife to 13.41% and increases the Snowmobile Trail Fund in the ACF Buruea of Parks and Land Management from 85.07% to 86.59%.

### **March 20, 2024**

[LD 2272](#) *An Act Related to Airboats and Airboat Noise Limits* (Reported by Rep. Landry of Farmington for the Committee on IF&W) (Emergency) [Emergency Enacted; PL 2023, c. 583 \(3/28/24\)](#) This committee reported bill proposes to enact the recommendations of a stakeholder group on Inland Fisheries established by Public Law 2021, chapter 585. The bill provides that a person may not operate an airboat: (1) If the noise level of the airboat exceeds 90 decibels; (2) between 7 p.m. and 7 a.m. if the noise level of the airboat exceeds 75 decibels, except to the extent necessary to achieve headway speed when leaving a boat launch or to move the airboat from a stationary position on a tidal flat; or (3) between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. if the noise level of the airboat exceeds 90 decibels, except to the extent necessary to achieve headway speed when leaving a boat launch or to move the airboat from a stationary position on a tidal flat. The bill also defines "airboat" and outlines penalties for violating these provisions and provides exceptions for certain law enforcement officers.

### **March 14, 2024**

[LD 2270](#) *An Act to Create the Lincoln Mill Facilities District* (Presented by Sen. Tipping of Penobscot Cty.) (After Deadline) (Emergency) This emergency bill creates the Lincoln Mill Facilities District, provides for the organizational structure and authorizes the district to be established in the town of Lincoln.

[LD 2269](#) *An Act to Automatically Seal Criminal History Record Information for Class D and Class E Crimes Relating to Marijuana Possession and Cultivation* (Reported by Rep. Moonen of Portland) This committee reported bill implements the recommendation so of the Criminal Records Review Committee. Among establishing other appeal processes for the impacted individuals or those who object to the automatic sealing of a conviction record, the bill establishes a process to automatically seal or make confidential the criminal history record information related to convictions for marijuana possession and cultivation related crimes committed on or after January 1, 2001, and prior to January 30, 2017.

[LD 2266](#) *An Act Regarding Offshore Wind Terminals Located in Coastal Sand Dune Systems* (Presented by Rep. Runte of York) (Governor's Bill) This bill authorizes the Department of Environmental Protection to grant a permit under the Natural Resources Protection Act for an offshore wind terminal located in a coastal sand dune system notwithstanding any provision of law regarding activities in coastal sand dune systems to the contrary as long as all other applicable permitting and licensing criteria are met.

**March 13, 2024**

[LD 2265](#) *An Act to Implement Recommendations Resulting from the State Government Evaluation Act Review of the Department of Professional and Financial Regulation* (Committee Bill Reported by Rep. Roberts of South Berwick) This committee bill enacts recommendations resulting from the committee review of the Department of Professional and Financial Regulation under the State Government Evaluation Act and proposes to change the title of Assistant to the Commissioner to Deputy Commissioner and clarifies that the Commissioner of Professional and Financial Regulation may temporarily modify or suspend any continuing education requirements, license expiration dates, examination requirements, or associated fees as necessary when a state of emergency is declared and may extend the suspension of requirements for no more than a year beyond the date of the declared emergency.

[LD 2264](#) *(New title) An Act to Clarify the Use of Public Equipment on Public Easements* (Committee Bill Reported by Sen. Nangle of Cumberland Cty.) **Passed to be Enacted** This committee bill enacts recommendations from the Abandoned and Discontinued Roads Commission which recommended changes to the definition in statute of the term “Private Way” to “Public Easement” and impacts a number of sections of statute where the term “private way” was previously used. The bill also adds a definition of “private road” to mean a privately owned way over which there is no public right of access. Under 23 M.R.S.A §3101 - §3104 the bill changes “private way to means a public easement not repaired or maintained year round by a municipality.” Under 23 MRSA §3105-A, the laws governing repairs and maintenance of public easements and private roads, the bill changes inhabitants to legislative body and clarifies that the legislative body of a town may plow, maintain and repair a public easement to the extent directed by the legislative body when the municipal officers or assessor consider it advisable in the best interest of the municipality for fire or police protection. Under 23 MRSA §3106, sub-§1 the bill changes the term “way” to “public easement” in the section of law that permits a municipality to appropriate funds to repair a private road, public easement, or bridge for stormwater runoff pollution from reaching a great pond, including those private ways maintained by a road association. The bill also repeals the definition of “public roadway” in 29-A MRSA §2322, the section of law governing bicycle and roller skis safety education act and amends the use of helmet law to apply to a “public way.”

As amended, this bill clarifies that a legislative body of a municipality may authorize the use of the municipality’s highway equipment to plow, maintain or repair private ways, otherwise known as public easements. The bill allows the Maine Abandoned and Discontinued Roads Commission to meet up to 12 times per year and directs the commission to consider the scope of property owner liability and public use of public easements, property owner liability on public easements, options for creating a road inventory, and the creation of a right-of-way template for property owners of land along an abandoned or discontinued road.

**March 7, 2024**

[LD 2262](#) *An Act to Amend the Process for the Sale of Foreclosed Properties Due to Nonpayment of Taxes* (Reported by Rep. Perry of Bangor for the Committee on Taxation) This committee bill establishes the recommendation of the Working Group to Study Equity in the Property Tax Foreclosure process pursuant to Public Law 223, chapter 358. The bill amends the process

following the foreclosure on a property by a municipality for failure to pay property taxes and the return of excess fund by: (1) requiring a municipality to make 3 attempts to contract with a real estate broker for the sale of the subject property; (2) requiring a real estate broker to attempt to sell the property for 6 months before the municipality can sell the property in a manner authorized by the municipality's legislative body; (3) eliminating the requirement that the former owner submit a written demand for the return of excess funds from the sale; (4) allowing a municipality to deduct from the proceeds of the sale additional costs authorized under the current law, fees incurred for advertising, mailing, and recording the property in addition to any expenses incurred in improving the property; (5) requiring a municipality to provide notice of intent to disburse any excess funds to the former owner to each record holder of an interest in the property by certified mail return receipt request at least 30 days prior to that disbursement; (6) requiring that if the municipality is unable to locate the former owner, they publish a notice in newspaper of general circulation in the county in which the property is located, specifying the former owner, a description of the property sold, the amount of the excess proceeds and the date by which the proceeds must be claimed; and (7) requiring the municipality to record in the registry of deeds a notice within 10 days of paying the excess proceeds to the former owner, their name, date of the payment and to whom it was made, a description of the property and a statement that by accepting the excess proceeds the former owner has waived the right to commence an action to dispute the taking of the property.

[LD 2261](#) *An Act Designating New Motor Vehicle Emissions Rules as Major Substantive Rules* (Sponsored by Rep. Soboleski of Phillips) (After Deadline) This after deadline bill would retroactively to May 22, 2023, require any rules adopted by the Department of Environmental Protections regarding new motor vehicle emissions standards, including rules to establish zero-emission requirements, to be major and substantive rules. The rules established by the Board of Environmental Protection on or after January 1, 2024, to incorporate the requirements of California's Advanced Clean Cars II and Advanced Clean Trucks regulations as major and substantive, requiring legislative review before adoption.

[LD 2257](#) *An Act to Allow School Administrative District No. 52 to Issue Temporary Notes for a Wastewater Treatment Project* (Sponsored by Sen. Timberlake of Androscoggin Cty.) (Emergency) (After Deadline) [Emergency Enacted; P & SL 2024, c. 20 \(3/28/24\)](#) This emergency bill extends the time period for School Administrative District 52 to issue temporary notes to finance a wastewater treatment plant project delayed due to the COVID-19 emergency and difficulties locating a suitable site for subsurface disposal in Turner.

### **March 5, 2024**

[LD 2254](#) *(New title) An Act to Clarify Permissible Election and Lobbying Expenditures by Consumer-owned Water Utilities and the Casco Bay Island Transit District* (Sponsored by Sen. Lawrence of York Cty.) [Emergency Enacted; PL 2023, c. 596 \(4/09/24\)](#) This emergency legislation clarifies that consumer-owned water utilities may include in the operating expenses to be recovered through user rates the expenditures: (1) related to notifying the public of or conducting trustee and local referendum elections directly related to or legally required for the operation of such utilities; and (2) for lobbying or grassroots lobbying.

As amended, this bill provides that a consumer-owned water utility, a consumer-owned transmission and distribution utility and the Casco Bay Island Transit District may include or incorporate in operating expenses to be recovered in rates expenditures for lobbying and expenditures related to notifying the public of or conducting trustee elections and local referendum elections directly related to or legally required for the operation of the utility or transit district.

[LD 2253](#) *(New title) An Act to Authorize a Stop-work Order Regarding an Activity That is Creating an Immediate and Substantial Adverse Impact to a Protected Natural Resource* (Sponsored by Sen. Brenner of Cumberland County) **Passed to be Enacted** This bill authorizes the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to issue a stop-work order whenever the DEP commissioner finds that an activity is being performed in a manner that violates state environmental protection laws or rules or the terms or conditions of a license or permit issued by the department and that the activity is creating a substantial adverse impact to a protected natural resource.

As amended, this bill authorizes the Department of Environmental Protection to issue a stop-work order whenever the commissioner finds that an activity is being performed in a manner that either violates: (1) state environmental protection laws or rules or the terms or conditions of a license; or (2) a permit or order issued by the Board of Environmental Protection or the department and that the activity is creating an immediate and substantial adverse impact to a protected natural resource. The amendment provides similar enforcement authority to the Maine Land Use Planning Commission with respect to activities conducted in the Unorganized Territory that are creating an immediate and substantial adverse impact to a protected natural resource.

[LD 2252](#) *An Act to Establish the Criminal Records Review Commission* (Reported by Rep. Moonen of Portland). This bill establishes the 28-member Criminal Records Review Commission, which includes a representative from the Maine Chiefs of Police and Maine County Sheriffs' Association. The commission is directed to review the laws, rules and procedures pertaining to criminal history record information including: (1) procedures within the Department of Public Safety regarding the collection, maintenance and dissemination of criminal history record information; (2) criteria and eligibility for sealing criminal history record information; (3) public access to criminal history record information; and (4) the expungement, sealing, and vacating of criminal history record information. The commission is also authorized to submit legislation amending laws related to criminal history record information as the commission determines appropriate.

[LD 2251](#) *An Act to Amend the Mining Excise Tax Laws* (Reported by Rep. Perry of Bangor for the Committee on Taxation). This bill makes changes to the mining excise tax as recommended by the Bureau of Revenue Services, Office of Tax Policy, as required by Resolve 2023, chapter 83, section 1 including: (1) providing a sales tax exemption for sales to a mining company for use in mining; (2) simplifying the excise tax imposed on a mining company by establishing a formula of the gross proceeds of that mining company multiplied by 0.35 and eliminating credits for payment of certain property taxes and prepayment of taxes; (3) renaming the Mining Oversight Fund the Mining Excise Tax Fund; (4) simplifying the distribution of excise tax revenues by requiring all revenue to be deposited in the Mining Excise Tax Fund, instead of

being split between the General Fund, the Mining Excise Tax Trust Fund and the Mining Impact Assistance Fund; (5) eliminating the Mining Impact Assistance Fund, which is used to provide grants to municipalities, counties and the unorganized territory to offset the loss of property tax revenue and to provide necessary new or additional public facilities and services related to mining; and (6) requiring the Governor to propose uses for the Mining Excise Tax Fund as part of the biennial budget.

[LD 2247](#) *An Act to Clarify the Minimum Sentencing Standards for a Violation of Operating Under the Influence* (Sponsored by Rep. Sinclair of Bath) **DEAD** This bill specifies that the mandatory minimum sentence of incarceration for a violation of operating under the influence applies when the person has operated a motor vehicle while having an alcohol level of 0.15 grams or more of alcohol per 100 milliliters of blood or 210 liters of breath. Current law applies the penalty if the person was tested as having an alcohol level of 0.15 grams or more of alcohol per 100 milliliters of blood or 210 liters of breath.

[LD 2246](#) *An Act to Establish a Minimum Value Threshold for the Class C Crime of Theft by a Repeat Offender* (Sponsored by Rep. Sinclair of Bath). **DEAD (Governor's veto sustained)** This bill stipulates that a person with two or more prior convictions may not be charged with a Class C crime if the person commits theft of property with a value of \$500 or less.

As amended, this bill stipulates that a person with two or more prior convictions may not be charged with a Class C crime if the person commits theft of property with a value of \$500 or less.

[LD 2245](#) *An Act to Clarify the Definition of "Underground Facility" and Reduce Administrative Burdens Under the So-called Dig Safe Law* (Reported Out by Sen. Lawrence of York Cty.) **Enacted; PL 2023, c. 572** This bill amends the "dig safe" laws by: (1) providing that an underground facility includes any item of personal property buried or placed below ground for use in connection with the storage or conveyance of liquefied propane gas; (2) exempting from the definition of "underground facility" liquefied propane gas distribution systems that have underground pipes when that system is located on a residential lot that has no more than one structure connected by underground pipes to the liquefied propane gas distribution system, the structure has no more than two dwelling units and the liquefied propane gas tank is located 25 feet or less from the structure; (3) providing that the owner or operator of any underground facility furnishing liquefied propane gas is considered an underground facility operator; and (4) directing the Public Utilities Commission to amend its rule Chapter 895: 12 Underground Facility Damage Prevention Requirements to reduce the administrative burdens for underground facility operators.

[LD 2242](#) *An Act to Set a Debt Limit for the Anson and Madison Water District* (Sponsored by Sen. Farrin of Somerset County). **Emergency Enacted; P & SL 2023, c. 21 (4/09/24)** This bill sets the debt limit of the Anson and Madison Water District at \$20 million.

As amended, this emergency bill provides that the trustees of Anson and Madison Water District can issue bonds or notes of indebtedness payable within a period of more than 12 months after the date of issuance in an amount of up to \$20 million.



[LD 2239](#) *Resolve, to Rename a Bridge in the Town of Mechanic Falls the Bill Dunlop Memorial Bridge* (Sponsored by Sen. Bennett of Oxford Cty.) (Emergency) **[Emergency Passed; Resolves 2023, c. 161 \(4/02/24\)](#)** This resolve directs the Department of Transportation to designate Bridge 2540 on Elm Street in the Town of Mechanic Falls, currently known as the Mechanic Falls Bridge, the Bill Dunlop Memorial Bridge.

[LD 2238](#) *An Act to Address Gun Violence in Maine by Requiring a Waiting Period for Certain Firearm Purchases* (Sponsored by Sen. Rotundo of Androscoggin Cty.) This bill establishes a 72-hour waiting period for the purchase and sale of a firearm between the agreed sale and the transfer of the firearm and establishes a fine of not less than \$200 or more than \$500 for the first offense and not less than \$500 or more than \$1,000 for subsequent offenses. The bill exempts sales to law enforcement and security professionals as well as sales to a federally licensed firearm dealer.

[LD 2237](#) *An Act to Strengthen Public Safety, Health and Well-being by Expanding Services and Coordinating Violence Prevention Resources* (Sponsored by Speaker Talbot Ross of Portland) **On Appropriations Table** This bill proposes to provide funding and enacts several provisions of law to enhance delivery of mental health resources statewide.

As amended, this bill provides funding and enacts several laws to enhance the delivery of mental health resources statewide and of municipal note: (1) requires the Department of Health and Human Services to establish two crisis receiving centers with one located in Aroostook County and the other in Penobscot County; and (2) directs the Commissioner of Public Safety to develop and implement procedures to notify the public of active shooter situations, including standards for notifying the deaf and hard-of-hearing community. The bill also establishes the Office of Violence Prevention, within the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention, to coordinate and promote efforts to reduce violence in Maine and establish and administer a program to award grants to organizations conducting community-based violence intervention initiatives that are primarily focused on interrupting cycles of violence. No later than February 1, 2027 the department is directed to submit to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over health and human services matters a report including information on the number grants awarded, amount of funding provided to each recipient, a description of violence intervention initiatives funded by the grant, and recommendations regarding the continuation of the grant program.

[LD 2236](#) *An Act to Expand the List of Crimes Eligible for a Post-judgment Motion to Seal Criminal History Record Information to Include Convictions for Possession and Cultivation of Marijuana* (Sponsored by Rep. Moonen of Portland) This is a committee bill which proposes to implement the recommendations of the Criminal Records Review Committee which includes the expansion of the records that are able to be sealed by an individual by a post-judgement motion if the conviction is considered an “eligible criminal conviction” under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 15, chapter 310-A. As drafted, criminal history record information related to the conviction for that crime, any Class D crime related to unlawfully possessing or cultivating marijuana could be eligible for a post-judgement motion to seal the record when that crime was committed prior to January 30, 2017, the effective date of Maine’s first adult use cannabis laws.

## February 27, 2024

[LD 2233](#) *Resolve, Regarding Legislative Review of Chapter 255: Workers' Compensation Fronting Companies, a Late-filed Major Substantive Rule of the Department of Professional and Financial Regulation, Bureau of Insurance* (Rep. Perry of Calais on behalf of the Department of Professional and Financial Regulation) This emergency resolve provides for legislative review of Chapter 255: Workers' Compensation Fronting Companies, a major substantive rule of the Department of Professional and Financial Regulation, Bureau of Insurance that was filed outside the legislative rule acceptance period.

[LD 2231](#) *Resolve, to Promote Access to Education and Workforce Development by Transferring Ownership of the Hutchinson Center Property in Belfast to the City of Belfast* (Sponsored by Sen. Curry of Waldo) (Emergency) **DEAD** This emergency resolve directs the University of Maine System to convey to the City of Belfast the University of Maine System's interest in the land and any buildings, including the building commonly known as the University of Maine Hutchinson Center, located at 80 Belmont Avenue in Belfast. After the transfer of the property, the City of Belfast must ensure it is used to provide access to education and workforce development for a minimum of 5 years.

[LD 2229](#) *An Act to Make Supplemental Appropriations and Allocations for the Expenditures of State Government, Highway Fund and Other Funds and to Change Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2024 and June 30, 2025* (Emergency) (Governor's Bill) (Presented by Rep. Crafts of Newcastle) This emergency bill proposes to make supplemental appropriations and allocations for the expenditures of State Government, Highway Fund and other funds and to change certain provisions of the law necessary to the proper operations of State Government for the fiscal years ending June 30, 2024 and June 30, 2025. The documents submitted by the Governor may be found here: <https://legislature.maine.gov/12437>

Of municipal interest, the proposal includes a \$1.9 million provision from the portion of the Highway Fund to increase the numbers of Maine State Police Trooper and leadership positions to 32 identified as the level necessary to maintain call sharing agreements in rural areas of the state. \$3.6 million is included in the general fund supplemental budget.

## February 22, 2024

[LD 2225](#) *An Act to Provide Funding to Rebuild Infrastructure Affected by Extreme Inland and Coastal Weather Events* (Emergency) (Governor's bill) (Sponsored by Speaker Talbot Ross of Portland) This emergency bill transfers \$50 million from the Maine Budget Stabilization Fund to the Department of Transportation for municipal, state or regionally significant infrastructure adaptation, repair and improvements that support public safety, protection of essential community assets, regional economic needs and long-term infrastructure resiliency. The bill provides that eligible project types may include working waterfront infrastructure, culverts, storm water systems, water system upgrades and other interventions that support reducing or eliminating climate impacts, especially coastal and inland flooding.

[LD 2224](#) *An Act to Strengthen Public Safety by Improving Maine's Firearm Laws and Mental Health System* (Governor's bill) (Sponsored by Sen. Rotundo of Androscoggin Cty.) This bill changes several provisions under current law in addition to creating uniformity between jurisdictions for restricted persons to own, possess or control a firearm if under an order by another jurisdiction similar to an extreme risk order in this state, the bill: (1) increases the class of crime for recklessly, knowingly, or intentionally selling or transferring a firearm to a prohibited person; (2) requires all sellers of firearms to use a federally licensed firearm dealer to complete transactions and run the required background check before the sale; (3) provides an alternate path for law enforcement to apply for a protective custody warrant when a law enforcement officer is unable to take a person into protective custody to conduct an assessment, submits an affidavit for judicial review that is sufficient to establish probable cause to believe that the person is mentally ill and due to that condition presents a likelihood of serious harm; probable cause to believe that the person possesses, controls or may acquire a dangerous weapon; and that the officer has made reasonable attempts to take the person into custody without a warrant; (4) increases the crime of possession of a dangerous weapon by a restricted person from class D to a class C crime; (5) requires the court issuing the order to transmit the person's information to the Maine State Police within 72 hours to ensure the prohibition is available for review for law enforcement purposes, to issue a concealed weapons permit and federal purposes for firearm purchases; (6) changes the requirement for an individual subject to a protective custody order to have a scheduled hearing to challenge the restriction from 14 days to 5 days and the order review period for the court from 14 days to 30 days; (7) requires the Department of Health and Human Services to provide injury and violence protection programs, and; (8) requires the department to plan for and assist a statewide network of crisis receiving centers to provide immediate and short-term mental health and substance use disorder crisis stabilization services.

## **February 21, 2024**

[LD 2223](#) *Resolve, to Direct the Department of Health and Human Services to Amend Rules and Establish a Study Group Related to Funding and Reimbursement for Mental Health Crisis Resolution Services* (After Deadline) (Sponsored by Sen. Stewart of Aroostook Cty.) **DEAD** This resolve directs the Department of Health and Human Services to develop a reimbursement model for operational costs, staffing and crisis resolution services to enable them to operate 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. The current model uses a per encounter basis reimbursement model instead of an annual cost reimbursement model. The services affected by this resolve are those services that are described by the MaineCare Benefits Manual as designed to offer immediate crisis-oriented services to an individual experiencing a crisis related to mental or behavioral health or social relationships or a crisis related to an intellectual disability, autism or related condition. Crisis resolution services also include services offered for co-occurring substance use conditions. The resolve also directs the Department of Health and Human Services to establish the Crisis Resolution Services System Study Group to conduct a study to evaluate and recommend funding sources for crisis resolution services though membership of the group is undefined. The department must submit a report of the study group's findings to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over health and human services matters by January 15, 2025.

## February 20, 2024

[LD 2220](#) *An Act to Prohibit Insurers from Using Credit Information as a Factor in Certain Insurance Practices* (Sponsored by Sen. Hickman of Kennebec Cty.) **DEAD** This bill prohibits insurers from using the credit information of an applicant or policyholder as a factor in making any of several determinations regarding policies covering private passenger motor vehicles and commercial vehicles and the prohibition applies notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary.

## February 15, 2024

[LD 2215](#) *An Act to Implement the Recommendations of the Right to Know Advisory Committee Regarding Public Records Exceptions* (Reported by Rep. Moonen of Portland) **Passed to be Engrossed** Along with changing rules regarding certain state activities not impacting municipalities, this bill implements statutory changes recommended by the Right to Know Advisory Committee after reviewing certain existing public records exceptions in Title 22. Of specific municipal interest, the bill replaces the provisions of law governing the confidentiality of records and information under the Maine Medical Use of Cannabis Act.

The bill specifies the following:

1. Information that identifies a qualifying patient, a visiting qualifying patient or a registered patient is confidential and may not be disclosed by the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, except with the written consent of the patient or pursuant to a court order or a subpoena.
2. Information that identifies a caregiver who is exempt from registration under the Maine Medical Use of Cannabis Act is confidential and may not be disclosed by the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, except with the written consent of the caregiver, pursuant to a court order or a subpoena or when necessary to protect the public from a threat to public health or safety.
3. Personal contact information of a registered caregiver or of an applicant for registration as a registered caregiver is confidential and may not be disclosed by the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, except with the written consent of the registrant or applicant, pursuant to a court order or a subpoena or when necessary to protect the public from a threat to public health or safety. In addition, if the registered caregiver resides at the same address where the registered caregiver engages in activities authorized under the Maine Medical Use of Cannabis Act, the department may disclose that address to a state, county or municipal employee responsible for the administration of the Act or of rules, ordinances or warrant articles authorized under the Act, including a law enforcement officer or code enforcement officer.
4. Personal contact information of a holder of a registry identification card who is an assistant, officer or director of a registered caregiver, dispensary, manufacturing facility or cannabis testing facility or of an applicant for a registry identification card as an assistant, officer or director of a registered caregiver, dispensary, manufacturing facility or cannabis testing facility or registration

certificate for a dispensary, manufacturing facility or cannabis testing facility is confidential and may not be disclosed by the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, except in response to a court order or a subpoena.

5. A final written decision of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services imposing an administrative penalty, ordering forfeiture and destruction of cannabis or suspending or revoking a registry identification card or registration certificate is not confidential. The bill preserves the obligation of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services under current law to provide information to the department's Bureau of Revenue Services for the administration and enforcement of taxes and the requirement in current law that law enforcement officers obtain a warrant before they may require a caregiver, dispensary, manufacturing facility or cannabis testing facility to disclose information that could reasonably identify an individual or require a person who accompanies a patient to disclose information that could reasonably identify a patient.

[LD 2214](#) *An Act to Make Supplemental Appropriations and Allocations for the Expenditures of State Government, General Fund and Other Funds and to Change Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2024 and June 30, 2025* (Emergency) (Governor's Bill Presented by Rep. Sachs of Freeport) This emergency concept draft proposes to make supplemental appropriations and allocations for the expenditures of state government, and change the necessary sections of law to advance policy initiatives for the fiscal years ending June 30, 2024 and June 30, 2025. The Governor's full budget recommendations are available [here](#). Of interest to municipalities, the supplemental budget bill:

**Medication Assisted Treatment (Page A-29).** Provides a one-time \$4 million appropriation to county jails for medication assisted treatment and medical care, which was recently mandated in Public Law 2021, chapter 732, Part C.

**K-12 School Funding (Part C).** Establishes the total cost of funding K-12 education as calculated by the Essential Programs & Service model to be \$2.622 billion and appropriates \$1.442 billion (55% of the total) as the state's share; appropriates \$272 million as the state's contribution of the unfunded actuarial liabilities of the Maine Public Employees Retirement System attributable to teachers and retired teacher health and life insurance; and sets the minimum mil rate expectation at 6.62.

**Property Tax Stabilization (Part E).** Transfers \$15 million from unappropriated General Fund surplus revenue to fulfill the state's commitment to reimburse municipalities for 100% of the property tax revenues lost due to the now repealed Property Tax Stabilization for Seniors law. This appropriation is also addressed in an [amended version](#) of LD 646, *An Act to Fully Reimburse Municipalities for Lost Revenue Under the Property Tax Stabilization for Senior Citizens Program*, which received unanimous support from the appropriations committee on February 13. If LD 646 is enacted, this transfer will not be needed.

**Maine Mass Violence Care Fund (Part N).** Creates the Mass Violence Care Fund, within the Office of the Attorney General (AG), to provide financial assistance for the unreimbursed portion of mass violence related physical and behavioral health care expenses; transfers \$5

million in unappropriated surplus revenue to capitalize the fund; and provides that only interest earnings and donations to the fund may be distributed to eligible victims. This section of the budget also creates a six-member working group, including the Senate President, Speaker of the House, AG, Health & Human Services Commissioner, State Treasurer, and the chair of the newly created Victims' Compensation Board, which is directed to identify the options and eligibility criteria for delivering the financial aid. The directive requires the submission of a report with recommendations to the board by December 3, 2024, and authorizes the joint standing committee over judiciary matters to report out related legislation in 2025.

**Disaster Recovery Fund (Part Q).** Increases from \$3 to \$15 million the funding held in the Disaster Recovery Fund and transfers \$15 million in unappropriated General Fund surplus revenue into the fund.

**Child Development Services (Part W).** In part, this section provides that as of July 1, 2028, all school administrative units (SAU) are responsible for ensuring a free, appropriate public education for children ages three to five with disabilities. Beginning on July 1, 2024, an SAU may be approved to pilot the implementation of the program and during the 2026 and 2027 school years additional SAUs will be approved to provide educational services to impacted students. Part W also provides that an SAU may elect to either provide the services or contract with public or private providers via a memorandum of understanding to do so. SAUs providing the services will be reimbursed for 100% of the costs as calculated by the Essential Programs & Services formula, which will be appropriated outside of the regular general-purpose aid for education funding. Finally, Part W establishes the Preschool Special Education Fund to assist SAUs that have voluntarily assumed providing services in advance of the 2028 mandate.

**Maine Office of Community Affairs (Part DD).** Establishes the Maine Office of Community Affairs (MOCA) within the Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future (GOPIF) and establishes a director for the office. The budget initiative further directs the MOCA to foster communications and partnership between the State and Maine town and cities, Tribal governments, and regional entities and to coordinate efforts, technical assistance, and financial support to better plan for challenges, pursue solutions and create stronger and more resilient communities.

**Community Resilience Partnership (Part EE).** Transfers \$5 million from unappropriated General Fund surplus revenue to the Community Resilience Partnership program to support grants and provide technical assistance to municipalities and tribes for climate planning, including adaptation and resilience projects, emissions reduction initiatives and energy efficiency projects.

**Office of New Americans (Part FF).** Establishes the Office of New Americans within GOPIF to improve the economic and civic integration of immigrants into the State's workforce and communities and creates an advisory council to advise the office on its directives. This initiative mirrors that found in [LD 2167](#).

**Affordable Homeownership (Part GG).** Transfers \$10 million in unappropriated General Fund surplus revenue to MaineHousing via the Affordable Homeownership Program to expand affordable, energy-efficient housing options that support state workforce needs.

**Emergency Housing Relief Fund (Part HH).** Transfers \$16 million in unappropriated General Fund surplus revenue to MaineHousing to supplement or establish programs addressing the needs of people experiencing homelessness or facing other immediate housing needs and to support other uses that address related emergencies, such as through privately-operated low barrier shelters, winter warming shelters, legal services, and other wraparound settlement services intended to help individuals integrate into the workforce and communities.

**Maximum Levels of General Assistance (Part II).** Prohibits a municipality from exceeding maximum levels of assistance under the General Assistance (GA) program for more than 30 days in a 12-month period.

**GA Reimbursement (Part OO).** Transfers \$5 million in unappropriated General Fund surplus revenue to the Department of Health & Human Services to reimburse municipalities for direct aid provided under the GA program.

**Crisis Receiving Center (Part KKK).** Authorizes the Department of Health & Human Services to develop a plan for a network of community-based crisis receiving centers that provide immediate and short-term, walk-in access to an array of clinical and non-clinical mental health and substance use disorder stabilization services. The department is further directed to: (1) establish guidelines in consultation with law enforcement agencies, municipalities, public health experts, and behavioral health providers; (2) assess geographical locations for maximization of community impact; (3) provide technical assistance to places and providers interested in joining the network; (4) coordinate regular meetings with centers and provide technical assistance; and (5) engage in continual process improvement and planning updates.

[LD 2210](#) *An Act to Establish a Civil Rights Unit and a Civil Rights Review Panel Within the Office of the Attorney General and Require Ongoing Enhanced Civil Rights Training for Civil Rights Officers* (Sponsored by Speaker Talbot Ross of Portland) This bill establishes a civil rights unit within the Office of the Attorney General that will receive and investigate complaints related to possible violations of the Maine Civil Rights Act, initiate civil actions under the Maine Civil Rights Act, coordinate with other individuals and entities dedicated to advancing civil rights, engage in public education and outreach on civil rights issues related to hate and bias to advance civil rights and provide recommendations on how to ensure protections of civil rights.

Of municipal interest the bill requires that all law enforcement agencies, municipal governments and state departments and agencies and any other divisions of State Government fully cooperate with the unit, make written reports of civil rights violations, and provide file information as requested for the purpose of the unit's official duties. The bill grants the Office of the Attorney General the authority to adopt rules governing the unit. Finally, the bill requires that all civil rights officers as defined in the Maine Civil Rights Act must fully cooperate with the unit as directed by this bill and undergo ongoing enhanced civil rights training provided by the Maine Criminal Justice Academy as determined by the Office of the Attorney General. The bill also creates within the Office of the Attorney General the Civil Rights Review Panel, which is separate from the civil rights unit. The panel must be composed of 13 members from various disciplines to be appointed by the Attorney General, the President of the Senate or the Speaker of the House as described in the bill. The bill requires the panel to examine complaints received by

the civil rights unit and use the data collected to inform policy recommendations to the Legislature. Under the bill, the panel must issue its own separate report summarizing the results of the panel's investigations, its policy recommendations and any comments or criticisms the panel may have concerning the unit's report. The bill requires that both the panel and the unit submit their reports to the Legislature no later than January 15th annually.

## **February 12, 2024**

[LD 2207](#) *An Act to Establish Municipal Cost Components for Unorganized Territory Services to Be Rendered in Fiscal Year 2024-25* (Emergency) (Reported by Rep. Perry of Bangor for the administrator of the unorganized territory pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 36, section 1604) **Emergency Enacted; PL 2023, c. 582 (3/28/24)** This emergency act establishes the cost components for municipal services rendered to the unorganized territory by the state and respective counties that would normally be paid for by a municipality for the purposes of assessing property tax on those owners.

As amended, this emergency bill establishes the cost components for services rendered to the unorganized territory by the state and respective counties for the purposes of assessing property taxes on those owners.

## **February 5, 2024**

[LD 2205](#) *Resolve, to Require the Public Utilities Commission to Initiate a Feasibility Study to Evaluate Transmission Technologies and Siting Locations for Any Future Electric Transmission Line Proposed Pursuant to the Northern Maine Renewable Energy Development Program* (Sponsored by Rep. Cyrway or Albion) (After Deadline) This resolve requires the Public Utilities Commission to study and evaluate the feasibility of alternative technologies and siting routes for the development and construction of an electric transmission line pursuant to the Northern Maine Renewable Energy Development Program. The study must include an evaluation of a number of factors, including, but not limited to, economic impacts, environmental impacts, public health concerns and a cost-benefit analysis of the proposed electric transmission line and requires the commission to consider community input. Upon conclusion of the feasibility study, the commission is required to issue a report to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over energy, utilities, and technology matters, which must include a summary of the feasibility study and any recommendations by the commission and its partners. The resolve authorizes the committee to report out a bill during the Second Regular Session of the 132<sup>nd</sup> Legislature and restricts the commission from resuming request for proposals or any other work on the electric transmission line until the feasibility study is completed and report submitted.

[LD 2204](#) *An Act to Combat Racketeering in Scheduled Drugs by Certain Organizations* (Sponsored by Rep. Andrews of Paris) **DEAD** This bill establishes the crime of racketeering and provides that a person is guilty of racketeering if the person is employed by or associated with an enterprise and intentionally conducts or participates in the affairs of the enterprise by participating in a pattern of criminal activity; acquires or maintains an interest in or control of an enterprise, or an interest in real property, by participating in a pattern of criminal activity; or



participates in a pattern of criminal activity and knowingly invests any proceeds derived from that conduct, or any proceeds derived from the investment or use of those proceeds, in an enterprise or in real property. In addition to establishing the activity as a class A crime, punishable by 20 years in prison and/or a fine of not more than \$1,000,000, of municipal interest is the seizure and forfeiture process of real estate involved in the criminal activity with disposal proceeds from the real estate or the tangible property to be sent to the Maine State Housing Authority. The act also requires: (1) an investigating agency to notify the Attorney General of a potential investigation that may result in the charges; (2) provides the Attorney General with authority to designate a prosecutorial power for the resulting charges; (3) prohibits ownership or partial interest in real estate to non-legal permanent residents from The Republic of China, including Hong Kong, Cuba, Iran, Korea and the Russia; (4) requires a consumer-owned or investor owned transmission and distribution utility to report suspicious power usage to the Department of Public Safety, Maine State Police when 400 ampere or more is requested at a residential property, a transformer malfunctions, power consumption at the residence exceeds 500% of a normal residential customer or a transformer larger than 25 kilovolt amperes is installed or required for a residential customer, and; (5) requires a municipal electrical inspection and permit when the residential building reaches the threshold of 400 amps and is located in a municipality that provides for electrical inspections. If the building is not in a municipality that has provided for electrical inspections, the person performing the work must apply to a state electrical inspector in writing. A municipal or state electrical inspector must also notify the transmission and distribution utility that serves the residential building of an application.

## February 1, 2024

[LD 2201](#) (*New title*) *An Act Regarding the Placement of Portable Toilets* (Sponsored by Sen. Libby of Cumberland Cty.) [Enacted; PL 2023, c. 614](#) This bill exempts a temporary portable toilet from the requirement to obtain a permit from a local plumbing inspector for placement. A temporary portable toilet is defined as one that is placed for less than seven days and is regulated by the Maine Centers for Disease Control under the Subsurface Wastewater Disposal Rule (Chapter 241) Section 5(I)(6): Temporary Portable Toilets.

As amended, this bill authorizes a person not subject to statutes regulating the operations of eating establishments, lodging places, campgrounds, sporting and youth camps, and public pools and spas (Title 22, chapter 562), to place and use a temporary portable toilet provided the facility is maintained and serviced in a reasonable manner to protect public health, safety, and the environment.

[LD 2200](#) *Resolve, to Attract and Retain Behavioral Health Clinicians* (Sponsored by Sen. Stewart of Aroostook Cty.) (After Deadline) **DEAD** This resolve directs the Department of Health and Human Services to develop and implement a program to provide a \$25,000 recruitment and retention incentive to behavioral health clinicians in the State during fiscal year 2024-25. It directs the department to establish criteria regarding participation in the program and to submit a report regarding the program to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over health and human services matters by November 6, 2024.

## January 29, 2024

[LD 2195](#) *An Act to Protect Businesses from Fraudulent or Predatory Financial Settlements by Allowing Those Businesses Opportunities to Remove Architectural Barriers in Noncompliance with the Maine Human Rights Act* (Sponsored by Sen. Daughtry of Cumberland Cty.) **DEAD** This bill amends the Maine Human Rights Act to prevent vexatious lawsuits and provide the owner, operator, lessor or lessee of a place of public accommodation the opportunity to remove an architectural barrier preventing the access to a place of public accommodation to obtain goods or services by an individual who are disabled. Also known as a “right to cure.” An individual whose access was limited or prevented to a place of public accommodation must provide written notice, including specifics about the circumstances of the limited or prevented access, to the owner, operator, lessor or lessee of the place of public accommodation. If the owner, operator, lessor or lessee fails to provide a response to the notice within 60 days and fails to remove or make substantial progress in removing the barrier to access within days after providing the response, the affected individual may file a complaint with the Maine Human Rights Commission or file a civil action in the Superior Court.

**January 25, 2024**

[LD 2192](#) *Resolve, to Ensure That the Independent Commission to Investigate the Facts of the Tragedy in Lewiston Has Necessary Authority to Discharge Its Fact-finding Mission* (Emergency) (Governor’s Bill) (Sponsored by Speaker Talbot Ross of Portland) **[Emergency Passed; Resolves 2023, c. 129 \(2/13/24\)](#)** This emergency resolve authorizes the Independent Commission to Investigate the Facts of the Tragedy in Lewiston to issue subpoenas to compel the testimony of witnesses and the production of documents. It also authorizes the independent commission to request and receive records in the possession of any state agency or instrumentality that it determines are necessary to fulfill the independent commission’s fact-finding mission, including confidential records and records not otherwise subject to public disclosure.

As amended and finally passed, this emergency Resolve amends the authorities and responsibilities assigned to the Independent Commission to Investigate the Facts of the Tragedy in Lewiston, which was created by Governor Mills via executive order on November 9, 2023. The resolve addresses the way witness testimony is accepted and transcripts are prepared and distributed; authorizes the commission to request and receive records in the possession of a state agency or instrumentality and ensures that the commission’s records are maintained in compliance with federal and state laws, rules and regulations.

[LD 2189](#) *Resolve, Regarding Legislative Review of Portions of Chapter 41: Special Restrictions on Pesticide Use, a Major Substantive Rule of the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Board of Pesticides Control* (Emergency) (Sponsored by Rep. Pluecker of Warren) **[Finally Passed; Resolves 2023, c. 153](#)** This emergency resolve allows for the immediate enactment of rules the department has proposed for Chapter 41: Special Restrictions on Pesticide Use, a provisionally adopted major substantive rule of the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Board of Pesticides Control, for major substantive legislative review instead of the typical 90 days following official legislative adjournment without the preamble.

As amended, this bill does not authorize final adoption of Chapter 41: Special Restrictions on Pesticide Use, a provisionally adopted major substantive rule of the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Board of Pesticides Control.

[LD 2187](#) *Resolve, Regarding Legislative Review of Chapter 10: Rules for the Administration of the Adult Use Cannabis Program, a Major Substantive Rule of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, Office of Cannabis Policy (Emergency)* (Sponsored by Rep. Supica of Bangor) This emergency resolve allows for the immediate enactment of rules the department has proposed for Chapter 10: Rules for the Administration of the Adult Use Cannabis Program, a provisionally adopted major substantive rule of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, office of cannabis policy, for major substantive legislative review instead of the typical 90 days following official legislative adjournment without the preamble.

[LD 2186](#) *Resolve, Regarding Legislative Review of Chapter 30: Compliance Rules for Adult Use Cannabis Establishments, a Major Substantive Rule of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, Office of Cannabis Policy (Emergency)* Sponsored by Rep. Supica of Bangor) This emergency resolve allows for the immediate enactment of rules the department has proposed under Chapter 30: Compliance Rules for Adult Use Cannabis Establishments, a provisionally adopted major substantive rule of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, office of cannabis policy, for major substantive legislative review instead of the typical 90 days following official legislative adjournment without the preamble.

*Resolve, Regarding Legislative Review of Chapter 2: Medical Use of Cannabis Program Rule, a Major Substantive Rule of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, Office of Cannabis Policy (Emergency)* (Sponsored by Rep. Supica of Bangor) This emergency resolve allows for the immediate enactment of rules the department has proposed under Chapter 2: Medical Use of Cannabis Program Rule, a provisionally adopted major substantive rule of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, office of cannabis policy, for major substantive legislative review instead of the typical 90 days following official legislative adjournment without the preamble.

## **January 22, 2024**

[LD 2183](#) *Resolve, to Correct the Designation of a Bridge in Canaan to Be Named After Staff Sergeant Richard Gerald Salsbury (Emergency)* (Sponsored by Sen. Farrin of Somerset)

[Emergency Passed; Resolves 2023, c. 131 \(2/29/24\)](#) This emergency resolve corrects a previous error made in the drafting of Resolve 2023, chapter 2, enacted June 29, 2023, renaming the Department of Transportation bridge in Canaan designated as the Moores Bridge on Moores Mills Road and bridge number 6116 in the previous resolve, to the appropriate bridge number 2120, Canaan Bridge on Main Street to the Staff Sergeant Richard Gerald Salsbury Memorial Bridge. The resolve also makes the designation retroactive back to the intended enactment date.

[LD 2182](#) *Resolve, Regarding Legislative Review of Portions of Chapter 132: Learning Results: Parameters for Essential Instruction, a Major Substantive Rule of the Department of Education (Emergency)* (Reported by Rep. Brennan of Portland for the Department of Education) **Finally Passed** This emergency resolve provides for legislative review of portions of Chapter 132:

Learning Results: Parameters for Essential Instruction, a major substantive rule of the Department of Education.

As amended, this emergency resolve prohibits the adoption of Chapter 132: Learning Results: Parameters for Essential Instruction rules promulgated by the Department of Education and directs the department to initiate rulemaking on the social studies portion of Chapter 132 and to submit the provisionally adopted ruled to the Legislature in 2025.

[LD 2181](#) *Resolve, Regarding Legislative Review of Portions of Chapter 61: State Board of Education Rules for Major Capital School Construction Projects, a Major Substantive Rule of the Department of Education, State Board of Education (Emergency) (Sponsored by Rep. Brennan of Portland at the request of the Department of Education.)* [Emergency Passed; Resolves 2023, c. 141 \(3/14/24\)](#) This emergency resolve creates an emergency preamble to allow the immediate enactment of rules the department has proposed under portions of Chapter 61: State Board of Education Rules for Major Capital School Construction Projects for major substantive legislative review instead of the typical 90 day following official legislative adjournment without the preamble.

[LD 2180](#) *Resolve, Regarding Legislative Review of Portions of Chapter 101: Maine Unified Special Education Regulation Birth to Age Twenty Two, a Major Substantive Rule of the Department of Education (Emergency) (Sponsored by Rep. Brennan of Portland at the request of the Department of Education.)* **On Appropriations Table** This emergency resolve allows for the immediate enactment of rules the department has proposed under portions of Chapter 101: Maine Unified Special Education Regulation Birth to Age Twenty-Two, for major substantive legislative review instead of the typical 90 day following official legislative adjournment without the preamble.

As amended, this emergency resolve allows for the immediate enactment of rules proposed under portions of Chapter 101: Maine Unified Special Education Regulation Birth to Age Twenty-Two, for major substantive legislative review and as necessary authorizes the Department of Education to make grammatical, formatting, punctuation and other technical, non-substantive editing changes to the rule prior to final adoption.

[LD 2179](#) *Resolve, Regarding Legislative Review of Portions of Chapter 64: Maine School Facilities Program and School Revolving Renovation Fund, a Major Substantive Rule of the Department of Education and the Maine Municipal Bond Bank (Emergency) (Sponsored by Rep. Brenner of Portland at the request of the Department of Education (DOE) and the Maine Municipal Bond Bank.)* [Emergency Passed; Resolves 2023, c. 144 \(3/19/24\)](#) This emergency resolve allows for the immediate enactment of rules the department has proposed under portions of Chapter 64: Maine School Facilities Program and School Revolving Renovation Fund for major substantive legislative review instead of the typical 90 day following official legislative adjournment without the preamble.

[LD 2178](#) *Resolve, Regarding Legislative Review of Chapter 20: Rules for the Licensure of Adult Use Cannabis Establishments, a Major Substantive Rule of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, Office of Cannabis Policy (Emergency) (Sponsored by Rep. Supica of Bangor at request of Dept. Administrative Affairs and Financial Services (DAFS).)* This

emergency resolve allows for the immediate enactment of rules the department has proposed under Chapter 20: Rules for the License of Adult Use Cannabis Establishments for major substantive legislative review instead of the typical 90 day following official legislative adjournment without the preamble.

[LD 2176](#) *An Act to Ensure the Workers' Compensation Board's Allocations Are Properly Funded* (Reported by Sen. Tipping of Penobscot Cty. on behalf of the Worker's Compensation Board) **On Appropriations Table** This bill amends the provision of law governing the Workers' Compensation Board Administrative Fund to ensure the board will be able to fund expenditures allocated by the Legislature and maintain its reserve. The bill removes current statutory language that places a specific dollar amount on the maximum value of assessments that may be levied from insured employers and replaces it with language providing that assessments levied may not be designed to produce more revenue than is sufficient for the Workers' Compensation Board to fund the expenditures allocated by the Legislature and to maintain a reserve of up to 1/4 of the board's annual budget. The bill retains language from current law that requires that any funds collected above the maximum assessment that exceed a margin of 10% be used to reduce the assessments paid by insured employers.

As amended, this bill amends the provision of law governing the Workers' Compensation Board Administrative Fund that ensures the board can fund authorized expenditures and maintain reserves. The existing provision, which provides a specific dollar amount on the maximum value of assessments that may be levied from insured employers, is replaced with language providing that assessments may not produce more revenue than is sufficient for the board to fund expenditures and maintain a reserve, which is further limited to no more than 25% of the board's annual budget.

[LD 2173](#) *Resolve, to Rename the Interstate 295 Interchange in the Town of Freeport the Matthew MacMillan Bridge* (Emergency) (Sponsored by Sen. Daughtry of Cumberland Cty.) **Emergency Passed; Resolves 2023, c. 140 (3/14/24)** This bill corrects a previous error made in the drafting of Resolve 2023, chapter 1, enacted June 29, 2023, renaming the Department of Transportation interchange in Freeport designated as the Desert of Maine Overpass and bridge number 5741 in the previous bill, to the appropriate bridge number 5720 and the Merrial Road Interchange to the Matthew MacMillan Bridge. The bill also makes the designation retroactive back to the intended enactment date.

## **January 18, 2024**

[LD 2170](#) *An Act to Prioritize School Construction Projects for Schools Affected by Disasters* (Sponsored by Sen. Vitelli of Sagadahoc Cty.) **DEAD** This bill requires the State Board of Education to prioritize approval of emergency school construction projects, which are defined as projects requiring the full replacement or a significant portion of a school facility that is declared uninhabitable by an authorized individual or local, state, or federal agency as a result of an unanticipated and sudden natural or human-made disaster.

[LD 2169](#) *(New title) Resolve, Directing the Office of Policy Innovation and the Future to Recommend Proposals to Support the Development of Attainable Housing* (Sponsored by Sen.

Daughtry of Cumberland Cty.) [Finally Passed; Resolves 2023, c. 162](#) This bill establishes the Workforce Housing Development Loan Fund in the Department of Economic and Community Development to provide loans to support the development of affordable workforce housing. The department is directed to solicit applications for loans from the fund through a competitive application process and authorized to award loans to community banks at an interest rate of 0% to provide funding to developers for the construction of housing for employees who earn 60% to 120% of the area median income as determined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.

As amended, this Resolve directs Office of Policy Innovation and the Future (GOPIF) to develop proposals to financially support the development of rental housing for persons making 80% to 150% of the area median income and programs to support homeownership by persons making 120% to 180% of the area median income. The office is required to seek input from entities familiar with programs that assist with the development of affordable housing as well as commercial real estate developers, the Maine State Chamber of Commerce and the Maine State Housing Authority. No later than January 15, 2025, GOPIF is directed to submit a report to the joint standing or select committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over housing matters, which is authorized to report out legislation in 2025.

### **January 16, 2024**

[LD 2167](#) *An Act to Develop Maine's Economy and Strengthen Its Workforce by Establishing an Office of New Americans* (Governor's Bill) (Sponsored by Rep. Dhalac of South Portland) This bill establishes the Office of New Americans (ONA), within the Office of Policy Innovation and the Future, to improve the economic and civic integration of immigrants into Maine's workforce and communities by identifying and addressing needs, barriers and opportunities by: collecting and analyzing relevant data; coordinating with all relevant local, state and federal government agencies; serving as the State's primary liaison with all stakeholders; and undertaking and promoting the activities that help achieve the goals of the ONA. Additionally, the office is responsible for strengthening workforce opportunities by providing guidance and improving pathways for professional accreditation and licensure; expanding and improving access to English language learning programs; supporting the expansion of access to legal services; and partnering with and supporting municipalities, schools and community-based organizations and businesses providing assistance or opportunities to immigrants. The bill also creates a 19-member council to advise the ONA, including a municipal official appointed by the Speaker of the House.

### **January 11, 2024**

[LD 2162](#) (New title) *An Act Regarding the Current Use Valuation of Working Waterfront Property* (Sponsored by Rep. Ankeles of Brunswick) **Passed to be Enacted** For tax years beginning on April 1, 2024, this emergency bill provides an additional \$15,000 homestead exemption on homes with assessed values of \$100,000 or less and provides 100% state reimbursement for the lost property tax revenue associated with the \$15,000 increase. The bill also amends the definition of "working waterfront land" under the current use valuation program to include wharfs or piers used by persons engaged in commercial fishing activities that include berthing a boat and the location of small fishing houses for commercial fishing gear maintenance

and storage; increases from 20% to 30% the reduction in assessed value for land used *predominantly* as working waterfront land; increases from 10% to 20% the reduction in assessed value for land used *primarily* as working waterfront land; and requires the assessor to delay payment of a penalty, for up to two years, associated with withdrawal from the program when requested by a landowner who is unable to pay the fee due to market conditions beyond the owner's control, injury or incapacitating event. Finally, the bill requires the State tax assessor to create an information bulletin regarding the changes to the working waterfront current use program.

As amended, this bill expands the definition property eligible for a discounted tax assessment under the working waterfront current use program to include wharfs or piers used either primary or predominately by persons engaged in commercial fishing activities that including berthing a boat and the location of small fishing houses for commercial fishing gear maintenance and storage. The bill also: (1) increases from 20% to 30% the tax assessment reduction for property used *predominately* as working waterfront and from 10% to 20% for land used *primarily* as working waterfront; (2) provides that land subject to a legally binding right-of-way or easement that permits access to intertidal land for commercial fishing activity is eligible for an additional reduction of 10%; and (3) allows the owner of waterfront property subject to a program penalty to request an up to two-year delay in the payment. The bill also directs the State Tax Assessor to create an information bulletin regarding the working waterfront current use program and by December 31 of each odd-numbered year, submit a report to the joint standing committee having jurisdiction over taxation matters, including a comparison of the sales price and the assessed value of the working waterfront property.

## **January 9, 2024**

[LD 2159](#) *An Act to Protect the Confidentiality of Attorney-Client E-mail Communications for Residents of Jails and Correctional Facilities* (Sponsored by Sen. Carney of Cumberland Cty.)

**DEAD** This bill extends the consequences of intercepting attorney-client oral or wire communications, including telephone calls, to email communications, provided the resident of a jail or correctional facility can show the facility had actual or constructive notice at the time of the communication of the attorney's name and email address and the communication originated from that email address. If shown, knowledge received from the intercepted communication is not admissible in a criminal proceeding or post-conviction review, and the person who viewed or read the information is disqualified from participating in an investigation of the resident or appearing as a witness in a pending or anticipated criminal proceeding.

[LD 2158](#) *(New title) Resolve, to Improve the Housing Voucher System and Reduce the Number of Voucher Expirations* (Sponsored by Rep. Golek of Harpswell) **Finally Passed; Resolves 2023,**

**c. 159** Among establishing new reporting and data collection requirements for the Maine State Housing Authority, of municipal interest this bill; (1) defines the term "housing voucher;" (2) permits a municipality to contract with landlords of residential housing at the highest rental rates allowed by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development program; (3) allows municipalities to establish a reasonable time limit on the use of housing vouchers once issued and; (4) permits the use of a housing voucher in any municipality in the state once issued by either a state or municipal housing authority.

As amended, this resolve directs the Maine State Housing Authority to establish a stakeholder group, including a member who has experience in the administration of municipal general assistance, to develop recommendations to improve the system governing the distribution and use of housing vouchers. No later than January 15, 2025, the authority is further directed to submit a report to the joint select or standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over housing matters, which is authorized to submit legislation in 2025.

[LD 2157](#) *An Act to Prohibit Tobacco Sales near Schools* (Sponsored by Rep. Moonen of Portland) The bill would prohibit the Department of Health and Human Services from issuing or renewing a retail tobacco license to a retailer within 1,000 feet of a school.

### January 3, 2024

[LD 2156](#) *An Act to Authorize the Provision of Emergency Medical Treatment for Certain Dogs* (Sponsored by Rep. Fay of Raymond) **Enacted; PL 2023, c. 587** The bill would allow emergency medical services persons to provide emergency medical treatment to certain dogs in accordance with protocols adopted by the Medical Direction and Practices Board.

As amended, this bill authorizes licensed emergency medical services personnel to provide treatment to law enforcement canines and search and rescue dogs in accordance with protocols adopted by the Medical Direction and Practices Board. The amendment also requires the board to consult with an individual with expertise in emergency veterinary medicine, designated by the State of Veterinary Medicine, when adopting or amending protocols for providing treatment to law enforcement canines or search and rescue dogs.

[LD 2147](#) *(New title) An Act to Change the Requirement for Edible Cannabis Products to Be Stamped or Embossed on Each Serving with a Universal Symbol* (Emergency) (Sponsored by Rep. Boyer of Poland) **Passed to be Enacted** The emergency bill removes the current requirement that edible cannabis products be stamped or embossed on each serving with a universal symbol to be sold or offered for sale.

As amended, this bill requires that each serving of an edible cannabis product or individually wrapped or blister packaged be stamped or embossed with a universal symbol indicating the product contains cannabis. The bill also requires that items determined impractical for individual stamping via Department of Administrative and Financial Services rules, must be packaged together and the symbol affixed to the package. The bill further provides that potato chips, popcorn, pretzels, loose granola, and gummies are impracticable for individual stamping.

[LD 2146](#) *An Act to Prohibit Certain Municipalities from Adopting Moratoria on Emergency Shelters* (Sponsored by Rep. Lookner of Portland) The bill prohibits municipalities with populations exceeding 30,000 people from adopting moratoria on the establishment of emergency shelters that provide temporary shelter for persons experiencing homelessness.

[LD 2141](#) *An Act to Enhance Protections for and Better Address Invasive Aquatic Plant Infestations in Inland Waters of the State* (Sponsored by Rep. Hasenfus of Readfield) **On Appropriations Table** The bill provides one time \$2 million appropriation for the An Act to



Enhance Protections for and Better Address Invasive Aquatic Plant Infestations in Inland Waters of the State and requires the Commissioner of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to also monitor watercraft inspection protocols and surface use restrictions on inland waters.

As amended, the bill provides \$2 million in one-time funding for the Invasive Aquatic Plant and Nuisance Species Fund within the Department of Environmental Protection. The bill further directs the department, in collaboration with the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to review and recommend more stringent watercraft inspection protocols on infested inland waters, review surface use restrictions, and provide notice of those restrictions to members of the public.

[LD 2136](#) *(New title) An Act to Provide Financial Support for Shelters for Unhoused Individuals and Establish a Stakeholder Group to Develop a 10-year Plan to Address the Root Causes of Homelessness* (Sponsored by Rep. Mastraccio of Sanford) **On Appropriations Table** This bill appropriates \$10 million to Maine Housing to provide ongoing funds for homeless shelters.

As amended, this bill increases the ongoing appropriation to support emergency shelter operations to \$12.5 million and requires the Maine State Housing Authority to reserve \$2.5 million annually for distribution to low barrier emergency shelters. The bill also directs the Statewide Homeless Council to convene a stakeholder group to develop a 10-year plan to address the root causes of homelessness and submit a report to the Joint Select Committee on Housing by November 6, 2024.

[LD 2135](#) *(New title) Resolve, Regarding the Operation and Future capacity of State-owned Landfills* (Sponsored by Rep. Dill of Old Town) This emergency resolve directs the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, Bureau of General Services and the Department of Environmental Protection to investigate and make recommendations by April 1, 2024 to the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources to address several critical issues and developments in the State's solid waste management system that affect approximately 159 municipalities in the central and northern areas of the State and sewer and utility districts and departments all across the State.

As amended, this bill directs the Department of Environmental Protection to evaluate the costs and benefits associated with state ownership of the former Jay paper mill landfill for the primary purpose of increasing disposal capacity for wastewater treatment plant sludge and special waste, but with consideration for the potential use for the disposal of municipal solid waste. The department is also directed to evaluate the options for amending the Old Town landfill operating service agreement. With respect to both tasks, on or before January 1, 2025, the department is directed to submit a report to the joint standing committee having jurisdiction over environment and natural resources mattering, which is authorized to advance legislation in 2025.

[LD 2129](#) *An Act to Establish a Statewide Sexual Assault Forensic Examination Kit Tracking System and Conduct an Inventory of Existing Forensic Examination Kits in the Possession of Law Enforcement (Emergency)* (Sponsored by Rep. Geiger of Rockland) **On Appropriations Table** Of municipal interest, this emergency bill requires a law enforcement agency that receives, maintains, stores or preserves sexual assault forensic examination kits to complete an inventory of all kits in its possession and report its findings to the Department of Public Safety. The department must compile all agency reports and present findings of the inventory by

September 1, 2025 to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over criminal justice and public safety matters and at the same time post the report on the department's public website in an easily accessible location. Public Law 2023, chapter 236 changed a provision in the Maine Revised Statutes, to require law enforcement agencies to store sexual assault forensic examination kits for 20 years. For consistency with that provision, this bill amends a provision in Title 24 to require law enforcement agencies to store sexual assault forensic examination kits for 20 years.

As amended, this bill directs the Department of Public Safety to establish, operate, and maintain a tracking system for all completed forensic examination kits and further requires law enforcement agencies have access to the tracking system for the purpose of reporting: (1) the date the completed kit was received; (2) where it is being stored; and (3) the date a prosecuting attorney was informed that an examination was performed. By January 1, 2026 and annually thereafter, the department is required to submit a report, including recommendations for improving the system, as well as statistics on the number of reported kits, to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over criminal justice and public safety matters and the governor. The bill also clarifies that if an alleged victim of sexual assault has an examination and reports the assault, the law enforcement agency investigating the offense must take possession of the kit. For consistency among statutes, the bill also requires law enforcement agencies to store sexual assault forensic examination kits for 20 years.

[LD 2123](#) *An Act Regarding Licensure of Emergency Medical Services Persons* (Sponsored by Rep. Cyrway of Albion) **DEAD** The bill amends language in current statute requiring a person to satisfactorily demonstrate competence and skills to be licensed as an emergency medical technician from board approved "practical evaluation" to "assessment".

[LD 2122](#) *An Act to Create Parity in the Licensing of Emergency Medical Services Professionals and Other Health Care Professionals Who Enter Private Residences* (Sponsored by Rep. Cyrway of Albion) **DEAD** The bill authorizes the use of the Background Check Center with in the Department of Health and Human Services, Maine Emergency Medical Services, and Department of Public safety for individuals seeking to be licensed or relicensed as an emergency medical services employee or operator in the same way a public service providers are.

[LD 2116](#) *An Act to Require Flame-retardant Seats on New School Buses* (Sponsored by Sen. Stewart of Aroostook Cty.) **DEAD** This bill requires that all seats on school busses manufactured after 2025 be made of flame-retardant material.

[LD 2111](#) *An Act Regarding the Timeline for Property Tax Abatement Based on Hardship or Poverty* (Sponsored by Sen. Timberlake of Androscoggin Cty.) **DEAD** The bill aligns the deadline for filing an application for property tax abatement based on hardship or poverty, which may be filed up to three years from the date of commitment, with the timeline of the foreclosure process, in which liens automatically foreclose 18 months from the date of filing.

[LD 2109](#) *An Act to Maintain State Police Rural Patrol Services at 2020 Staffing Levels* (Emergency) (Sponsored by Sen. Timberlake of Androscoggin Cty.) **On Appropriations Table** The bill directs the Department of Public Safety, Bureau of State Police to maintain rural patrol services in all counties of the State at no less than 2020 staffing levels.

As amended, the bill appropriates funding for four State Police troopers to conduct rural patrols in Androscoggin County.

[LD 2105](#) *Resolve, to Protect and Enhance Access to Behavioral Health Services in Androscoggin County and Surrounding Communities* (Emergency) (Sponsored by Sen. Rotundo of Androscoggin Cty.) **On Appropriations Table** This emergency resolve provides one time funding of \$10 million to cover the cost of operating losses associated with the acute behavioral health care services provided by St. Mary's Regional Medical Center in Lewiston and to ensure that those services can be continued and expanded to meet urgent needs in Androscoggin County and surrounding communities.

As amended, this emergency resolve provides \$8.9 million in one-time funding to cover the operating losses associated with the acute behavioral health care services provided by St. Mary's Regional Medical Center in Lewiston and to ensure that those services can be continued and expanded to meet urgent needs in Androscoggin County and surrounding communities. The resolve also provides \$1.9 million in one-time funding to Spurwink Services to acquire Tri-County Mental Health Services.

[LD 2104](#) *An Act to Amend the Charter of the Wiscasset Water District* (Sponsored by Sen. Reny of Lincoln Cty.) **Enacted; P & SL 2023, c. 22** The bill amends the charter of the Wiscasset Water District to expand the district's service territory to include the Town of Edgecomb and to allow the district to provide sewer service to the towns of Edgecomb and Wiscasset and to existing customers in Woolwich. It also provides for representation of Edgecomb on the district's board of trustees once service is expanded to include 1/3 of the legal residents of Edgecomb.

As amended, this bill includes the Town of Edgecomb in the Wiscasset Water District subject to a referendum vote in the towns of Wiscasset and Edgecomb. The bill further authorizes the district to supply water to existing customers in Woolwich and to contract with Wiscasset for the management, oversight, operations and billing related to the functions of the Wiscasset Wastewater Department. The bill also amends the provisions of the charter governing trustees of the district to include a trustee who is a legal voter in Edgecomb.

[LD 2102](#) *An Act to Support Municipalities by Repealing the Law Limiting the Municipal Property Tax Levy* (Sponsored by Rep. Pierce of Cumberland Cty.) **Enacted; PL 2023, c. 603** This emergency bill repeals the law limiting municipal property tax levy, also known as LD 1.

As amended, this bill repeals the law limiting municipal property tax levy, also known as LD 1.

[LD 2101](#) *An Act to Strengthen Shoreland Zoning Enforcement* (Sponsored by Sen. Nangle of Cumberland Cty.) **Enacted; PL 2023, c. 602** This emergency bill authorizes a municipality to restrict the issuance of or suspend or revoke any municipally issued permit to the owner of real estate who violates a shoreland zoning ordinance. It authorizes the municipality to claim a lien against the real estate for all costs incurred by the municipality and any unpaid penalties related to the ordinance violation.

As amended, the bill authorizes the Maine Land Use Planning Commission and municipalities to take certain actions when a violation of a law, ordinance, standard, rule, permit or order occurs on land in a shoreland zone. Before taking any of the actions, the commission or municipality must provide the owner and any occupant written notice of the violation and 10 days within which to remove, abate or otherwise correct the violation. The actions that the commission or municipality may take include: (1) denying, suspending or revoking a permit for further development of all or a portion of the land on which the violation occurred until the violation is corrected and any penalties and court-awarded fees are paid; (2) filing a civil action against the owner or occupant to recover unpaid penalties, the cost to correct the violation, court costs and reasonable attorney's fees necessary to file and pursue the civil action; and (3) claiming a lien against the land on which the violation occurred if the commission or municipality is the prevailing party in the civil action. The bill also requires persons selling property to disclose any actual or alleged violations of shoreland zoning statutes, ordinances, rules or regulations.

[LD 2098](#) *An Act Regarding Multiple Special Designating Plates for Certain Disabled Veterans* (Sponsored by Sen. LaFountain of Kennebec Cty.) **DEAD** This bill clarifies that the Secretary of State may issue a registration certificate exempt from excise tax and special designating plates for more than one vehicle owned by certain disabled veterans.

[LD 2094](#) *Resolve, to Require the Establishment of a Stakeholder Group to Examine and Improve the Recruitment, Retention and Wellness of Law Enforcement Officers* (Sponsored by President Jackson of Aroostook Cty.) **Finally Passed; Resolves 2023, c. 165** This bill requires the Department of Public Safety to convene a stakeholder group made up of members from various police organizations around the state, Department of Public Safety, Maine Criminal Justice Academy, private security firms and a statewide organization representing mental health to study: (1) how to incentivize and encourage the recruitment of law enforcement officers and how funding could be provided to address vacant law enforcement positions; (2) how to incentivize and encourage the retention of law enforcement officers and how funding could be provided to support this goal; (3) how to incentivize and encourage mental and physical wellness programs for law enforcement officers and how funding could be provided to support this goal; (4) how to develop and support law enforcement entities in rural communities and how funding could be provided to support community peace and crime deterrence; (5) the current educational, social service, public health, criminal justice, drug enforcement and economic needs of communities and law enforcement entities, opportunities to address those needs and how funding could be provided to support the peacekeeping efforts of law enforcement entities; (6) the impact of media on public perception of law enforcement officers; and (7) current community policing, social services and crime prevention programs throughout the State, and recommendations for future programs, and how funding could be provided to support the peacekeeping efforts of law enforcement entities. No later than January 2, 2025, the department is further directed to report out recommendations to the Judiciary Committee.

As amended, this bill directs the Department of Public Safety to convene a 12-member stakeholder group, including representatives from the Maine Association of Police, Maine Chiefs of Police Association, and the Maine Sheriffs' Association, to study the long-term solutions necessary to improve the recruitment, retention, and wellness of law enforcement officers. No later than January 2, 2025, the department is further directed to submit a report of the working group's findings and recommendations to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having

jurisdiction over criminal justice and public safety matters, which is authorized to submit legislation in 2025.

[LD 2093](#) *An Act to Address Food Insecurity by Helping Maine Residents Access Locally Produced Food* (Emergency) (Sponsored by Sen. Ingwersen of York Cty.) **On Appropriations Table** In 2023, the Legislature appropriate \$600,000 in on-time funding in both FY 2024 and FY 2024 to support the Fund To Address Food Insecurity and Provide Nutrition Incentives. This emergency bill provides ongoing funding and increases the annual amount to \$1.2 million to match contributions from private and public sources in service of the fund's mission.

[LD 2089](#) (*New title*) *An Act Regarding Drug Awareness Instruction in Secondary School* (Sponsored by Sen. Farrin of Somerset Cty.) **Enacted; PL 2023, c. 601** This bill requires no less than 10 hours of instruction in a school year between grades 6-12 regarding the prevention of the illegal use of fentanyl and other drugs with a high risk overdose. The bill also establishes the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of October annually as Drug Poisoning Awareness Week.

As amended, the bill clarifies that health education in a secondary school must include reference to the effects of dangerous drugs such as fentanyl in addition to alcoholic drinks, stimulants and narcotics. The bill also allows a secondary school to supplement substance use instruction by observing a drug awareness week during the month of October each year.

[LD 2088](#) *An Act to Change the Number of Agency Liquor Stores Allowed in Certain Municipalities* (Sponsored by Sen. Daughtry of Cumberland Cty.) **Emergency Enacted; PL 2023, c. 550 (3/19/24)** This bill lowers the population threshold for municipalities to have up to seven agency liquor stores in a municipality from 15,000 to 10,000.

As amended, the bill authorizes the Bureau of Alcoholic Beverages and Lottery Operations to issue one additional agency liquor store license to any municipality, instead of only to a municipality with a population less than 15,000. In determining whether to issue an additional license, the bureau may consider any information provided by the municipality requesting an additional agency liquor store license. The bill also directs the bureau to convene a stakeholder group to examine how agency liquor stores are licensed and operated to better understand how they are distributed throughout the State and to evaluate the effectiveness of the current system for consumers, the public, local law enforcement officials, municipalities, state and entities licensed in Maine for the sale of liquor.

[LD 2087](#) *An Act to Protect Property Owners by Preventing the Use of Eminent Domain to Build Transmission Lines Under the Northern Maine Renewable Energy Development Program* (Sponsored by Sen. Curry of Waldo Cty.) This bill prohibits the use of eminent domain in the development or construction of a generation connection line or transmission line under the Northern Maine Renewable Energy Development Program.

[LD 2086](#) *An Act to Amend the Law Governing the Disposition of Forfeited Firearms* (Sponsored by Sen. Carney of Cumberland Cty.) This bill would expand the law that currently directs the state to destroy all firearms that have been forfeited to a law enforcement agency used in the commission of a murder or unlawful homicide to all firearms that have been forfeited as

mandated by the general sentencing provisions of the Maine Criminal Code. The bill also eliminates one of the exceptions to mandatory forfeiture, applying to cases in which the firearm subject to forfeiture is rightfully owned by another person and amends the law governing forfeiture of firearms within the Maine Juvenile Code.

[LD 2085](#) *An Act to Update Maine's Domestic Violence and Stalking Laws* (Emergency) (Sponsored by Sen. Carney of Cumberland Cty.) **[Emergency Enacted; PL 2023, c. 519 \(3/06/24\)](#)** This emergency bill amends relevant sections of Maine's Criminal Code and sections under protection from abuse laws to reflect a new federal standard established by *Counterman 32 v. Colorado, 600 U.S. 66 (2023)* to provide that in the commission of a violation of the abuse laws, terrorizing, stalking or harassment by telephone based on the content of the actor's speech, the actor must have consciously disregarded a risk that the actor's speech would place a reasonable person in fear of bodily injury.

This emergency Act more closely aligns the statutes with the federal standard set by *Counterman v. Colorado, 600 U.S. 66 (2023)* by specifying that, for an actor to commit "abuse" within the meaning of the protection from abuse laws based on the content of the actor's speech or for an actor to commit the crime of terrorizing, domestic violence terrorizing, stalking, domestic violence stalking or harassment by telephone based on the content of the actor's speech, the actor must have consciously disregarded a substantial risk that the actor's speech would place a reasonable person in fear of bodily injury.

[LD 2084](#) *An Act to Provide Funding for Essential Services for Victims of Crimes* (Sponsored by Sen. Carney of Cumberland Cty.) **On Appropriations Table** This bill provides ongoing funding for crime victim services of \$6 million beginning in budget year 2024-2025.

As amended, this bill provides \$6 million in ongoing funding to replace current and anticipated reductions in federal grants for crime victim services.

[LD 2082](#) *An Act to Ensure the Financial Stability of Behavioral Health Services Providers and Housing Assistance Providers* (Emergency) (Sponsored by Sen. Bennett of Oxford Cty.) This emergency bill requires the Department of Health and Human Services to pay administrative expenses and interest charged on lines of credit or loans accessed by behavioral health services providers and housing assistance providers when a delay in department contract award, finalization or payments requires the provider to access the line of credit or loan.

## **December 21, 2023**

[LD 2079](#) *An Act to Strengthen Firefighters' Collective Bargaining Rights* (Emergency) (Sponsored by Rep. Roeder of Bangor) **DEAD** This concept draft bill, as emergency legislation, would strengthen the collective bargaining rights of firefighters in order to increase recruitment and retention of firefighters.

[LD 2077](#) *An Act Regarding Customer Costs and the Environmental and Health Effects of Natural Gas* (Sponsored by Rep. Zeigler of Montville) The bill removes the exemption for a gas

utility to require permission from the PUC to serve in any municipality without a current provider. It provides that, beginning January 1, 2025, the Public Utilities Commission may not approve a gas utility to furnish service or serve customers in a municipality that is outside of the utility's service area on June 30, 2024. Beginning January 1, 2025, it prohibits a gas utility from offering or providing a promotional allowance to customers or potential customers. The bill also requires the PUC to conduct inquiries related to district geothermal systems and costs associated with gas system expansion and requires the Department of Health and Human Services and Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention to submit a report on indoor air quality and health impacts of fossil fuel combustion and leakage to several joint standing committees of the Legislature.

[LD 2076](#) *An Act to Exempt from Excise Tax Vehicles of Active Duty Service Members Stationed Out-of-state* (Sponsored by Rep. Lemelin of Chelsea) [Enacted; PL 2023, c. 565](#) This bill expands eligibility for an exemption from payment of motor vehicle excise taxes to include a person on active duty stationed outside the State or who is deployed for more than 180 days. It further amends the exemption to include members of the National Guard and the Reserves of the United States Armed Forces. Finally, the bill repeals the provision of law that establishes a local option for municipalities to pass an ordinance offering the exemption established by the bill.

As amended, this bill extends the motor vehicle excise tax exemption provided for certain persons deployed for military service to include individuals who are not deployed at the time of making the request for an exemption from excise tax but who were deployed for a period of at least 180 consecutive days in the 12 months preceding the request for an exemption. The amendment also makes changes to clarify what documentation a person requesting the exemption is required to provide to verify the person's military service.

[LD 2073](#) *An Act to Amend the Application of the Law Requiring Motor Vehicle Liability Insurance Policies to Cover Towing and Storage Charges for Certain Vehicles* (Emergency) (Sponsored by Rep. Perry of Calais) **DEAD** This emergency bill requires motor vehicle liability policies issued for certain motor vehicles to provide coverage for certain towing and storage charges incurred as a result of an accident involving the insured vehicle if the vehicle is towed at the request of a law enforcement officer. Chapter 395, Part A includes an application section that provides that those requirements apply to all motor vehicle liability insurance policies executed, delivered, issued for delivery, continued, or renewed in this State on or after July 1, 2024.

[LD 2072](#) *An Act to Amend the Laws Governing Motor Vehicles* (Presented by Sen. Nangle of Cumberland Cty. on behalf of the Secretary of State) This bill makes several changes to the laws governing motor vehicles. Of municipal note, the bill clarifies that vans and sport utility vehicles may be registered as farm trucks; clarifies that a set of disabled veteran plates are optional for a veteran who has lost both legs or the use of both legs when the veteran receives a registration fee and excise tax exemption; clarifies that the Secretary of State may issue a registration certificate and special designating plates for more than one vehicle owned by certain disabled veterans; and allows for the issuance of titles for semitrailers no more than 25 years old.

[LD 2071](#) *Resolve, to Fill All Vacant and Expired Seats on the Emergency Medical Services' Board* (Emergency) (Sponsored by Sen. Harrington of York Cty.) [Emergency Passed; Resolves](#)

[2023, c. 154 \(3/26/24\)](#) The Blue Ribbon Commission on EMS identified vacancies on the EMS board as a key problem for addressing issues within the provision of EMS services state-wide. This emergency resolve would direct the Governor to appoint members to fill vacant or expired terms within 30 days of the effective date of the resolve. Current vacancies include Southern Maine Region 1, Northeast Region 4, Non-Transporting Services, For Profit Ambulance Services, Emergency Professional Nurses, Pediatrics, with all other appointments set to expire in January of 2023 or expired in 2020-2022.

## **December 12, 2023**

[LD 2066](#) *An Act to Clarify Liability Under the Uncontrolled Hazardous Substance Site Law and to Waive a Fee Regarding Voluntary Response Action Plans* (Sponsored by Rep. Fay of Raymond) [Enacted; PL 2023, c. 510](#) The bill amends the uncontrolled hazardous substance law clarifying responsibilities of each party for costs incurred by the State for abatement, cleanup or mitigation of the threats or hazards posed by an uncontrolled site including all of the costs associated with the State's acquiring of property among other changes. Of municipal interest, the bill provides a limited exemption from liability for contamination of a site with perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances if the source of the contamination was primarily caused by Department of Environmental Protection-licensed land application of sludge or sludge-derived products.

This Act amends the uncontrolled hazardous substance law to clarify responsibilities of each party for costs incurred by the State for abatement, cleanup or mitigation of the threats or hazards posed by an uncontrolled site including all costs associated with the State's acquiring of property. Of municipal interest, with exceptions, the law provides a limited exemption from liability for contamination of a site with perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances if the source of the contamination was primarily caused by Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)-licensed land application of sludge or sludge-derived products. The exemption is not provided if the DEP commissioner determines that the third party that applied the sludge failed to follow applicable requirements or if a person has failed to comply with an information request or has impeded a required response.

[LD 2065](#) *An Act to Amend Maine's Aquaculture Leasing Laws* (Sponsored by Rep. Hepler of Woolwich) [Enacted; PL 2023, c. 564](#) This bill amends the laws governing the aquaculture leasing process. It eliminates provisions that are no longer applicable regarding operations that were in effect prior to January 1, 1994. It amends the notice requirement for standard lease applications to the general public to specify that notice must be published once in a newspaper of general circulation in the area of the State affected and by any other manner considered appropriate by the Department of Marine Resources. Of municipal interest, the bill requires; (1) the department to send a completed copy of the application and notice of hearing to the owners of riparian land and the municipal officers of the municipalities in or adjacent to the location of the lease; (2) changes the 30-day deadline for comments on proposed limited purpose leases from 30 days from receipt of notice to 30 days specified in the notice or within the publication of the limited purpose lease summary and; (3) prohibits the commissioner from issuing a lease under this subsection for the intertidal zone within the municipality without the consent of the municipal officer in municipalities with a shellfish conservation program under section 6671.



As amended, this bill amends the laws governing the aquaculture leasing process. It eliminates provisions that are no longer applicable regarding operations that were in effect prior to January 1, 1994. It amends the notice requirement for standard lease applications to the general public to specify that notice must be published once in a newspaper of general circulation in the area of the State affected and by any other manner considered appropriate by the Department of Marine Resources at least 30 days before the public hearing and increases from five to 10 the number of requests necessary to require the department to hold a public hearing. Of municipal interest, the bill requires: (1) the department to send a completed copy of the application and notice of hearing to the owners of riparian land and the municipal officers of the municipalities in or adjacent to the location of the lease; (2) changes the 30-day deadline for comments on proposed limited purpose leases from 30 days from receipt of notice to 30 days specified in the notice or within the publication of the limited purpose lease summary and; (3) prohibits the commissioner from issuing a lease under this subsection for the intertidal zone within the municipality without the consent of the municipal officers in municipalities with a shellfish conservation program under section 6671.

[LD 2061](#) *Resolve, Authorizing the Director of the Bureau of Parks and Lands to Convey Peacock Beach State Park to the Town of Richmond* (Emergency) **On Appropriations Table** Sponsored by Rep. Cluchey of Bowdoinham) This resolve authorizes the Director of the Bureau of Parks and Lands within the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry to convey to the Town of Richmond all the State's interest in a parcel of land approximately 32 acres in size known as Peacock Beach State Park. This parcel is currently the subject of a 25-year lease between the Bureau of Parks and Lands and the Town of Richmond. Future use of the property must be for noncommercial public recreational use and the department retains the right of first refusal regarding future property conveyances.

[LD 2059](#) *An Act Regarding Processing of Applications Under the Natural Resources Protection Act to Ensure Consistency with Shoreland Zoning Laws* (Sponsored by Rep. Fay of Raymond) **Enacted; PL 2023, c. 497** This bill authorizes the Commissioner of Environmental Protection to return as incomplete an application for a permit under the Natural Resources Protection Act if the commissioner finds that there is a reasonable likelihood that the proposed activity would be inconsistent with the minimum guidelines for municipal zoning and land use controls adopted by the Board of Environmental Protection under the laws governing shoreland zoning.

[LD 2058](#) *An Act Regarding Compliance with Environmental Permit and License Application Requirements* (Sponsored by Rep. Bridgeo of Augusta) **Enacted; PL 2023, c. 509** This bill provides that the Department of Environmental Protection may specify as a reason for nonacceptance of a permit or license application that the application was submitted after the activity requiring the permit or license has begun if the applicant knowingly violated a requirement to obtain a permit or license for the activity or the applicant previously violated a requirement to obtain a permit or license.

This Act provides that the Department of Environmental Protection can deny acceptance of a permit or license when the an application is received after the activity requiring a permit or license has begun provided the applicant knowingly violated a requirement to obtain the permit or license or the applicant, within the five years immediately preceding the submission of the application, violated a requirement to obtain a permit or license pursuant to Title 38.

[LD 2056](#) *Resolve, Designating Route 127 in Arrowsic the Private Merwin A. Delano, Jr. Memorial Highway* (Sponsored by Rep. Hepler of Woolwich) **[Finally Passed; Resolves 2023, c. 132](#)** This resolve directs the Department of Transportation to designate Route 127 in the Town of Arrowsic the Private Merwin A. Delano, Jr. Memorial Highway.

This Resolve directs the Department of Transportation to designate Route 127 in the Town of Arrowsic the Private Merwin A. Delano, Jr. Memorial Highway.

[LD 2054](#) *An Act to Exclude Certain Operating Under the Influence Crimes from the Immunity Provisions That Are Triggered When Law Enforcement Is Called for a Suspected Overdose* (Sponsored by Rep. Hasenfus of Readfield) **[Enacted; PL 2023, c. 507](#)** This bill adds operating under the influence, or OUI, and operating or attempting to operate a watercraft, snowmobile or all-terrain vehicle, or ATV, under the influence to the list of crimes that do not qualify for immunity from arrest, prosecution and certain revocation and termination proceedings when assistance has been requested for a suspected drug-related overdose.

[LD 2053](#) *An Act to Exempt Buildings Used to Cultivate Crops from the Maine Uniform Building and Energy Code* (Sponsored by Rep. Shaw of Auburn) **Passed to be Enacted** This bill exempts buildings used to cultivate crops from the Maine Uniform Building and Energy Code, except that it does not exempt buildings used to cultivate cannabis.

[LD 2051](#) *An Act Regarding the Duties of Bail Commissioners* (Sponsored by Rep. Lee of Auburn) **[Enacted; PL 2023, c. 508](#)** This bill amends the Maine Bail Code to allow county jail employees to prepare and execute bail paperwork for defendants having bail set at personal recognizance or unsecured appearance bond by a bail commissioner.

[LD 2050](#) *An Act to Expand Accreditation Options for Laboratories That Conduct Blood-alcohol or Drug Testing* (Sponsored by Rep. Meyer of Eliot) **[Enacted; PL 2023, c. 498](#)** Under current law, a laboratory certified under the federal Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments of 1988 may test blood samples to determine blood-alcohol level or the presence of a drug or drug metabolite. This bill adds an additional accreditation option for laboratories.

[LD 2048](#) *An Act to Amend the Content of Notices Provided with Respect to Tax Liens on Certain Property* (Sponsored by Rep. Perry of Bangor) **[Enacted; PL 2023, c. 579](#)** This bill removes a provision in the laws governing tax liens that requires a municipality, or the State Tax Assessor in the case of an unorganized territory, to place language in a notice of lien on a property on which a homestead exemption is claimed that the taxpayer may contact the Department of Professional and Financial Regulation, Bureau of Consumer Credit Protection regarding options for finding an advisor to assist the taxpayer in working with the taxing entity to avoid tax lien foreclosure.

As amended, this bill requires the Department of Professional and Financial Regulation, Bureau of Consumer Credit Protection to post on a publicly accessible website information that may be used by municipalities, and the State Tax Assessor for the unorganized territory, to inform an owner of homestead property subject to tax lien foreclosure of the resources available to help avoid foreclosure. The bill replaces current statute requiring a municipality or the state to include

language in a notice of lien providing that the taxpayer may contact the bureau regarding options for finding an advisor to assist the taxpayer in avoiding tax lien foreclosure.

[LD 2042](#) *An Act to Update the Laws Governing Education in the Unorganized Territory* (Sponsored by Rep. Brennan of Portland) **On Appropriations Table** This bill amends the laws governing education in unorganized territory as they relate to eligibility to enroll in education, compulsory attendance, and truancy to be comparable to the laws governing public education in organized areas. The bill also amends the laws governing the transportation of elementary students in unorganized territory by removing the provision that prohibits the Commissioner of Education from reimbursing parents for the transportation of a student.

As amended, this bill amends the laws governing education in the unorganized territory that pertain to eligibility to enroll, compulsory attendance, and truancy to be comparable to the laws governing public education in organized areas and to align with the system of learning results for elementary, secondary, and special education. The bill also amends the laws governing the transportation of elementary students in unorganized territory by removing the provision that prohibits the Commissioner of Education from reimbursing parents for the transportation of a student.

[LD 2041](#) *Resolve, to Review Traffic Fatalities Occurring While an Operator Was Under the Influence and Subsequent Prosecution with Respect to Those Occurrences* (Sponsored by Rep. O'Connell of Brewer) This resolve directs the Attorney General to convene a commission with membership made up of law enforcement officers and district attorneys to review traffic fatalities in the State in which an operator was charged with operating under the influence, or OUI, and the subsequent prosecution of those occurrences. The commission is directed to create a set of best practices to be used as a guide in the enforcement of and prosecution involving the laws governing OUI offenses in the State.

[LD 2036](#) *An Act to Remove the Exemption for Certain Roadside Springs from Regulation as Public Water Systems in the Laws Regarding Water for Human Consumption* (Sponsored by Sen. Ingwersen of York Cty.) **Enacted; PL 2023, c. 524** This bill repeals the definition of "roadside spring" in the law governing water for human consumption and the provision exempting certain roadside springs from regulation as public water systems.

This Act amends the definition of "roadside spring" to exempt from regulation as a public water system, springs that serve an average of no more than 25 individuals daily 60 days out of the year.

[LD 2035](#) *An Act Regarding Disclosure of Flood Risk by Sellers of Real Estate* (Sponsored by Sen. Brenner of Cumberland Cty.) **Enacted; PL 2023, c. 585** This bill requires sellers of residential and nonresidential real property to notify prospective buyers in writing of whether the property is in an area of special flood hazard mapped on a flood insurance rate map issued by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the presence and cost of any active flood insurance policy for the property, any previous flood damage incurred, any flood insurance claims filed and any flood-related disaster aid received while the prospective seller owned the property. The bill includes provisions for nonresidential real property regarding the delivery and timing of the

flood risk disclosure and provisions regarding contract termination; these provisions are similar to current law concerning residential real property disclosures.

As amended, this bill requires sellers of residential and nonresidential real property to notify and inform prospective buyers in writing of whether: (1) the property is in a special flood hazard area mapped on a Federal Emergency Management Agency flood insurance rate map; (2) the property has been impacted by flood events or flood-related damages; or (3) if flood insurance claims were filed or disaster-related aid was provided.

[LD 2033](#) *Resolve, Authorizing the Director of the Bureau of Parks and Lands to Convey a Parcel of Land in the Town of Woodstock* (Sponsored by Sen. Keim of Oxford Cty.) **[Finally Passed; Resolves 2023, c. 128](#)** This resolve authorizes the Director of the Bureau of Parks and Lands to Convey a Parcel of Land in the Town of Woodstock.

[LD 2030](#) *An Act to Exempt Certain Emergency Activities and Structure Elevation Increases in Flood Zones from Permit Requirements Under the Natural Resources Protection Act* (Sponsored by Sen. Lyford of Penobscot Cty.) **[Emergency Enacted; PL 2023, c. 531 \(3/12/24\)](#)** This bill exempts certain activities from permit requirements under the Natural Resources Protection Act. The activities exempted are emergency activities to alleviate flood events, elevating or replacing existing building foundations in areas of special flood hazard and one-time increases in the height of existing piers over coastal wetlands.

This emergency Act exempts from permitting requirements under the Natural Resources Protection Act (NRPA): (1) emergency activities necessary to alleviate flood events, provided a local government conducting or overseeing such activity notifies and maintains communication with the Department of Environmental Protection; (2) elevation of buildings located in coastal sand dune systems, or a pier, wharf or dock located wholly or partially in, on or over a coastal wetland or adjacent to a protected natural resource subject to additional specified limitations; and (3) increase in the height of a pier, wharf or dock located wholly or partially in, on or over a coastal wetland where the height of the pier, wharf or dock is increased by no more than the amount necessary for the bottom of the lowest horizontal structural component of the deck to be found feet above base flood elevation, subject to additional specified limitations. The Act also authorizes the Department of Environmental Protection through NPRPA permit by rule process to increase in the height of pier, wharf or dock located wholly or partially in, on or over a coastal wetland when reconstructed or replaced where the height of the pier, wharf or dock is increased by no more than the amount necessary for the bottom of the lowest horizontal structural component of the deck to be for feet above base flood elevation, subject to additional specified limitations or to reconstruct or replacement of a pier, wharf or dock in, on or over a coastal sand dune system if the pier, wharf or dock that was in existence on January 1, 2024 and the structure is built on pilings, posts or similar supports that allow for the free movement of water, wind and sand under the deck, subject to additional specified limitations.

[LD 2028](#) *An Act to Amend Certain State Tax Laws* (Sponsored by Sen. Grohoski of Hancock Cty.) **[Enacted; PL 2023, c. 613](#)** This bill makes a number of changes to current state tax law. Of municipal interest, the bill clarifies that a property taxpayer who owns more than one residential property subject to an existing municipal lien is ineligible for the state property tax deferral program.

As amended and of municipal interest, this bill clarifies that a property taxpayer who owns more than one residential property subject to an existing municipal lien is ineligible for the state property tax deferral program.

[LD 2027](#) (*New title*) *An Act Regarding the Property Tax Exemption, Business Equipment Tax Exemption and Business Tax Reimbursement for Facilities Storing Spent Nuclear Fuel and Radioactive Waste* (Emergency) (Sponsored by Sen. Reny of Lincoln Cty.) [Emergency Enacted; PL 2023, c. 588 \(4/02/24\)](#) This emergency bill specifies that a facility that stores spent nuclear fuel or radioactive waste classified by the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission as greater-than-Class C waste may not be considered an air pollution control facility for purposes of eligibility for an exemption from property taxation, which applies retroactively to property tax years beginning on or after April 1, 2022, and to any actions or proceedings pending at the time of passage of the bill.

As amended and for purposes of property tax exemptions for air pollution control facilities, this bill provides that emissions from and particles of spent nuclear fuel and radioactive waste and the facilities that store such waste that are classified by the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission as greater-than-Class C waste are not exempt from property tax as an air pollution control facility. The bill also provides that facilities that store spent nuclear fuel or radioactive waste are not eligible for the benefits under the business equipment tax exemption or business equipment tax reimbursement.

[LD 2023](#) *An Act to Make Technical Changes to Maine's Tax Laws* (Sponsored by Sen. Grohoski of Hancock Cty.) **Passed to be Enacted** In part this bill amends the property tax laws to: 1. Update outdated terms referencing municipalities and municipal officers; 2. Remove and replace gender-specific language; 3. Correct a conflict in the state property tax deferral program created by Public Law 2023, chapters 360 and 412, which affected the same provisions of law, by combining the provisions; 4. Remove an obsolete reference to an application and instructions in the laws governing the sale of tax-acquired properties since they are no longer required; and 5. Make other technical and grammatical changes to the laws affecting Maine property tax. Part B makes changes to the income tax law.

## **Bills Carried Over from the First Session**

[LD 2016](#) *An Act to Implement Recommendations of the Distributed Generation Stakeholder Group* (Sponsored by Sen. Lawrence of York Cty.) **DEAD** The bill establishes the Distributed Generation and Energy Storage System Program, which, beginning in 2024, directs the Public Utilities Commission to procure distributed generation resources paired with energy storage systems, called combined projects, and by 2028 procure combined projects that will have a capacity to generate an amount of electric energy that is equal to 7% of the total megawatts of electricity load in this State minus any amount of capacity in excess of 750 megawatts that is procured through current net energy billing programs. The commission is directed to procure at least 70% of this amount through a competitive procurement process resulting in power purchase agreements and up to 30% of the amount from community-owned projects through an open

enrollment process resulting in standardized power purchase agreements with prices set in relation to the winning bids under the competitive procurement. A contract with a combined project under the program must be for both the energy from the project and renewable energy credits associated with that energy. The renewable energy credits purchased under the program must be monetized and applied to benefit transmission and distribution utility ratepayers.

### **June 1, 2023**

[LD 2007](#) *An Act to Advance Self-determination for Wabanaki Nations* (Sponsored by Speaker Talbot Ross of Portland) **Carried Over** Except as otherwise specified in the Maine Implementing Act, this concept draft bill provides that federal Indian law applies with regard to the rights, privileges, powers, duties and immunities of the Passamaquoddy Tribe, the Penobscot Nation, the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians and the Mi'kmaq Nation. "Federal Indian law" is defined for this summary to mean the United States Constitution and all generally applicable federal statutes, regulations and common law and case law interpreting, implementing, applying or enforcing those federal laws and regulations, and subsequent amendments thereto, relating to the rights, status, privileges, powers, duties and immunities of federally recognized Indian tribes and their members and land or other natural resources within the United States. This definition explicitly recognizes that federal Indian law is not static, but evolves as federal common law develops, federal laws are passed and amended, and as federal courts interpret the relevant statutes and regulations and their application to federally recognized Indian tribes, nations, bands and other groups.

[LD 2006](#) *An Act to Amend the Laws Regarding Adjustments for Sudden and Severe Disruption of Municipal Valuation* (Sponsored by Sen. Keim of Oxford Cty.) **On Appropriations Table** This bill provides that the amount of money that a municipality that qualifies for an adjustment for sudden and severe disruption of valuation uses from undesignated fund balances does not reduce the amount of money that municipality receives in state-municipal revenue sharing.

As amended and beginning on or after July 1, 2024, or the effective date of the bill, whichever is later, this emergency bill provides that the portion of undesignated fund balance used by a municipality that qualifies for an adjustment for sudden and severe disruption of valuation to mitigate property tax assessment increases does not reduce the amount of revenue sharing distributed to the impacted municipality.

### **May 30, 2023**

[LD 2005](#) *An Act to Eliminate the Aircraft Excise Tax* (Sponsored by Rep. Fredericks of Sanford) **DEAD** This bill repeals the annual excise tax imposed on aircraft and provides an explicit exemption from the excise tax for aircraft.

**May 25, 2023**

[LD 2003](#) *An Act to Protect Maine's Intertidal Zone* (Sponsored by President Jackson of Aroostook Cty) **DEAD** This bill provides that for purposes of determining public trust rights and common law rights in intertidal land, the harvesting of naturally occurring seaweed or rockweed is deemed to be fishing. The bill also exempts obtaining and exercising control over seaweed or rockweed naturally occurring on intertidal land from the statutes governing theft and criminal trespass.

**May 22, 2023**

[LD 1991](#) *An Act Regarding Gubernatorial Primary Elections* (Sponsored by Rep. Supica of Bangor) **DEAD** This bill provides for open primary elections for the Governor's Office, in which all party enrolled and unenrolled candidates must appear on the same ballot. All qualified voters, regardless of enrollment status, are eligible to vote in open primary elections with votes in an election tabulated using ranked-choice voting, except that the two candidates who receive the most votes are declared the winners. The names of the winners must appear on the ballot for the general election. If one of the candidates who received the most votes at the open primary dies or becomes disqualified before the general election, that candidate's name must remain on the ballot and the voters must be notified that a vote for that candidate will be counted and, if that candidate is declared the winner of the election, a vacancy will be declared at the beginning of the term for which the candidate was elected.

[LD 1989](#) *Resolve, to Modify the Deed for a Parcel of Property in the Town of Carrabassett Valley to Allow for Workforce Housing* (Sponsored by Sen. Black of Franklin Cty.) **DEAD** This bill allows up to five acres of a portion of land owned by the town of Carrabassett Valley to be developed for workforce housing to serve households earning between 60% and 120% of the median income for the area if the development occurs before July 1, 2033.

[LD 1983](#) *An Act to Establish the Maine Buy American and Build Maine Act* (Sponsored by Sen. President of Aroostook Cty.) **Carried Over** This bill, which excepts counties, municipalities, school entities, Department of Transportation and the Maine Turnpike Authority, establishes the Maine Buy American and Build Maine Act and requires that all contracts for the construction, reconstruction, alteration, repair, improvement or maintenance of a public building or public work made by a state agency, board, commission or institution, contain a provision that any manufactured good valued over \$5,000, including iron, cement and steel, and any article, material or supply acquired for public use used supplied in the performance of the contract or any subcontract to the contract must be manufactured in the United States.

[LD 1982](#) *An Act Regarding Appropriations and Allocations to Support the State of Maine* (Sponsored by Sen. President of Aroostook Cty.) **Carried Over** This concept draft bill would appropriate and allocate money to support programs and needs of this State.

[LD 1981](#) *(New title) An Act Regarding the Loring Job Increment Financing Fund* (Sponsored by President Jackson of Aroostook Cty.) **On Appropriations Table** In part, the bill expands the allowable uses of the Loring Job Increment Financing Fund to include electricity, telecommunications and the maintenance of buildings and facilities and provides that covered municipal services and maintenance and restoration must relate to projects that will create or retain jobs and promote economic development.

As amended, this bill expands the allowable uses of the Loring Job Increment Financing Fund to include electricity, telecommunications and the maintenance of buildings and facilities and provides that covered municipal maintenance and restoration services must relate to projects that create or retain jobs and promote economic development. By February 1, 2025, the bill also requires the Loring Development Authority of Maine to provide a report accounting for receipts, expenditures, assets, and liabilities to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over economic and community development matters, which is authorized to report out related legislation.

## **May 18, 2023**

[LD 1976](#) *An Act to Update the Growth Management Program Laws* (Sponsored by Rep. Sachs of Freeport) **Carried Over** This bill makes several changes to the Growth Management Act (GMA), including:

1. Defining the terms adjacent neighborhood, affordable housing, high-impact corridor, important natural resources, neighborhood standards, place-type, region, rural crossroad, rural farmstead, village center, working waterfront and workforce housing; amending the definitions of critical natural resources, downtown, growth area and rural area; and repealing the definitions of cluster development, multi-municipal region, and transitional area
2. Amending the “purpose” section of the GMA to encourage the State to work with regional planning organizations or council of governments to develop multi-municipal growth management programs to address residential and commercial development, transit, habitat protections, and water quality.
3. Amending established GMA goals to: (1) direct new development to growth areas to make more efficient use of public services and infrastructure, protect natural resources and related industries, and prevent sprawl and resulting traffic impacts; (2) plan for, fund and develop efficient public facilities, including public transportation, and understanding the cost associated with various development patterns and ensuring new developments generate the revenues necessary to fund ongoing infrastructure maintenance and replacement expenses; (3) ensure that municipal land use polices and ordinances encourage the siting and construction of affordable housing located near employment and services and that comply with provisions of state law regarding mobile home and mobile park siting and design requirements; (4) protect, maintain, and improve the water quality of each water body subject to state regulation and ensue water



quality is protected from long term and cumulative increases in phosphorus in great pond watersheds and nitrogen in coastal waters; and (5) encourage municipalities to develop policies to accommodate older residents with aging in place, including appropriate housing options, transportation access and accessibility and availability of needed services.

4. Authorizes the state to adopt routine and technical rules related to the mandatory provisions of the GMA.

5. Until the inconsistency is resolved, authorizes state review of any proposed development project that is proposed within a municipality that has adopted a rate of growth, zoning or impact fee ordinance that is found inconsistent via court order or during a state completed comprehensive plan review.

6. Requires the municipal committee directed to prepare a growth management plan to: (1) bring together as many people from the community as possible through a series of public events and activities; (2) advertise a full schedule of meetings and opportunities for the community to engage in the process; and (3) share the draft plan broadly with the community, incorporate feedback, issue subsequent drafts and assist with the implementation.

7. In the process of encouraging public participation in the development of the growth management plan, directs the municipality to: (1) assemble and provide key data and insight to the public in an easy to understand format at the beginning of the process to help inform the work; (2) solicit and consider a broad range of public input by holding an initial public workshop priorities from the community; (3) conduct hands-on workshops with the public using maps to understand where residents want to protect critical natural resources and rural areas and how to focus development; (4) prepare illustrative master plans for designated growth areas where significant change is imaged by the community, with multiple alternatives and iterations generated and evaluated in response to public input and feedback, including at least two rounds of review and revision; and (5) provide multiple opportunities for the public to review and comment on draft plans, proposals and priority actions.

8. Requires municipalities to notify the state and regional planning organizations (RPO) that the comprehensive planning process has been initiated and directs the state and RPOs to work with municipalities to provide mapping for initial public workshops, including Beginning with Habitat maps and supporting resources. The state and RPO are allowed, but not required, to provide municipalities with additional useful data and mapping in response to the big ideas and high priorities identified by the public.

9. Amends the statute encouraging public access by requiring planning committees to advertise meetings through traditional and modern media channels and where possible, use hybrid meeting technology, and record meetings for viewing by individuals unable to attend scheduled meetings.

10. Amends the statutes requiring the planning committee to hold at least one public hearing prior to adopting the plan by requiring the committee to present the draft plan with an interactive portion of the meeting providing the public the opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback. Following the presentation of the plan, the committee must conduct a public comment period, after which the committee must make plan revisions and issue the next drafts. Councils and select boards are required to hold a joint public hearing with the planning board to ensure that all parties agree and to strengthen accountability and townwide ownership of the plan.

11. Requires a copy of the proposed comprehensive plan to be made available on the home page of the municipal website and in hard copies for public inspection.

12. Amends the data that may be analyzed in the process of drafting a comprehensive plan to include supplies of affordable, workforce and market rate housing, socio-economic makeup of the community and available for community networks, programs and support systems to respond to the needs of residents, and data related to the total length of road and other infrastructure liabilities to inform capital plans for the life cycle costs of existing infrastructure projected 30 years out and an understanding of the taxes necessary to pay for additional public services.

13. Requires comprehensive plans to: (1) include a description of the community's desired outcomes for critical natural areas, rural areas and designated growth areas; (2) identify and map conserved land and critical natural resources subject to formal legal protection and rural areas that deserve protection from unrestricted development; (3) identify and map designated growth areas including where development exist, where it should go and the desired pattern of development; (4) use data and maps to guide decisions on how and where to conserve and develop land and include in the comprehensive plan a variety of natural resource based maps; and (5) include an implementation plan consisting of policies and strategies to help the community achieve the plan's goals.

14. Requires adoption of land use policies and strategies that: (1) within designated growth areas reduce minimum lot areas, lots widths and unit sizes; align front and side setbacks with the development characteristics and patterns; allow for a range of multi-unit buildings types; designate use of municipal land for affordable housing; reduce or eliminate on-site parking requirements in downtowns, adjacent neighborhoods, villages and high-impact corridors; eliminate on-site open space requirements; provide clear and simple rules for accessory dwelling units; consider adoption of form-based development standards; establish timely permitting procedures; and where new growth areas are identified, require neighborhood standard to be adopted in a way that implements the community's vision; (2) support development, including affordable housing by establish programs such as TIF, low-interest revolving loans funds, life safety and façade grants, reduce impact fees in growth areas and establish local or regional land banks or community land trust; (3) create a financial plan for the maintenance and replacement of exiting public infrastructure and services over a 30-year life cycle; and (4) within rural areas discourage incompatible development by establishing a fund for land conservation, increasing minimum lot area to 10 acres, assessing impact fees on subdivisions located outside of growth areas, adopting a rate of growth or cap on building permits issued for development outside of the growth area, allowing farmstands on lots that are five acres or greater, establishing a transfer of development rights program and adopting a policy that prohibits the municipality from assuming public ownership or maintenance of private roads located in rural areas.

15. Repeals comprehensive planning provisions that are either duplicative or in conflict with the standards established in the bill.

16. Clarifies state level review of submitted comprehensive plans must be based on adherence with the mandatory elements of the GMA.

[LD 1975](#) *An Act to Implement a Statewide Public Health Response to Substance Use and Amend the Laws Governing Scheduled Drugs* (Sponsored by Rep. Crafts of Newcastle) **Carried Over**

In part, this bill establishes the Substance Use, Health and Safety Fund in the Department of Health and Human Services to oversee, approve and provide grants and funding to agencies, organizations and service providers, to increase voluntary access to community care for persons

who need services related to substance use. By June 30, 2024, and annually thereafter, the Legislature must appropriate to the fund an amount sufficient to fully fund the services as set forth in the bill.

**LD 1967** *An Act to Support Municipal Franchise Agreements* (Sponsored by Rep. Melanie Sachs of Freeport) **Enacted; PL 2023, c. 502** This bill provides that beginning on January 1, 2024 any new or renewed franchise agreement or contract between a municipality and a video services provider (VSP) that includes payment of a franchise fee must: (1) authorize the municipality to use the fees to offset the costs to regulate the VSP, support provision of public education and governmental (PEG) programs; offset municipal property taxes; and any other purposes identified by the municipality; (2) require franchise payments to be made no later than 45 days after the end of the each calendar quarter, with failure to do so resulting in the assessment of a 12% interest payment on unpaid fees and enabling the municipality to terminate the agreement or contract for repeated failure to pay fees; and (3) require payments to be accompanied by a financial statement, verified as correct, identifying the total amount of gross annual revenue generated by the activities of the provider and a description of the calculation used to determine the payment, which at the municipality's discretion may be subject to an audit by a qualified third party selected by the municipality. The bill further clarifies that a municipality's acceptance of franchise fee revenue does not constitute agreement that the amount paid is correct unless the municipality has not initiated a process to challenge or audit the paid fee within 36 months of payment, or within 48 months of receipt of payment in cases where a financial statement is not provided. The bill also: (1) prohibits a VSP from offering or providing services within a municipality unless it has entered into a franchise agreement or contract with the municipality to do so; (2) grants the PUC regulatory oversight of VSP; (3) defines the terms facility support transmission equipment and PEG facility equipment program and signal; (4) replaces the term "cable system operator" with "video service providers" throughout the statute which is defined as a person that sells access to video, audio or computer generated or augmented entertainment services and owns or operates facilities located in whole or in part in public rights-of-way; (5) makes a VSP responsible for all cost for PEG equipment reasonably necessary to capture, process and deliver content and further provides that the VSP may not offset cost through the payment of a franchise fee, but provides that the VSP may recover costs from subscribers as permitted by law and negotiated by the municipality; (6) provides that a strand mile of cable is measure from the end of the current cable installation; (7) repeals the authority for municipalities to grant exclusive franchises; (8) requires the PUC to oversee and enforce the provision of the statute; and (9) authorizes the Attorney General to bring action to enforce the provisions of the law. Finally, the bill creates a dispute resolution process, authorizing the municipality or provider to petition the PUC to investigate and resolve the dispute or request binding arbitration by a mutually agreed arbiter from the Maine Association of Mediators.

This Act makes several changes to the franchise agreement statute including: (1) defining a video service provider (VSP) as "any person in Maine that directly or through one or more affiliates sells access to video, audio or computer-generated or computer augmented entertainment and owns or operates facilities located in whole or in part in a municipality's public rights-of-way that are used to provide those services, irrespective of the technology or application used to deliver such services;" (2) making a VSP responsible for all costs associated with public, educational and government (PEG) facility equipment, as deemed necessary by the municipality;

(3) prohibiting a VSP from offsetting costs through franchise fees but enabling providers to recover fees assessed to subscribers to the extent applicable by law and as negotiated by the municipality; (4) repealing language in current statute allowing municipalities to enter into exclusive franchise agreements; (5) prohibiting a VSP from providing services in a municipality unless they have entered into a franchise agreement; (6) allowing municipalities to use franchise fees for the purposes the municipality deems pertinent; (7) establishing a quarterly payment schedule with allowable interest for late payments; (8) requiring a VSP to maintain certain financial records related to the calculation of payment; (9) allowing a municipality to challenge or audit the amount of the payment; (10) clarifying that a violation is one that violates the unfair trade practices act and requires action within seven years; (11) developing a dispute resolution process; and, (12) establishing a 30-day notice for the movement of channels to a different tier or lineup.

[LD 1962](#) *(New title) Resolve, to Direct the Public Utilities Commission to Adopt Rules Regarding Utility Shut-offs* (Sponsored by President Jackson of Aroostook Cty.) **[Finally Passed; Resolves 2023, c. 145](#)** This concept draft bill would limit the ability of utilities to terminate utility services.

As amended, this resolve directs the Public Utilities Commission to adopt rules governing electric and gas utility service terminations and disconnections due to unpaid bills. For residential customers the rules must prohibit termination during extreme weather conditions occurring between April 16 and November 14 and establish a threshold dollar amount of greater than \$50 owed for termination or disconnection. For low-income customers, the rules must prohibit the utility from charging fees related to restoration or reconnection, requiring a security deposit for restoration of service, or assessing late fees that accrued prior to the termination or disconnection.

[LD 1960](#) *An Act to Support Farming in Maine by Extending the Deadline for Manufacturers of Products Containing Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances to Report on Those Products* (President Jackson of Aroostook Cty.) **DEAD** This concept draft bill would extend the deadline by which manufacturers of products containing PFAS are required to submit information about those products to the Department of Environmental Protection.

[LD 1959](#) *An Act Regarding Open Primary Elections and Ranked-choice Voting* (Sponsored by Sen. Baldacci of Penobscot Cty.) **DEAD** This bill provides for open primary elections for the office of United States Senator, United States Representative to Congress, Governor, State Senator, and State Representative. All of the candidates for those offices, including unenrolled candidates, must appear on the same open primary ballot and all qualified voters, regardless of enrollment status, are eligible to vote in open primary elections.

[LD 1957](#) *An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Invest in Maine's Railroad Infrastructure* (Sponsored by Rep. Collings of Portland) **Carried Over** This bond bill issues \$50 million to be used to expand passenger rail service, prioritizing railroad track corridors that could

support passenger and freight intermodal operations and enhance the movement of agricultural products.

[LD 1952](#) *An Act to Allow On-site Cannabis Consumption* (Sponsored by Rep. Boyer of Poland)

**DEAD** This bill creates a new business within the adult use cannabis laws providing for the licensing and oversight of “cannabis hospitality establishments,” where cannabis and related products can be sold and consumed at on location. The bill prohibits operators from giving away cannabis product, selling tobacco or alcohol or from selling products via vending machines, drive-through windows, or over the internet. The bill also requires the operator of an establishment to allow public safety officials to enter the facility in cases of an emergency.

**May 15, 2023**

[LD 1940](#) *An Act to Promote Consistent Policies within Growth Management Programs in Order to Increase Food Security and Economic Resiliency in Local Communities* (Sponsored by Sen. Hickman of Kennebec Cty.)

**DEAD** This bill amends the laws governing planning and land use regulation to encourage municipalities to: (1) ensure charters, policies, codes, regulations, bylaws and fees align with each other and meet the overall intent of the comprehensive plan approved by the legislative body; (2) develop policies that assess community needs and environmental, food security and economic resiliency effects of municipal regulations, lessen the effect of excessive parking requirements for buildings in downtowns and on main streets and provide for alternative approaches for compliance relating to the reuse of upper floors of buildings in downtowns and on main streets; and (3) in the development of affordable housing, to establish policies that assess food security and economic resiliency effects of municipal regulations.

[LD 1937](#) *An Act to Remove the Confidentiality of the Transportation of Hazardous Materials by Railroad Companies* (Emergency) (Sponsored by Speaker Talbot Ross of Portland)

**Carried Over** This bill repeals the public exception for records related to the transportation of hazardous materials by a railroad company.

[LD 1935](#) *An Act to Promote Workforce Development by Establishing a Workforce Development Program* (Sponsored by Rep. Brennan of Portland)

**Carried Over** This bill requires the Commissioner of Labor to develop and implement a workforce development program to provide services related to language acquisition, housing, job training and education, transportation and health care and case management.

**May 11, 2023**

[LD 1929](#) *An Act to Protect Consumers by Licensing Home Building Contractors* (Sponsored by Rep. Roberts of South Berwick)

**Carried Over** This bill establishes licensing requirements for

contractors that perform work on residential construction and establishes a board to administer the licensing requirements, which includes two municipal code enforcement officers.

[LD 1927](#) *An Act to Create the Rural Prosperity Council* (Sponsored by Rep. Pluecker of Warren)

**DEAD** This bill establishes the Rural Prosperity Council as an advisory council within the Office of Policy Innovation and the Future to address the social, economic and community well-being and resilience of rural areas in Maine by addressing unique structural challenges experienced by rural communities, including but not limited to housing, education, health care, small business development and job creation.

**May 9, 2023**

[LD 1914](#) *An Act to Enact the Maine Psilocybin Health Access Act* (Sponsored by Sen. Bailey of York Cty.)

**Carried Over** This bill creates the Maine Psilocybin Services Act regulating the use, licensure, possession, manufacture, administration, tracking and testing of various species of mushrooms. The bill provides for state level licensing of four related psilocybin activities including: (1) service center, where a client participates in a preparation, administration and integration session; (2) service facilitator; (3) manufacturing facility; and (4) testing facility. Municipal authority to regulate the industry is limited. While communities may adopt an ordinance that imposes reasonable regulations, municipalities may not require a local license, impose a tax or fee or prohibit more than one service center from operating within municipal boundaries, as long as the distance between centers is greater than 1,000 feet. Reasonable regulations are defined as: (1) conditions on the manner in which products are manufactured; (2) conditions on the manner in which centers provide services; (3) limits on the hours of operation; (4) requirements related to public's access; and (5) limits on where licensed premises may be located. In addition, service centers are prohibited from locating: (1) in unorganized territories; (2) in areas zoned exclusively for residential use; or (3) within 1,000 feet of a public or private elementary or secondary school unless there is a physical or geographic barrier preventing students from reaching the premises or the abutting property had not been previously used as an active school.

[LD 1904](#) *An Act to Enact the Maine Fair Chance Housing Act* (Sponsored by Speaker Talbot Ross of Portland)

**DEAD** This bill establishes the Maine Fair Chance Housing Act, the purpose of which is to ensure that a person is not denied housing based solely on the existence of a history of criminal convictions. This bill prohibits a housing provider from considering an applicant's criminal history until after the housing provider determines that the applicant meets all other qualifications for tenancy. A person who is aggrieved by a violation of the Maine Fair Chance Housing Act by a housing provider may file a grievance with the Maine Human Rights Commission and, if it is a violation by a private housing provider, may bring a civil action in court.

**May 4, 2023**

[LD 1896](#) *(New title) Resolve, Directing the Workers' Compensation Board to Analyze Data on the Adequacy of Certain Maine Workers' Compensation Benefits* (Sponsored by Sen. Nangle of Cumberland Cty.) [Finally Passed; Resolves 2023, c. 139](#) This resolve requires benefits awarded under the Maine Workers' Compensation Act of 1992 to be annually increased to account for inflation.

This Resolve directs the Workers' Compensation Board, using data supplied by insurers, third-party administrators, and group and individual self-insurers, to identify and analyze the compensation and benefits provided to an individual claimant for incapacity or death and any other relevant data and available reports. The board is further directed to provide monthly updates and no later than August 16, 2025, the submit a final report to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over workers' compensation matters with its findings, recommendations, and suggested legislation. The committee is authorized to report out legislation in 2026.

[LD 1893](#) *An Act to Allow a Municipality to Impose a Fee on Short-term Rentals for the Benefit of That Municipality* (Sponsored by Rep. Strout of Harrington) **DEAD** This bill allows a municipality to impose, if approved by referendum of the voters in that municipality, a local option fee on short-term rentals of living quarters in any hotel, rooming house or tourist or trailer camp currently subject to the 9% sales tax on lodging, including a short-term accommodation rental rented through a transient rental platform. Long-term rentals currently exempt from sales tax are not subject to the short-term rental fee. The revenue from the local option fee is distributed to the municipality imposing the local option fee.

[LD 1889](#) *An Act to Provide Authorization to Aroostook County to Use the Statewide Radio and Network System* (Sponsored by President Jackson of Aroostook Cty.) **DEAD** This bill requires the Office of Information Technology to authorize Aroostook County to use the statewide radio and network system and amends the provisions of law governing the Statewide Radio and Network System Reserve Fund to include Aroostook County.

## **May 1, 2023**

[LD 1867](#) *(New title) An Act to Establish the Community Housing Production Program* (Sponsored by Rep. Lookner of Portland) **On Appropriations Table** This bill establishes the Community Housing and Rural Development Authority within the Maine Redevelopment Land Bank Authority to develop, own, lease and maintain mixed-income, permanently affordable public residential housing in this State.

As amended, this bill establishes the Community Housing Production Program and directs MaineHousing to administer grants to nonprofit developers, cooperations and public entities to produce mixed income rental housing. The bill also allocates in a one-time \$75 million

appropriation for the production program and a one-time \$25 million appropriation for existing homeownership assistance programs.

[LD 1864](#) *An Act to Increase Maine's Housing Supply by Prohibiting Certain Zoning Requirements in Areas Where Public Sewer and Water Infrastructure Are Available and in Designated Growth Areas* (Sponsored by Rep. Boyle of Gorham) **DEAD** This bill restricts municipal ordinance requirements related to minimum lot size in areas where water and sewer infrastructure are available and in areas where water and sewer infrastructure are not available but that are within designated growth areas. For a housing development served by public water and sewer systems located in an area in which dwelling units are allowed, a municipality must allow a dwelling unit on a lot with a minimum size of 5,000 square feet. For a housing development located in a designated growth area that is not served by public water or sewer system, that complies with minimum lot size requirements in accordance existing subdivision law and that is in an area in which dwelling units are allowed, a municipality must allow a dwelling unit on a lot with a minimum size of 20,000 square feet. The bill also provides limits to ordinance provisions relating to lot coverage, road frontage and setback requirements.

[LD 1857](#) *(New title) Resolve, to Establish a Public Safety Health and Wellness Grant Pilot Program* (Sponsored by Rep. Copeland of Saco) **Carried Over** As amended, this Resolve directs the Department of Public Safety to establish a two-year pilot program to provide public safety employees, including certain volunteer first responders, access to a health and wellness program to mitigate the negative physical and mental health effects of their employment. The department is authorized to use up to 10% of the \$2 million allocation to fund the costs associated with administering the program.

**April 27, 2023**

[LD 1832](#) *(New title) An Act Continue the Study of Community Paramedicine and to Make Changes Related to Health Insurance Coverage and Prior Authorizations requirements for Certain Ambulance Service Providers* (Sponsored by Rep. Cyrway of Albion) **Enacted; PL 2023, c. 591** This emergency bill requires an ambulance service to be reimbursed for the cost of treating a person, regardless of whether the ambulance service transports the person to a hospital.

As amended and absent any other agreement, this bill makes permanent the requirement that an insurance carrier reimburse an out-of-network ambulance services provider at the established out-of-network rate. The bill also prohibits a health insurance carrier from requiring an air ambulance service provider to obtain prior authorization before transporting an enrollee to a hospital or between hospitals for urgent care. The joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over health coverage, insurance and financial services matters is also authorized to report out, after further study, legislation in 2025 related to reimbursement by health insurance carriers for health care services provided by community paramedicine personnel.



[LD 1823](#) *An Act to Respect and Protect the Right to Food* (Sponsored by Sen. Hickman of Kennebec Cty.) **Carried Over** Of municipal significance, the bill amends the statutes regulating food and food sovereignty by: (1) applying the provisions of the Maine Food Sovereignty Act to all local food ordinances, including those in place before the Act was enacted; (2) establishes the Maine Vegetable Garden Protection Act to allow a person to cultivate vegetable gardens on the person's own property or with permission on the private property of another and prohibits interference by the State or a political subdivision; (3) provides that local ordinances may be adopted to regulate matters related to the cultivation of vegetable gardens, including height, setback, water use, fertilizer use or the control of invasive or unlawful species, as long as the ordinance does not have the effect of prohibiting the cultivation of vegetable gardens; and (4) authorizes municipalities to develop and implement programs to establish edible landscaping, food forests and community gardens in public spaces, including municipally owned properties, rights-of-way, school grounds, parks and parking lots.

**April 24, 2023**

[LD 1789](#) *An Act to Remove All Marijuana-related Provisions from the Maine Criminal Code and Expunge All Convictions Involving Marijuana* (Sponsored by Sen. Baldacci of Penobscot Cty.) **DEAD** This bill amends the Maine Criminal Code by eliminating several marijuana related provisions and directs the Department of Public Safety to review all criminal records possessed by any state criminal justice or law enforcement agency and to expunge all records that relate to criminal convictions and civil violations for conduct involving marijuana or that are otherwise authorized under Maine's adult use cannabis laws.

[LD 1787](#) *Resolve, Directing the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry to Convene a Stakeholder Group Tasked with a Comprehensive Overhaul and Modernization of the State Subdivision Statutes* (Sponsored by Rep. Ducharme of Madison) **On Appropriations Table** This resolve requires the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, in coordination with the Department of Environmental Protection, to convene a stakeholder group, including municipal officials, to review and recommend a comprehensive overhaul and modernization of the subdivision laws. The departments must submit a report to the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry and on Environment and Natural Resources, which are authorized to report out legislation in 2024.

As amended, this bill directs the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry to convene a stakeholder group, including a representative from a municipal government, to review and recommend a comprehensive overhaul and modernization of the subdivision laws and submit a report to the joint standing committees of the Legislature having jurisdiction over subdivision review matters under those laws by December 6, 2025.

**April 20, 2023**

[LD 1752](#) *Resolve, to Prepare Preapproved Building Types* (Sponsored by Sen. Pouliot of Kennebec Cty.) **On Appropriations Table** This bill directs the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Bureau of Resource Information and Land Use Planning to contract with an appropriate consultant to establish a set of building types that municipalities may adopt as preapproved building types to reduce the cost and time associated with processing building permit applications. The bill also requires the department to submit a report no later than November 6, 2024 to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over housing matters, which is authorized to report out legislation in 2025.

As amended, this bill directs the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Bureau of Resource Information and Land Use Planning to enter into a contract with a consultant to establish a set of preapproved building types that municipalities may adopt to reduce the cost and time associated with processing building permit applications. The bill also requires the consultant to: (1) ensure that each preapproved building type can be developed to ensure that rent for affordable units does not exceed 30% of the median income in the county where the building will be located; and (2) seek input from a postsecondary institution in the State with a program that uses new technologies to produce materials and develop building methods designed to make housing more efficient and affordable. No later than December 3, 2025, the bureau is further directed to submit a report to the joint standing or select committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over housing matters.

[LD 1751](#) *(New title) Resolve, to Direct the Department of Health and Human Services to Explore the Feasibility of an Ambulance Service Assessment Fee* (Sponsored by Sen. Curry of Waldo Cty.) **On Appropriations Table** This bill establishes an ambulance service assessment fee on ambulance service providers to maximize federal funding for reimbursement to ambulance service providers under the MaineCare program. It also increases the reimbursement rates under the MaineCare program for ambulance services, neonatal transport, no-transport calls and community paramedicine.

As amended, this bill directs the Department of Health and Human Services to determine the feasibility of implementing an ambulance service assessment fee to maximize federal Medicaid matching funds to be distributed to ambulance service providers. The department is further directed to examine other states with service provider taxes or fees for ambulance services and consult with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and the Maine Departments of Administrative and Financial Services and Public Safety, any other relevant parties, on the feasibility of such a fee. The analysis must include, at a minimum, an estimate of funds to be raised, potential technology costs and other costs for implementation and administration and a timeline for implementing the assessment fee. The department is also tasked with exploring the potential for voluntary programs with municipalities that increase funding to governmental ambulance service providers through the implementation of an intergovernmental transfer program. No later than January 10, 2025, the department must submit a report to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having

jurisdiction over health and human services matters, which is authorized to report out legislation in 2025.

[LD 1750](#) *Resolve, Directing the Department of Transportation to Complete a Service Plan and Determine the Scope of Work for Restoration of Rail Use of the Berlin Subdivision Rail Corridor from Downtown Portland to Auburn* (Sponsored by Sen. Chipman of Cumberland Cty.) **DEAD**

This resolve directs the Department of Transportation to complete a study that includes service and scope of work plans for the section of the Berlin Subdivision Rail Corridor between downtown Portland and Auburn for restoration of the rail corridor to a minimum of Class 3 interurban light rail operating conditions. The resolve also requires the Commissioner of Transportation to establish an advisory committee to advise the department in undertaking its responsibilities regarding the service scope of work plans.

[LD 1742](#) *An Act to Enhance the Use of Critical Incident Stress Management Teams and to Require Peer Team Support* (Sponsored by Rep. Gramlich of Old Orchard Beach) **On Appropriations Table** This bill directs the Director of the Maine Emergency Management Agency to provide critical incident stress management team services and peer team support services to all firefighters and employees or members of a public safety agency, fire department or organization involved in emergency care or response in Maine by supporting the establishment and deployment of critical incident stress management teams and services. The bill also requires public safety agencies, fire departments and organizations involved in emergency care or response to have at least one person who has received critical incident stress management training and to provide education and access to ongoing behavioral health care services related to any post-traumatic stress resulting from a critical incident.

As amended, this bill directs the Commissioner of Public Safety to ensure that critical incident stress management team services (CISMTS) are available to first responders by: (1) supporting the establishment of a CISMTS for all public safety service providers, including public and private safety agencies, public safety answering points, organizations involved in emergency care or response, and employers of correctional facility, county jail or sheriff's office; (2) providing CISMTS to agencies that not have access to the service; (3) beginning July 1, 2025, implementing a promotional program to increase awareness and support for CISMTS; and (4) providing access to behavioral health care services to all first responders after a critical incident. The bill also requires providers of these services, including municipal public safety agencies, to employ or have at least one CISMTS peer support person on staff to provide education and access to ongoing behavioral health care services related to any post-traumatic stress resulting from response to a critical incident. The commissioner is further directed to collaborate with government and nonprofit organizations with interests in the provision of law enforcement, firefighting, and EMS services in carrying out the CISMTS related mandate.

[LD 1737](#) *(New title) An Act to Expand Property Tax Relief for Veterans and Their Survivors* (Sponsored by Rep. Hymes of Waldo) **On Appropriations Table** This bill provides a complete exemption from property taxes for veterans who were disabled during active military service and who are receiving a pension or compensation from the United States Government for total, service-connected disability, except that the dollar amount of the reduction in taxes due because of the exemption is limited to \$5,000 or the amount of taxes actually due for that property tax year, whichever amount is less.

As amended, this bill provides that for property tax years beginning on or after April 1, 2025, veterans of the U.S. Armed forces are no longer required to have served during a federally recognized war period to receive the veterans' property tax exemption. For veterans under the age of 62, the exemption is \$5,000 of the just value of the property and \$6,000 for veterans who are 62 years of age or older. The bill also extends an exemption of between \$10,000 and \$50,000 based on the veteran's U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs service-connected disability rating and further provides that veterans' survivors remain eligible for the benefit upon the death of the qualifying veteran.

[LD 1733](#) *An Act to Require the Revenue Forecasting Committee to Prepare Economic Impact Statements for Certain Legislation* (Sponsored by Rep. Millett of Waterford) **DEAD** This bill requires, at the request of three or more members of a legislative committee, the Revenue Forecasting Committee to prepare an economic impact statement for any legislation that creates a new workforce program or amends employment, labor or taxation laws.

[LD 1732](#) *(New title) An Act Regarding the General Assistance Program* (Sponsored by Rep. Meyer of Eliot) **Enacted; PL 2023, c. 575** This bill changes the municipal general assistance program in the following ways: (1) requires overseers and designated or appointed municipal officials administering the program to complete training within 120 days of election or appointment; (2) requires municipalities to accept applications for general assistance during regular business hours; (3) amends provisions governing the municipality of responsibility to increase the provision of assistance from 30 days to six months when a municipality assists an applicant in relocating to another community and from six months to 12 months when an applicant is residing in a group home, shelter, rehabilitation center, nursing home or hospital or in a hotel, motel or other temporary housing; (4) increases from 70% to 90% the amount of state reimbursement for the costs of general assistance incurred by each municipality and Indian tribe; (5) provides state reimbursement for additional program costs, including emergency general assistance, temporary housing, interpreter services and administrative expenses; and (6) requires the Department of Health and Human Services to provide the services necessary to support municipalities, including education and training for certain state employees, 24-hour technical assistance, written decisions and access to statewide database.

As amended, the bill amends the municipal general assistance program in the following ways. (1) Requires overseers and designated or appointed municipal officials administering the program to complete training within 120 days of election or appointment and directs the Department of Health and Human Services to ensure overseers and GA administrators have access to training that can be completed in less than for hours and made accessible either in person, online or via pre-recorded video. The training must include instruction on the purpose of the program, the delivery of trauma-informed services and culturally and linguistically appropriate services, and the laws governing the program's administration, procedures, and requirements. (2) Requires municipalities to accept applications for general assistance during regular business hours. (3) Requires municipalities to provide "trauma-informed services" defined as the provision of services that recognize the unique signs and symptoms of trauma in applicants, and seek to actively avoid traumatization, as well as "culturally and linguistically appropriate services" defined as services that are designed to serve culturally diverse populations in a person's preferred language, within the context of cultural beliefs, and in an environment that supports diversity, promotes community engagement, and builds trust and relationships with applicants and recipients. (3) Amends provisions governing the municipality of responsibility to increase the provision of assistance from 30 days to six months when a municipality assists an applicant in relocating to another community and from six months to 12 months when an applicant is residing in a group home, shelter, rehabilitation center, nursing home or hospital or in a hotel, motel, or other temporary housing. (4) Requires the department to provide municipal administrators with access to statewide database. (5) No later than January 30, 2026 and January 30 of each odd-numbered calendar year thereafter, submit a report to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over general assistance matters regarding the individuals served by the program, the technical assistance provided to municipalities, and the number and content of complaints received.

**April 18, 2023**

[LD 1721](#) *(New title) Resolve, to Establish a Plan to Provide Transitional Housing and to Support the Growth of Maine's Workforce* (Sponsored by Sen. Duson of Cumberland Cty.) **[Finally Passed; Resolves 2023, c. 136](#)** This bill creates the Transitional Housing Community Construction Program Fund under MaineHousing to create transitional housing communities, which are clusters of housing dwelling units for homeless individuals and families to provide stability and to allow the individuals and families to transition to permanent housing. The bill directs that transitional housing communities be created throughout the State designed to cover all counties. The bill directs the Department of Health and Human Services, through independent housing services under its administration of assisted housing programs, to coordinate, arrange or provide services including job training and health care services for residents of transitional housing communities. The bill also provides one-time funding to MaineHousing to create transitional housing communities and funding to the department to provide independent housing services to residents of transitional housing.

This Resolve directs the Office of Policy Innovation and the Future (GOPIF) to propose a plan providing transitional housing to persons seeking federal work permits based on a model consisting of leasing a property formerly used as a hotel and contracting with a private nonprofit entity to provide support services. The plan must include an evaluation of options for purchasing or allocating funds to a nongovernmental entity to purchase a similar property, or to provide transitional housing concurrent with services aimed at supporting entry into the workforce and an evaluation of the financial impacts upon the State and the municipality in which the property is located. The plan must identify potential funding sources, including but not limited to existing state and federal funds. GOPIF is further directed to: (1) provide information regarding who is being served by the model, how many enter the workforce, the amount of time those being served use transitional housing and accompanying services before successfully entering the workforce and how workforce needs are affected by the model; and (2) no later than January 15, 2025 submit a report to the joint standing or select committees of the Legislature having jurisdiction over housing matters, which is authorized to report out legislation in 2025.

[LD 1714](#) *An Act to Create a Sustainable Funding Source for Recovery Community Centers Using a Percentage of the Adult Use Cannabis Tax Revenue* (Sponsored by Rep. Rana of Bangor) **Carried Over** This bill establishes the Recovery Community Centers Fund within the Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Behavioral Health to fund recovery community centers. The bill requires that 12% of the sales tax revenue received per month on the sale of adult use cannabis and products and 12% of the excise tax revenue collected on the sale of adult use cannabis be credited to the fund.

[LD 1710](#) *(New title) Resolve, to Establish the Commission to Improve Tenant-Landlord Relationships and Maximize the Use of Housing Vouchers* (Sponsored by Rep. Golek of Harpswell) **On Special Study Table** In part, this bill amends the laws governing the municipal general assistance program by: (1) redefining maximum levels of assistance to better reflect the cost of basic necessities; (2) increasing the period of eligibility from one month to six months; (3) requiring the Department of Health and Human Services to develop a comprehensive application form for applicants of general assistance, emergency assistance and rental assistance and provide training to ensure that municipalities comply with the requirements of the program; (4) requiring municipalities to provide culturally appropriate and trauma-informed services when administering the general assistance program; and (5) requiring municipalities to exceed the maximum levels of assistance in order to alleviate an emergency, which is garners 100% state reimbursement for the additional expenditures.

As amended, the resolve creates the 14-member Commission to Improve Tenant-Landlord Relations and Maximize the Use of Housing Vouchers. The commission is directed to review and consider: (1) the extent to which recipients of housing vouchers are subject to discrimination; (2) existing incentives that encourage landlords to accept tenants and the reasons

why landlords are unwilling or reluctant to rent to individuals who rely on rental assistance; (3) efforts in other states to reduce housing and income discrimination; and (4) efforts to provide outreach and educational information to landlords concerning the available rental assistance programs. No later than November 6, 2024, the commission is required to submit a report that includes its findings and recommendations to the joint standing or joint select committees of the Legislature having jurisdiction over housing matters for presentation in 2025.

[LD 1691](#) *An Act to Provide Parity in State Energy Rate Relief Payments and Tax Exemptions for Maine Cannabis Businesses* (Sponsored by Sen. Daughtry of Cumberland Cty.) **Carried Over**  
As amended, this bill requires that a cannabis business otherwise eligible for financial relief from the State but not provided the relief because the business was engaged in a cannabis-related activity receive the financial relief from either the Medical Use of Cannabis Fund or the Adult Use Cannabis Public Health and Safety and Municipal Opt-in Fund. The bill also extends a sales tax exemption to the production of cannabis.

[LD 1685](#) *An Act to Increase Acreage Eligibility and Change Requirements for Filing Plans Under the Maine Tree Growth Tax Law* (Sponsored by Rep. Matlack of St. George) **DEAD** This bill amends the Maine Tree Growth Tax Law by increasing the acreage eligibility requirement from 10 to 25 acres of forested land beginning April 1, 2025. The bill authorizes municipal assessors and the State Tax Assessor to retain copies of required forest management and harvest plans and with assistance from the Director of the Bureau of Forestry to determine the sufficiency of a plan to meet the requirements of the law. The bill also specifies that the forest management and harvest plans retained by a municipal assessor or the State Tax Assessor are confidential and not public records.

**April 13, 2023**

[LD 1675](#) *An Act to Amend the Laws Governing the General Assistance Program Regarding Eligibility, Housing Assistance and State Reimbursement and to Establish a Working Group* (Sponsored by Rep. Brennan of Portland) **DEAD** This bill amends the law governing the general assistance program to provide that a municipality must calculate housing assistance equivalent to the amount of rental assistance provided for tenant-based housing choice vouchers under Section 8 of the United States Housing Act of 1937. The bill extends the period of eligibility from one month to six months. Beginning July 1, 2023, when a municipality incurs net general assistance costs in excess of 0.008% of that municipality's most recent state valuation relative to the state fiscal year for which reimbursement is being issued, the Department of Health and Human Services must reimburse the municipality for 90% of the amount in excess of these expenditures. The bill also directs the department to establish a working group to study and make recommendations related to a uniform intake process and the conversion of the general assistance program into a housing assistance program.

[LD 1673](#) *(New title) Resolve, Establishing a Working Group to Coordinate Collaboration Among State Agencies for the Purpose of Promoting Smart Growth and Development in High-use Corridors* (Sponsored by Rep. Gere of Kennebunkport) **[Finally Passed; Resolves 2023, c.](#)**

**156** This bill establishes the Thriving Corridors Program within the Department of Administrative and Financial Services in order to assist municipalities with technical support and funding to redevelop high-impact corridors near downtowns, village centers or crossroads into mixed-use, mixed-income, walkable neighborhoods by infilling and redeveloping underutilized land.

As amended, this resolve directs the Director of the Office of Policy Innovation and the Future (GOPIF) to convene a working group consisting of the commissioners from the Departments of Transportation, Environmental Protection, Agriculture, and Conservation and Forestry, and Economic and Community Development, as well as the director of the Maine State Housing Authority to design a plan for agency coordination to maximize state resources and promote smart growth, walkable neighborhoods, mixed-use development and mixed-income housing in high-use corridors near higher-density downtowns, village centers or crossroads through infilling and redevelopment of underutilized lands. The working group is also required to propose a plan for technical assistance grants to municipalities for the development of ordinances and zoning regulations governing high-use corridors including model transit-oriented development zoning ordinances. No later than January 15, 2025, the resolve further directs GOPIF to submit a report regarding the working group's findings and recommendations to the joint standing or select committees of the Legislature having jurisdiction over housing matters, which are authorized to report out legislation in 2025.

[LD 1672](#) *An Act to Establish an Affordable Housing Permitting Process* (Sponsored by Rep. Gere of Kennebunkport) **DEAD** This bill creates the seven-member Affordable Housing Development Review Board, which includes a representative of municipal government, tasked with reviewing proposed affordable and workforce housing developments, effectively circumventing the local processes. In the review process, the board is authorized to preempt any municipal ordinances in the process of determining whether to grant or deny the application for a permit. The bill also creates the process by which a housing development may apply for a permit, in lieu of applying for a local permit, provided the development is in a designated growth area or area served by public water or sewer and 50% of the building's square footage is for affordable or workforce housing. The bill also provides that the development is authorized in an area where a municipal ordinance is not consistent with a comprehensive plan and provides that inconsistent ordinances including provisions that require a minimum lot size of more than 5,000 square feet, density restriction, more than two parking spaces per three dwelling units, more than 50 feet of street frontage, and more than 10 feet of front setback, to name a few. The bill also prescribes the procedures the review board must employ, which requires that notice of a hearing be provided to the applicant and the impacted local board. The bill extends appeal rights to the applicant and provides that municipal fees may not be assessed except to connect to utilities and



apply for building permits. Finally, the application fee for the special permitting process is \$5,000 per application.

[LD 1664](#) *An Act to Increase Reimbursement Under the General Assistance Program* (Sponsored by Sen. Moore of Washington Cty.) (Emergency) **Carried Over** As amended, this bill increases from 70% to 90%, state reimbursement for the costs of general assistance incurred by each municipality and Indian tribe.

[LD 1660](#) *(New title) An Act to Ensure Proper Regulation of Chemical Plastic Processing* (Sponsored by Sen. Carney of Cumberland Cty.) **Enacted; PL 2023, c. 517** This bill redefines recycling as the series of activities by which material is collected, transported, sorted, and processed for use as an industrial feedstock in place of raw materials to manufacture new products with minimal loss of material quality and quantity. The definition further provides that excluded from the definition recycling is energy recovery or energy generation by any means, including, but not limited to, advanced recycling, combustion, gasification, incineration, pyrolysis, solvolysis, hydrolysis, thermal desorption, waste-to-energy, waste-to-fuel or any other chemical or molecular conversion process.

The Act defines the term "plastic-to-plastic recycling" as the production from plastic waste of new plastic material to be used as industrial feedstock in place of raw material for the manufacture of new products made of or containing plastic that either retains the chemical structure of the plastic waste or deconstructs the plastic waste using methods that result exclusively in the production of new plastic material. Plastic-to-plastic recycling does not include chemical plastic processing, which is defined as the processing of plastic waste using chemical or molecular methods into basic raw materials, feedstock chemicals, fuel for combustion, waxes, or lubricants. The law also adds the owner or operator of a facility that processes plastic waste through chemical plastic process to the list of facilities required to submit annual reports to the Department of Environmental Protection.

[LD 1648](#) *An Act to Make Changes to the Farm and Open Space Tax Law* (Sponsored by Rep. Boyle of Gorham) **Carried Over** This bill establishes a new method for the valuation for property enrolled in the farm and open space program by extending eligibility for a reduced valuation to land managed under a carbon conservation management plan. The plan, a written agreement between the landowner and the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, must describe the strategies used on a parcel of land at least 10 acres in size to increase carbon storage or improve carbon conservation and include specific strategies for compliance, be sworn to and complied with by the landowner, and renewed at least once every 10 years. The bill also requires the state to reimburse municipalities for lost property tax revenue in a manner similar to the method of reimbursement provided under the tree growth program. Finally, the bill repeals the statute limiting to no more than 15,000 acres the amount of land that a landowner may enroll in the farm and open space program.

**April 12, 2023**

[LD 1640](#) *(New title) An Act Directing the Department of Transportation to Adopt Rules Regarding Corrosion Mitigation Methods for Steel Bridges* (Sponsored by Sen. Chipman of Cumberland Cty.) **On Highway Table** This bill requires the adoption of rules by the Department of Transportation governing projects costing \$50,000 or more consisting of corrosion prevention and mitigation for bridge infrastructure. Rules adopted pursuant to this legislation must include establishing a process for ensuring that corrosion prevention and mitigation activities are performed in accordance with established standards, requiring the use of personnel who are industry-trained and industry-certified in corrosion prevention and mitigation methods and requiring plans to prevent environmental degradation that might result from corrosion prevention and mitigation activities.

As amended, this bill directs the Department of Transportation to adopt routine technical rules governing corrosion mitigation methods for steel bridges wholly under the control of the State and specifies that the rules must include: (1) processes for ensuring that corrosion mitigation activities are carried out in accordance with established federal standards and under the supervision of personnel who are industry-trained and certified in corrosion mitigation methods; (2) require plans to prevent environmental degradation that might result from corrosion mitigation activities; and (3) require compliance with all applicable state and federal rules.

[LD 1633](#) – *An Act to Establish a Community-based Reentry Program in All Department of Corrections Facilities* (Sponsored by Sen. Beebe-Center of Knox Cty.) **DEAD** This bill creates a reentry program administered by a community-based organization at each correctional facility operated by the Department of Corrections. The peer-supported program provides individualized reentry plans to incarcerated individuals starting from two years prior to an individual's release, involving multiple meetings to determine the individual's education, job training, substance use disorder treatment, housing and other needs subsequent to release and follow-up meetings after release to support the individual's reentry into the community and to reduce or prevent recidivism. This bill also creates the Peer Reentry Review Board, which oversees, advises, studies data and makes recommendations to the community-based reentry program and reports to the Commissioner of Corrections and the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over criminal justice and public safety matters.

[LD 1621](#) *An Act Regarding Environmental Justice* (Sponsored by Speaker Talbot Ross of Portland) **Carried Over** This bill enacts a provision that requires fair and equitable access to Department of Environmental Protection decision-making processes for environmental justice populations and frontline communities, which are defined as people and communities who disproportionately experience the negative consequences of climate change.

**April 5, 2023**

[LD 1538](#) *An Act to Provide Tax Benefits to Persons Constructing Accessory Dwelling Units* (Sponsored by Sen. Brenner of Cumberland Cty.) **DEAD** This bill allows for reimbursement by the State for up to years of a percentage of property taxes paid due to an increase in the taxes because of the construction of an accessory dwelling unit, which is defined as an attached or detached unit on the same lot or parcel as an existing or proposed single-family or multifamily residence that allows for independent living for one or more persons and contains kitchen and bathroom facilities and sleeping accommodations.

[LD 1537](#) *An Act to Amend the Laws Relating to the Prevention of Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances Pollution and to Provide Additional Funding* (Sponsored by Sen. Ingwersen of York Cty.) **Carried Over** This bill extends the deadline for reporting the use of PFAS, in products for sale until October 1, 2023 and allows the amount of PFAS to be reported based on information provided by a supplier rather than testing. The bill clarifies the packaging exemption and exempts manufacturers with less than \$20 million in annual national sales from the PFAS reporting requirements but not from any sales prohibitions. It requires the Department of Environmental Protection, not later than January 1, 2025 and every year thereafter until December 31, 2029, to adopt a rule identifying at least one product category or use that may not be sold, offered for sale or distributed in this State if it contains intentionally added PFAS. It prohibits the department prior to January 1, 2028 from providing an exemption for products in which the use of PFAS is a currently unavoidable use unless the department has adopted rules that identify a relevant related product category or use for a sales prohibition. The bill includes an appropriations and allocations section to provide funding for two positions and expenditures related to the implementation of the laws governing products containing PFAS.

[LD 1530](#) *An Act to Support Patients by Permitting On-site Consumption of Medical Cannabis and Medical Cannabis Products* (Sponsored by Rep. Supica of Bangor) **DEAD** This bill allows for the on-site consumption of harvested cannabis for medical use by a qualifying patient in a caregiver retail store, in a registered dispensary or with a registered caregiver. The Department of Administrative and Financial Services must establish, by major substantive rule, the process for issuing permits for on-site consumption and the permit fee, which may not exceed the administrative cost of issuing the permit.

[LD 1517](#) *An Act to Create Equity in the State's Cannabis Industry* (Sponsored by Rep. Tabor Ross of Portland) **Carried Over** This bill directs the Finance Authority of Maine to establish and administer a cannabis business equity program designed to encourage eligible individuals to apply for registration under the Maine Medical Use of Cannabis Act or for licensure under the Cannabis Legalization Act and to provide related support services to such individuals. Services provided under the program include assistance with regulatory compliance, real estate and other contracting, safety and security consulting and business and financial planning. The also bill directs the State Controller to transfer \$2 million by June 30, 2024 from the Adult Use Cannabis

Public Health and Safety and Municipal Opt-in Fund to capitalize the cannabis business equity program.

[LD 1515](#) *(New title) An Act to Implement the Recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Commission to Study Emergency Medical Services in the State (Emergency)* (Sponsored by Rep. Talbot Ross of Portland) **On Appropriations Table** This bill provides General Fund appropriations of \$45 million in FY 2024 and \$70 million in FY 2025 to the Department of Public Safety to support existing transportation costs of emergency medical services, provides that the amount of funding must be reduced to the maximum extent possible through the use of public and private Medicaid match programs.

As amended, this bill authorizes municipal officers to adopt a plan stipulating the method by which ambulance services will be delivered in the community, and further clarifies that a municipality that adopts a plan is not required to provide or fund ambulance services. Adopted plans must be posted in the same manner that all municipal ordinances are posted, and a copy submitted to the Department of Public Safety. The bill also creates the 26-member Maine Emergency Services Commission, including members from statewide associations representing the interests of municipalities, fire chiefs and counites, which is tasked with monitoring and evaluating the state's EMS system and providing recommendations for improvements. The commission is also required to submit several status reports to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over public safety matters, which includes: (1) by December 31, 2024, draft legislation to reorganize the Emergency Medical Services Board that is consistent with the Maine EMS: Two-Year Action Plan; (2) by March 1, 2025, a commission status report and findings, including recommended legislation for submission in 2025; and (3) by January 15, 2025, an update on an EMS services public information campaign slated for implementation on July 1, 2025.

[LD 1514](#) *(New title) An Act to Establish a Pilot Program at a Community-based Organization to Provide a Transitional Living Program for Individuals Recently Released from Correctional Facilities* (Sponsored by Rep. Talbot Ross of Portland) **On Appropriations Table** This bill directs the Department of Corrections to administer a program to provide transitional housing to recently released indigent inmates, establishes a fund to capitalize the program and further requires MaineHousing to study long-term solutions for transitional housing for recently released indigent client inmates.

As amended, this bill allocates \$200,000 in one-time funding to the Department of Corrections to partner with a community-based organization to establish a pilot program providing transitional living services to adults recently released from a correctional facility. The program must include, but is not limited to, providing temporary housing to such individuals and establishing and providing a master leasing program that assists individuals with rent support, life skills coaching and other services.

[LD 1505](#) *An Act to Amend the Maine Cooperative Affordable Housing Ownership Act* (Sponsored by Rep. Cloutier of Lewiston) **Enacted; PL 2023, c. 513** This bill amends the Maine Cooperative Affordable Housing Ownership Act to include group equity cooperatives and provides that a housing assistance program must be made reasonably available to residents those cooperatives.

As amended and adopted, this Act amends the Maine Cooperative Affordable Housing Ownership Act to include a “group equity cooperative” that is organized to provide and preserve housing for classes of low- or moderate-income households and describes the standards of operation, including a directive maintaining affordability and a requirement that 80% of the units be owner occupied. Additionally, the law provides that owners of a group equity cooperative are eligible for all state and municipal housing assistance programs.

[LD 1493](#) *An Act to Increase Affordable Housing by Expanding Tax Increment Financing* (Sponsored by rep. LaRoche of Augusta) **Carried Over** As amended, this bill authorizes the creation of Evergreen Housing Zones to allow tax increment financing revenue to be used to finance qualified housing projects located within the municipality. Qualified housing projects include developments: (1) where at least 50% of the units are restricted for affordable or workforce housing; (2) are subject to a restrictive covenants preserving affordable or workforce housing units for a period of 10 years for single-family, owner-occupied units and 30 years for rental units; (3) located in an Evergreen Housing Zone; and (4) meet all other qualifications adopted in Department of Economic and Community Development rules.

### **March 30, 2023**

[LD 1457](#) *An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue for a Jail in Caribou* (Sponsored by President Jackson of Aroostook Cty.) **Carried Over** This bond bill issues \$3 million to fund a jail in Caribou.

[LD 1450](#) *An Act to Fund the Recommendations of the Mountain Division Rail Use Advisory Council* (Sponsored by Sen. Bennett of Oxford Cty.) **Carried Over** This bill provides a one-time appropriation for the replacement of the tracks on the 28 miles of the rail corridor between the towns of Fryeburg and Standish per the recommendations of the Mountain Division Rail Use Advisory Council.

[LD 1441](#) *An Act to Enhance State Oversight of Water Use and Water Resources* (Sponsored by Rep. Sayre of Kennebunk) **Carried Over** This Act amends the duties of the Water Resources Planning Committee within the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry to include developing measures for the consolidation and centralization of collected state water resources information within a single state agency, ensuring public access to that information, identifying opportunities and resources to enhance or supplement the collection of state water resources

information and enhancing or supplementing the State's monitoring of and data collection regarding water use and water resources. Beginning January 15, 2024, and annually thereafter, the bill directs the Maine Agricultural Water Management Board to submit a report to the Joint Standing Committees on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Environment and Natural Resources, Energy, Utilities and Technology; and Health and Human Services, which are authorized to report out legislation.

[LD 1426](#) *An Act to Secure Housing for the Most Vulnerable Maine Residents by Amending the Laws Governing Municipal General Assistance* (Sponsored by Rep. Mathieson of Kittery)

**DEAD** This bill: (1) requires an overseer, no later than the 120th day following appointment or election, to complete training on the requirements of the municipal general assistance program; (2) replaces, for determining the maximum level of assistance, the fair market value determination with setting the assistance at the equivalent amount of rental assistance provided for tenant-based housing choice vouchers under Section 8 of the United States Housing Act of 1937 except that the benefit level may not be less than the difference between the applicant's income and 110% of the area's fair market rent; (3) provides that if general assistance is being used to pay rent for an applicant whose rent is subject to a lease an overseer may redetermine the applicant's eligibility annually; (4) increases from 70% to 90% the amount of state reimbursement for the costs of general assistance incurred by a municipality and each Indian tribe; (5) directs the Department of Health and Human Services to: (a) reimburse each municipality for 5% of the direct costs of paying benefits incurred through its general assistance program; (b) establish and provide overseers with access to a statewide database for tracking applicants for the general assistance program and expenses relating to the program; (c) provide assistance to municipalities with regard to processing applications for the general assistance program; (d) establish a hotline that is available 24 hours per day in order to provide consistent, accurate advice to overseers; and (e) respond to requests for assistance within 24 hours.

[LD 1422](#) *(New title) An Act to End Homelessness and Assist Students Who Are Homeless by Establishing a Rental Subsidy Program (Emergency)* (Sponsored by Rep. Brennan of Portland)

**Carried Over** As amended, this bill establishes a housing subsidy program for homeless students under the authority of the Maine State Housing Authority and appropriates one-time funding of \$2 million in fiscal years 2024 and 2025. In coordination with the Departments of Education and Health and Human Services and other agencies or service providers, the authority shall consider ways in which the services provided by school-based housing navigators established by the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act could benefit the administration of a rental subsidy program. The program must provide housing subsidies directly to homeless students or to an adult family member or guardian of the homeless student. No later than January 15, 2024 the authority is directed to report on the program's process to the Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing or Joint Select Committee Housing.

[LD 1418](#) *An Act Concerning Single-use Disposable Water Bottles and Water Refill Stations* (Sponsored by Rep. Gramlich of Old Orchard Beach) **DEAD** Of note, this bill provides that beginning January 1, 2024, each facility or function of state or local government that is open to the public or that is regularly used by employees must include a reasonably accessible water refill station. The bill also limits the sale of single-use water bottles that are less than liter at a facility or function of the State or a political subdivision, and further prohibits state and local governments from purchasing bottles of water that are less than one liter in size.

[LD 1412](#) *RESOLUTION, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine Establishing That All Maine Residents Have Equal Rights Under the Law* (Sponsored by Rep. Reckitt of South Portland) **Carried Over** This resolution proposes to amend the Constitution of Maine to prohibit the denial or abridgment by the State or any political subdivision of the State of equal rights based on the actual or perceived race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, physical or mental disability, ancestry or national origin of an individual.

[LD 1409](#) *(New title) Resolve, to Establish a Task Force to Study Sharing the Costs of Training First Responders Among Governmental Entities (Emergency)* (Sponsored by Rep. Fay of Raymond) **On Study Table** This bill establishes a formula to reimburse municipalities for the costs for training full-time first responders if the first responder is hired by another municipality within five years of the first municipality's initial incurrence of training costs.

As amended, this bill establishes the 18-member Task Force to Study Sharing the Costs of Training First Responders Among Government Entities, which includes representatives from the Maine Fire Chiefs' Association, Maine Chiefs of Police Association, and the Maine Municipal Association. The task force is directed to develop an equitable way of providing reimbursement for the training and credentialing costs of first responders, incurred by a government entity, when the employee ends service with that entity after receiving the training. No later than December 1, 2024, the task force is required to submit a report, including findings, recommendations, and suggested legislation, to the joint standing committee on State and Local Government.

[LD 1402](#) *An (New title) An Act Regarding Unobligated Balances from Amounts Appropriated for General Purpose Aid for Local Schools and to Require Annual Reports on School Demographics* (Sponsored by Rep. Brennan of Portland) **On Appropriations Table** This bill provides for an additional allocation of school funding for a school administrative unit in which at least 15% of the school administrative unit has tax-exempt property that cannot be levied to support public education in the school administrative unit or for a school administrative unit in which at least 50% of students are eligible for free or reduced-price meals. The adjustment is funded through any unencumbered balances that otherwise would be carried forward into the next fiscal year in the Department of Education, General Purpose Aid for Local Schools program, General Fund account. To qualify for an adjustment, the school administrative unit is required to submit a plan for how the funds will be used to increase academic and social success

of economically disadvantaged students. The amount of the adjustment must be based on a per-pupil rate calculated using the number of economically disadvantaged students and limited by the amount of funds available.

As amended, this bill requires the Commissioner of Education to report annually to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over education matters on the demographic profiles of public schools and students in Maine and to consult with the Maine Education Policy Research Institute and its steering committee on the initial development of the demographic profile report. This bill also requires that at least 60% of the unobligated balances in the Department of Education's general purpose aid for local schools account that are carried forward to the next fiscal year must be transferred to the School Revolving Renovation Fund no later than October 1st of each year.

### **March 27, 2023**

[LD 1376](#) (*New title*) *An Act to Increase the State Minimum Wage to \$15 Per Hour* (Sponsored by Rep. Collings of Portland) **Carried Over** As amended, this bill increases the minimum hourly wage to \$15.00 per hour beginning January 1, 2024, and requires that on January 1, 2025, and every year thereafter, the minimum wage increases by the increase in the cost of living, if any.

[LD 1349](#) *An Act to Review State Lands and Waterways That Have Sacred, Traditional or Other Significance to the Wabanaki People* (Sponsored by Rep. Collings of Portland) **Carried Over** This bill establishes the Commission to Review State-owned Lands and Waterways to identify which state-owned lands or waterways have sacred, traditional or other significance and to develop a process to return lands and waterways to the Passamaquoddy Tribe, Penobscot Nation, Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians or Mi'kmaq Nation. The commission must hold public meetings and hearings throughout the State and accept testimony and written comments in a manner determined by the commission. The commission must invite the participation of stakeholders as determined by the commission and also invite the participation of large private landowners, land trusts and conservation organizations. Beginning in 2024, the commission must submit a report no later than November 15 of each year to the joint standing committees of the Legislature having jurisdiction over conservation matters, inland fisheries and wildlife matters, marine resources matters, which may report out legislation.

[LD 1345](#) *An Act to Permit Municipalities to Establish by Ordinance a Program for Partial Deferral of Property Taxes for Seniors* (Sponsored by Rep. Moriarty of Cumberland) **Enacted; PL 2023, c. 547** This bill permits municipalities to establish a program by ordinance for seniors that provides for partial stabilization of property taxes accompanied by deferral of the amount of taxes due in excess of the stabilized amount. Residents of a municipality that adopts such a program may not participate in the State's property tax deferral or stabilization programs.



As amended, this bill authorizes municipalities to adopt ordinances establishing a program providing seniors a partial stabilization of property taxes accompanied by the deferral of the payment of taxes due in excess of the stabilized amount. The bill further clarifies that residents of a municipality that adopts such a program may not participate in the State's property tax deferral program.

[LD 1342](#) *An Act to Increase Funding for the Prevention and Control of Invasive Aquatic Species* (Sponsored by Rep. Riseman of Harrison) **Enacted; PL 2023, c. 612** This bill increases the fees for original or renewal certificates of number with two validation stickers that are required for all resident motorboats and personal watercraft, and the fees for lake and river protection stickers for all motorboats and personal watercraft not registered in the State and seaplanes, operating on inland waters of the State. Beginning January 1, 2024, the fee is increased by \$10 and, beginning January 1, 2026 and each January biennially thereafter, the fee is increased by \$2.

As amended, this bill increases the fees for new or renewal certificates of number for resident motorboats and personal watercraft and the fees for lake and river protection stickers for all motorboats and personal watercraft not registered in Maine. Beginning January 1, 2025, the fees for certificates of number are first increased by \$10, and by an additional \$10 as of January 1, 2028. The same is provided for lake and river protection stickers fees, which are increased by \$15 on January 1, 2025 and by another \$15 on January 1, 2028. The amendment also provides that beginning January 1, 2025, 70% of fees are credited to the Invasive Aquatic Plant and Nuisance Species Fund, and 30% of fees are credited to the Lake and River Protection Fund.

[LD 1335](#) *An Act to Amend the Property Tax Stabilization for Senior Citizens Law* (Sponsored by Rep. Boyer of Poland) **DEAD** This bill proposed to amend the Property Tax Stabilization law by providing that: (1) eligible individuals who are married to each other may not receive property tax stabilization for more than one homestead; (2) homesteads held in trust qualify for stabilization; and (3) each application after the initial application must contain information indicating any additions or improvements that have been made to the eligible homestead since the previous application.

### **March 23, 2023**

[LD 1301](#) *An Act Regarding Transition Coordination, Prisoner Attendance at Funerals, Furloughs, Visitation, Education and Discretionary Accounts at County Jails* (Sponsored by Rep. Collings of Portland) **Carried Over** As amended, this bill requires the County Corrections Professional Standards Council to convene a stakeholder group to examine the need for additional intensive case managers to assist in the transition of prisoners from county jails into the community and examine the consistency among county jails of written policies regarding prisoner attendance at funerals, furloughs, visitation, education, and discretionary accounts. Participation in the stakeholder group includes the Maine Sheriffs' Association and the

Department of Health and Human Services, as well as others with relevant backgrounds and experience and by February 15, 2024, further directs the stakeholder group to submit a report to the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety, which is authorized to report out legislation.

[LD 1298](#) *An Act to Allow a Local Option Sales Tax on Short-term Lodging to Fund Affordable Housing* (Sponsored by Rep. Skold of Portland) **DEAD** This bill allows a municipality to impose a local option sales tax of 1% on short-term lodging that is subject to the state sales and use tax if approved by referendum of the voters in that municipality. The revenue from the sales tax must be distributed to the municipality imposing the tax and used for municipal programs that support affordable housing development in that municipality, including rental assistance for lower income households or moderate-income households.

[LD 1294](#) *(New title) An Act Regarding the Ordinances Governing Residential Units Located in Buildings in a Location Zoned for Commercial Use* (Sponsored by Rep. Gere of Kennebunkport) **Enacted; PL 2023, c. 536** This concept draft bill would implement certain recommendations of the Commission To Increase Housing Opportunities in Maine by Studying Land Use Regulations and Short-term Rentals.

This Act amends the law authorizing a municipality, as necessary to achieve statewide and regional housing production goals, to adopt ordinances allowing residential units within buildings located in an area zoned for commercial use. Current law requires that an ordinance that establishes a limit on the number of residential units within a building in a location zoned for commercial use be proportional to the space available for residential units in that building. This amendment removes that requirement and makes the proportional limit optional.

[LD 1285](#) *An Act to Extend Funding for the Land for Maine's Future Program* (Sponsored by Sen. Black of Franklin Cty.) **Carried Over** As amended, on or before June 30, 2024 this bill transfers \$20 million from the unappropriated surplus of the General Fund to the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Land for Maine's Future program.

[LD 1281](#) *An Act to Protect Economic Competitiveness in Maine by Extending the End Date for Pine Tree Development Zone Benefits* (Sponsored by Sen. Daughtry of Cumberland Cty.) **DEAD** This bill changes the date after which a qualified Pine Tree Development Zone business in a tier 1 location may not be certified from December 31, 2023 to December 31, 2025. It also changes the date on which all Pine Tree Development Zone benefits are terminated from December 31, 2033 to December 31, 2035 and makes corresponding changes in several sections of law.

### **March 20, 2023**

[LD 1258](#) *An Act to Increase the Personal Property Tax Exemption for Farm Machinery* (Sponsored by Rep. Terry of Gorham) **Carried Over** As amended, this bill increases the

personal property tax exemption on farm machinery from \$10,000 to \$45,000 as of April 1, 2024, requires the state to reimburse municipalities for 90% of the cost of implementing the changes, and specifies that machinery eligible for the Business Equipment Tax Exemption or the Business Equipment Tax Reimbursement program is ineligible for the exemption.

[LD 1257](#) *An Act to Increase Housing Capacity and Protect the Municipal Tax Base and Working Lands* (Sponsored by Rep. Crafts of Newcastle) **DEAD** This bill adds to the list of subdivision review exceptions projects that yield three but no more than 18 dwelling units on a single or parcel of land located in a designated growth area within a municipality, provided the project is subject to municipal site plan review. The bill also defines "administrative reviewing authority," as a municipal employee or other designee of a municipality, and "municipal site plan review," which must include criteria regarding storm water management, sewage disposal, water supply and vehicular access. Finally, the bill requires the reviewing authority, when reviewing an application for subdivision approval, to determine that the proposed subdivision is not located in an area identified and designated in the municipality's comprehensive plan as a rural area, unless the area is a designated growth area or an area for which the municipality has adopted a plan governing the approval of subdivisions.

[LD 1233](#) *An Act Regarding the Maine State Cemetery Preservation Commission* (Sponsored by Rep. Greenwood of Wales) **Carried Over** This bill expands the duties of the Maine State Cemetery Preservation Commission to include investigation of violations of the laws governing burying grounds and cemeteries reported to the commission by municipalities, state and local law enforcement agencies and statewide associations dedicated to the preservation or the maintenance of cemeteries. The bill also expands the commission's powers, to include the authority to hire staff, create a website, prepare educational materials for distribution to municipalities and associations dedicated to the preservation of cemeteries, establish a grant program to provide funds for the restoration of burying grounds and cemeteries, and to submit annually to the Legislature proposals for the appropriate care, protection, preservation and access to cemeteries. The bill increases the burial-transit permit fee by \$5 to fund the commission's operations. Finally, the bill directs the commission to submit a report to the joint standing committee having jurisdiction over state and local government matters related to the grant program and authorized the committee to report out implementing legislation in 2025.

[LD 1227](#) *An Act to Balance Renewable Energy Development with Natural and Working Lands Conservation* (Sponsored by Rep. Pluecker of Warren) **Carried Over** As amended, this bill directs the Governor's Energy Office (GEO) to create and maintain a publicly accessible database of fully permitted or constructed energy facilities using renewable resources that may be used to identify land use trends. The bill also requires the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, in collaboration with the GEO and the Public Utilities Commission and other state agencies, stakeholders and research institutions, to develop a plan to implement a dual-use energy pilot program and requires GEO to submit a report with a plan for implementing

a pilot program to the Joint standing Committees on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry; Energy, Utilities and Technology; and Environment and Natural Resources no later than February 1, 2025.

[LD 1215](#) *An Act to End the Sale of Flavored Tobacco Products* (Sponsored by Sen. Duson of Cumberland Cty.) **Carried Over** This bill prohibits the sale and distribution of flavored tobacco products, including flavored cigars and electronic smoking devices.

### **March 16, 2023**

[LD 1210](#) *An Act to Establish a Maine Highway Capital Fund to Provide Consistent Funding for the Construction and Repair of Maine's Roads and Bridges* (Sponsored by Rep. Ducharme of Madison) **DEAD** This bill establishes the Capital Fund within the Department of Transportation to fund the construction or repair of highways or bridges, which is capitalized with: (1) any highway construction or repair revenue remaining at the end of the fiscal year that would otherwise be transferred into the General Fund; (2) 20% of the unappropriated General Fund surplus at the end of each fiscal year; and (3) any other funds the department directs be deposited into the fund.

### **March 13, 2023**

[LD 1185](#) *An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Recapitalize the School Revolving Renovation Fund* (Sponsored by Sen. Ingwersen of York Cty.) **Carried Over** This bond bill issues \$100 million to recapitalize the School Revolving Renovation Fund for the purpose of providing funds to public schools for renovation and capital repairs.

[LD 1177](#) *(New title) An Act to Assess an Impact Fee on Megayachts* (Sponsored by Rep. Lookner of Portland) **Carried Over** As amended, this bill requires the owner of a megayacht to pay an impact fee of \$10 per foot length over 150 for each day up to 30 days the yacht is secured to a slip in a municipality that collects slip fees, 50% of which is retained by the municipality to support harbor and sea level mitigate infrastructure and the remaining revenues used to support water and land based public transit. Under the terms of the bill, a megayacht is a privately owned pleasure vessel owned by an individual or a corporation and measuring at least 150 feet in overall length and does not include a commercial fishing vessel, a commercial cruise vessel with more than 20 passengers not including crew, a commercial scientific research vessel, a marine salvage or construction equipment vessel, a commercial freight carrying vessel, a vessel built before 1950, a vessel made primarily of wood, a military vessel or a vessel owned by an academic institution.

[LD 1162](#) *(New title) An Act to Increase Support for the Community Forestry Fund* (Sponsored by Rep. Brennan of Portland) **Carried Over** As amended, this bill appropriates \$500,000 in each

year of the FY 2024 – FY 2025 biennium to provide grants to municipalities to address ash tree disease and expand tree replacement efforts.

[LD 1156](#) *An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Promote the Design, Development and Maintenance of Trails for Outdoor Recreation and Active Transportation* (Sponsored by Rep. Fay of Raymond) **Carried Over** This bond bill issues \$30 million to provide funds to the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Bureau of Parks and Lands for the design, development and maintenance of nonmotorized, motorized and multi-use trails statewide.

[LD 1153](#) *(New title) An Act Regarding Municipal Taxation of Certain Solar Energy Equipment* (Sponsored by Rep. Woodsome of Waterboro) **On Appropriations Table** This bill repeals the personal property tax exemption for solar energy equipment that generates heat or electricity if all of the energy is used on the site where the property is located or the energy is transmitted through the facilities of a transmission and distribution utility, and a utility customer or customers receive a utility bill credit for the energy generated by the equipment.

As amended, this bill provides that for property tax years beginning on or after April 1, 2025 solar energy equipment is exempt from property taxation if: (1) the energy produced is used on site; (2) the equipment is collocated with a net energy billing customer or customers subscribed to at least 50% of the energy produced on site; or (3) the produced energy is transmitted through an electric utility and accounted for using a bill credit mechanism and the generator of electricity had a fully executed interconnection agreement prior to June 1, 2024.

[LD 1152](#) *(New title) An Act to Require Public Employers to Provide Long-term Disability Insurance Coverage* (Sponsored by Sen. Ingwersen of York Cty.) **On Appropriations Table** This bill requires the Maine Public Employees Retirement System to offer long-term disability insurance coverage and employers to provide the coverage at employer expense to members of the system who participate in the system's defined contribution plan or provide substantially equivalent coverage obtained from another source.

As amended, starting on July 1, 2025 and unless a public employer provides substantially equivalent coverage from another source, this bill directs the Maine Public Employees Retirement System board of trustees to offer long-term disability insurance coverage to members, and further requires the State to pay 100% of the costs of the premiums and any other amounts due to an insurance company or other third party in connection with coverage offered by the board or provided by the employer.

[LD 1145](#) *An Act to Create the Southern Maine Coastal Waters Commission* (Sponsored by Sen. Bailey of York Cty.) **DEAD** This concept draft bill would create the Southern Maine Coastal Waters Commission to oversee the Southern Maine Dredge Authority. Membership on the commission would be open to a representative from each coastal municipality from South

Portland to Kittery and would include a representative from the Departments Environmental Protection, Transportation, and Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry.

[LD 1134](#) *An Act to Improve Housing Affordability by Amending the Definition of "Subdivision" Under the Site Location of Development Laws* (Sponsored by Rep. Boyle of Gorham) **DEAD** This bill amends the site location of development laws to provide that the term "subdivision" includes the division of a parcel of land into 20 or more lots to be offered for sale or lease to the general public within any three-year period if the aggregate land area includes more than 50 acres and when all the lots are for single-family, detached, residential housing, common areas or open space.

### **March 9, 2023**

[LD 1111](#) *An Act Concerning Contracts and Agreement for Large-scale Water Extraction* (Sponsored by Rep. O'Neil of Saco) **Carried Over** This bill requires contracts for the extraction and transportation of water to be approved by a vote of the legislative body of each municipality and township located within the watershed from which water is to be extracted and limits the term of these contracts to no more than three years.

[LD 1074](#) *An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Fund New Affordable Housing for Low-income Households* (Sponsored by Sen. Daughtry of Cumberland Cty.) **Carried Over** This bond bill issues \$100 million to build new affordable housing for low-income households through the construction of new and adaptive reuse of existing structures.

### **March 7, 2023**

[LD 1056](#) *An Act Restricting State Assistance in Federal Collection of Personal Electronic Data and Metadata* (Sponsored by Sen. Brakey of Androscoggin Cty.) **DEAD** This bill prohibits a state department, agency or political subdivision from participating in or providing support or resource enabling a federal agency to collect or use a person's electronic communications unless: (1) informed consent is provided; (2) the collection of data or metadata is subject to a warrant; or (3) in accordance with a legally recognized exception to the federal warrant requirements.

[LD 1027](#) *An Act to Prohibit Local Sales Taxes* (Sponsored by Rep. Perkins of Dover-Foxcroft) **DEAD** This bill prohibits a municipality from imposing a local sales tax.

[LD 1009](#) *An Act Regarding the Reduction and Recycling of Food Waste* (Sponsored by Rep. Zeigler of Montville) **On Appropriations Table** This bill sets goals for the reduction of the disposal of food scraps by establishing the reduction of waste at the point of generation as the first priority and directs the diversion of rescued food first for consumption by humans, then for agricultural use, including for consumption by animals, then subjecting the food scraps to

composting or anaerobic digestion with subsequent soil application and finally subjecting the food scraps to anaerobic digestion not followed by soil application. Requirements are placed on producers to separate the food scraps from other solid waste at the point of generation, with these requirements phased in over a five-year period. Commercial entities engaged in the transportation of municipal solid waste are required to collect food scraps from customers except for customers in municipalities with solid waste management ordinances that cover the collection of food scraps and that are consistent with the State's food recovery policy. Beginning on January 1, 2027, the bill also requires food scraps containers to be placed next to any solid waste containers provided in public buildings and on public land.

As amended, this bill provides that, beginning July 1, 2026, a designated food waste generator may not dispose food waste at an incineration facility or solid waste landfill and must to the maximum extent practicable reduce the volume of food waste it generates, separate and arrange for the donation of excess edible food and manage the remaining food waste it generates through agricultural use, composting or anaerobic digestion at the point of generation, at a different location or by transferring the food waste to an organics recycler for management. The Department of Environmental Protection may approve a temporary waiver from these requirements for a designated food waste generator based on undue hardship for a period not to exceed three years. Beginning July 1, 2026 and until June 30, 2028, a designated food waste generator is a person that generates two or more tons per week of food waste and that is located within 20 miles of an organics recycler with available capacity. Beginning July 1, 2028, a designated food waste generator generates one or more tons per week of food waste and is located within 25 miles of an organics recycler with available capacity. The amendment specifies that, not earlier than July 1, 2031, the department may adopt rules providing that a designated food waste generator includes a person that generates less than one ton but greater than 100 pounds per week of food waste or that is located farther than 25 miles from an organics recycler with available capacity.

[LD 1006](#) *An Act to Ensure Access to Safe Drinking Water from Household Wells in Rural Areas by Expanding Testing* (Sponsored by Rep. Pluecker of Warren) **Carried Over** As amended, this bill requires the Department of Health and Human to provide free testing for PFAS in household well water to low-income residents through contracts with qualified laboratories. The department is also required to conduct educational outreach to make qualifying residents aware of the availability of free testing and eligibility for grants from the Maine State Housing Authority to pay for water treatment systems. The bill clarifies that homeowners served by well water that exceed state PFAS standards are also eligible for the grants.

[LD 999](#) *An Act to Support Family Caregivers by Expanding Family Medical Leave* (Sponsored by Rep. Murphy of Scarborough) **Carried Over** As amended, this bill adds grandparents and great-grandparents with serious health conditions to the list of persons related to an employee for whom family medical leave may be taken.

[LD 996](#) *An Act to Allow a Municipality to Establish a Local Option Sales Tax* (Sponsored by Rep. Gramlich of Old Orchard Beach) **DEAD** This bill allows municipalities to impose a local tax on the sale of any good or service subjected to the state sales tax provided the authority is approved by vote of the legislative body or municipal referendum. The related article or question must describe what the revenue will be used for and can be applied on a seasonal or year-round basis.

**March 2, 2023**

[LD 957](#) *An Act Requiring Water Bottle Filling Stations in New and Renovated Public Schools* (Sponsored by Rep. Millett of Cape Elizabeth) **Enacted; PL 2023, c. 492** As amended and enacted, this bill requires new public schools and those undergoing substantial renovations to be equipped with water bottle filling stations and authorizes students to possess refillable water bottles. Under the terms of the bill, a “substantial renovation” means a renovation for which the cost exceeds 50% of the building's value prior to renovation.

[LD 949](#) *An Act to Protect Workers from Employer Surveillance* (Sponsored by Rep. Roeder of Bangor) **Carried Over** As amended, this bill provides that a public or private employer may not use surveillance and specifies that “surveillance” excludes the use of cameras for security or safety purposes or the use of GPS tracking or other safety devices on vehicles owned by the employer but operated by the employee. Notice that the employer uses employee surveillance mechanisms must be provided to a prospective employee during the hiring process, as well as annually, in writing, to current employees. The bill prohibits an employer from using audiovisual monitoring in an employee's residence or personal vehicle or on the employee's property and provides that an employee can decline a request by an employer to install data collection or transmission applications on personal electronic devices for the purposes of employer surveillance. The bill also requires that an employer notify a prospective employee during the interview process that the employer engages in employer surveillance.

[LD 936](#) *(New title) An Act to Require Employers to Disclose Pay Ranges and Maintain Records of Employees' Pay History* (Sponsored by Rep. Roeder of Bangor) **Carried Over** As amended, this bill requires employers with 10 or more employees to include a statement on a job posting that lists the range of pay the employer will offer to a successful applicant. The bill also requires an employer to disclose the range of pay it offers for the position upon request of the employee and requires the employer to maintain a record of each position held by an employee and the employee's pay history.

[LD 931](#) *An Act to Expand the State's Workforce by Supporting the Transition from Incarceration to Employment* (Sponsored by Rep. Sayre of Kennebunk Cty.) **Carried Over** This concept draft bill would direct the State Workforce Board to prepare a plan expanding the State's current workforce development programming for incarcerated persons and persons reentering the community after incarceration in consultation with the Department of Corrections and the



Department of Labor in calendar year 2023. The responsibility for execution of this plan would rest with those departments beginning January 1, 2024.

[LD 928](#) *RESOLUTION, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine to Establish a Right to a Clean and Healthy Environment* (Sponsored by Rep. O’Neil of Saco) **Carried Over** This resolution proposes to amend the Constitution of Maine to grant the people of the State a right to a clean and healthy environment and to the preservation of the natural, cultural, and healthful qualities of the environment.

### **February 28, 2023**

[LD 913](#) *An Act to Support First Responders* (Sponsored by Rep. Terry of Gorham) **DEAD** This concept draft bill would support first responders.

[LD 912](#) *An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Restore Historic Community Buildings* (Sponsored by Rep. Millett of Waterford) **Carried Over** This bond bill issues \$25 million to restore historic community buildings, with funds being issued contingent on a 50% local match requirement from either private or nonprofit sources and administered by the Director of the Maine Historic Preservation Commission.

[LD 911](#) *An Act to Amend the Laws Regarding Certain Law Enforcement Interactions and Tools for Determining Residency During Conflict Resolution* (Sponsored by Rep. Henderson of Rumford) **DEAD** This concept draft bill would amend the law governing law enforcement interactions when the participants in a dispute reside in the same place and provide for additional tools to law enforcement for determining residency during conflict resolution.

[LD 910](#) *An Act to Amend the Laws of Maine* (Sponsored by Rep. Terry of Gorham) **Carried Over** This concept draft bill would amend the laws of Maine.

### **February 24, 2023**

[LD 875](#) *An Act to Allow Mini-trucks to Be Operated on Roads in the State* (Sponsored by Sen. Chipman of Cumberland Cty.) **DEAD** This bill allows mini-trucks to be operated on public ways. The mini-truck, a 4-wheeled motor vehicle with a maximum speed of 60 miles per hour and a maximum weight of 2,000 pounds, must be registered and meet the same inspection standards as other motor vehicles to operate on a public way.

[LD 860](#) *An Act to Identify the Railroad Lines from Portland to Bangor as a Major Corridor and to Fund a Feasibility Study* (Sponsored by Sen. Baldacci of Penobscot Cty.) **DEAD** This concept draft bill would identify the railroad lines from Portland to Bangor as a major corridor and fund a feasibility study.

**February 21, 2023**

[LD 853](#) *RESOLUTION, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine to Establish a Right to Housing* (Sponsored by Rep. Collings of Portland) **Carried Over** This resolution proposes to amend the Constitution of Maine to declare that all individuals have a natural, inherent, and unalienable right to housing.

[LD 827](#) *An Act to Allow Employees to Request Flexible Work Schedules* (Sponsored by Rep. Roeder of Bangor) **Carried Over** As amended, this bill establishes a process for enabling a private or public sector employee to request a flexible work schedule. The request must be made in writing and the employer must consider the request, determine whether the request is “inconsistent with employer operations” and provide a decision in writing, including the specific reasons if the request is denied. As defined in the bill, the term inconsistent with operations includes increased costs to the employer, impacts on business operations, workforce retention and recruitment issues, and the feasibility of off-site job performance. If the request is granted, the employee and employer must mutually agree on the duration and terms of the work schedule. The bill also allows the employer to rescind the agreement, with notice, when determined necessary and provides that employer may not penalize an employee for making the request.

[LD 808](#) *(New title) An Act to Amend the Pupil Counts Used for Determination of School Administrative Unit Operating Costs* (Sponsored by Rep. Davis of East Machias) **On Appropriations Table** This concept draft bill would create a fund to reimburse school administrative units that pay tuition to state-approved schools after the October student counts are taken by the Department of Education.

As amended, this bill provides that beginning in fiscal year 2025-26, the student count used for determining the operating costs for school administrative units is the greater of the average of the pupil counts for October 1st of the three most recent calendar years prior to the year of funding and the most recent October 1st pupil count.

[LD 791](#) *An Act to Support the Maintenance of Historic Fort George in Castine* (Sponsored by Sen. Grohoski of Hancock Cty.) **Carried Over** As amended, beginning in fiscal year 2023-24 this bill provides an ongoing General Fund appropriation of \$1 million, annually, to the Department Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Bureau of Parks and Lands for the maintenance, preservation, and promotion of historic sites.

[LD 787](#) *An Act to Create the New Maine Resident Service Coordination Program in the Department of Economic and Community Development* (Sponsored by Sen. Bennett of Oxford Cty.) **Carried Over** As amended, this bill establishes within the Department of Economic and Community Development the New Maine Resident Service Coordination Program, to serve as a

centralized resource to coordinate municipal efforts to connect persons who have recently moved to the State with housing and job opportunities. No later than January 1, 2024, the bill also directs the department to provide an update on its progress to the Joint Standing Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Business, which is authorized to report out legislation in 2024.

[LD 772](#) *(New title) An Act to Limit Retroactive Application of Land Use Ordinances to Pending Permit Applications That Propose Housing* (Sponsored by Sen. Pouliot of Kennebec Cty.)

**Enacted; PL 2023, c. 598** This bill gives an applicant for a land use permit the right to have a municipality or the Maine Land Use Planning Commission review the application solely based on any orders, regulations, ordinances, rules, expiration dates, fees or other requirements in effect at the time the original application for the land use permit is filed for review.

As amended, this bill prevents a municipality or local planning board from retroactively applying a land use ordinance on a development that includes one or more units of residential housing, provided the ordinance was proposed after: (1) the permit application is filed; and (2) deemed complete for processing. The bill further defines the term “deemed complete for processing” as when the application is filed with the municipality or planning board and at the time of submission, the applicant demonstrates legal title or right to or interest in all of the property proposed for development.

## **February 16, 2023**

[LD 748](#) *An Act to Strengthen the Due Process Rights of Persons in Law Enforcement Custody* (Sponsored by Sen. Hickman of Kennebec Cty.) **DEAD** This bill amends the Maine Civil Rights Act to provide that a person who is placed under arrest, in custody, under interrogation or temporarily detained by a law enforcement officer and who is not warned by the law enforcement officer of the person's privilege against self-incrimination and the person's right to the assistance of legal counsel may institute and prosecute in the person's name and on the person's behalf a civil action for legal or equitable relief against the law enforcement officer for failure to provide such warnings.

[LD 738](#) *An Act to Establish a Paid Family and Medical Leave System* (Sponsored by Sen. Daughtry of Cumberland Cty.) **DEAD** This concept draft bill would require the development and implementation of a paid family and medical leave system.

[LD 721](#) *An Act to Preserve Historic Buildings and Promote Affordable Housing* (Sponsored by Sen. Daughtry of Cumberland Cty.) **DEAD** This concept draft bill would preserve historic buildings and promote affordable housing.

## **February 14, 2023**

[LD 646](#) *(New title) An Act to Fully Reimburse Municipalities for Lost Revenue Under the Property Tax Stabilization for Senior Citizens Program* (Emergency) (Sponsored by Rep. Sachs of Freeport) [Emergency Enacted; PL 2023, c. 520 \(3/06/24\)](#) This placeholder bill would make appropriations and allocations for the operations of state government.

This emergency Act directs the Department of Administrative and Financial Services to immediately transfer from unappropriated General Fund revenue \$15 million to fully reimburse municipalities for lost revenue under the property tax stabilization program, and on or before June 30, 2024, transfer an additional \$50,000 to reimburse municipalities for the state-mandated costs related to implementation and administration of program.

[LD 630](#) *An Act to Ensure Rural Law Enforcement Services in Maine* (Sponsored by Rep. Graham of North Yarmouth) **DEAD** This concept draft bill establishes measures to ensure that residents in the rural parts of the state receive adequate law enforcement services, including services provided through the Maine State Police and county sheriffs.

[LD 629](#) *An Act to Improve, Protect and Defend the Individual Civil Right to Bear Arms Through Exemption of Firearms and Ammunition from Taxation* (Sponsored by Rep. Ardell of Monticello) **DEAD** In part, this bill prohibits a municipality or a county officer from assessing a tax or fee on any firearms or ammunition sold or possessed in Maine.

[LD 602](#) *(New title) An Act to Provide Regional Support to Deliver State and Federal Programs to Municipalities in the State* (Sponsored by Rep. Gere of Kennebunkport) **On Appropriations Table** This concept draft bill would clarify and enhance the relationship between state agencies and regional planning commissions by providing: (1) direct resources to regional planning commissions for the development of municipal ordinances and the examination of regional suitability for new housing developments; (2) technical assistance through the existing regional planning commission structure to provide cities and towns access to federal and state programs for housing, land use and economic development; and (3) improved mapping and geographic information system support to accomplish state and regional goals.

A amended, this bill establishes the duties of regional planning commissions and councils of government, or regional councils to include: (1) providing technical assistance enabling municipalities to access state and federal housing, land use and economic development programs; (2) assisting municipalities in developing housing development related ordinances; (3) establishing mapping and geographic information systems to support regional housing goals; (4) maintaining a central database that includes information on regional general assistance usages, person experience homelessness, and other demographic data; (5) collaborating with municipalities to track progress for regional housing development goals. The bill also

establishes the Regional Council Support Fund, capitalized by an ongoing \$2 million appropriation, to support the newly assigned responsibilities.

[LD 599](#) *An Act to Provide Support Services for a Transitional Housing Program for Homeless Persons* (Sponsored by Rep. Brennan of Portland) **Carried Over** As amended, this bill appropriates \$1.2 million in ongoing funding for the department to contract for support services for a transitional housing program in Portland that provides low-barrier, 24-hour, 7-day-a week shelter, comprehensive case management and daily living support services to individuals experiencing homelessness who also have medical, mental health or substance use-related needs.

[LD 577](#) *(New title) An Act to Increase Availability and Security of Election Information on Government Websites* (Sponsored by Sen. Beebe-Center of Knox Cty.) **Carried Over** As amended, this bill requires the Secretary of State to provide a publicly accessible website or equivalent online platform for voters to access information about upcoming elections, including local elections, to the extent municipalities provide information to the Secretary of State. The bill creates two positions within the department to develop and manage the website and provide support services to municipalities.

## **February 9, 2023**

[LD 536](#) *An Act to Provide Natural Organic Reduction Facilities for Maine Residents for the Conversion of Human Remains to Soil* (Sponsored by Rep. Doudera of Camden) **Carried Over** As amended, this bill provides for the treatment of human remains by natural organic reduction as an alternative to burial in a casket or cremation and clarifies that the Department of Health and Humans Services it responsible for oversight of the program.

[LD 527](#) *An Act to Allow Municipalities to Create Bicycle and Pedestrian Zones with Reduced Speed Limits* (Sponsored by Rep. Ankeles of Brunswick) **DEAD** This bill would allow municipalities to create bicycle and pedestrian zones in which the speed limit is 25 miles per hour.

[LD 513](#) *An Act Regarding Overtime Protections for Certain Maine Workers* (Sponsored by Sen. Tipping of Penobscot Cty.) **Carried Over** This bill annually raises the minimum salary used to determine whether an employee who works in an executive, administrative or professional is ineligible for overtime pay, which is currently 3,000 times the minimum hourly wages. As proposed, the minimum incrementally increases from 3,500 times the minimum wage in 2024 to 4,500 times the minimum wage in 2026. The bill also exempts nonprofit corporations that meet compensatory time agreements from the proposed provisions and directs the Department of Labor to adopt routine technical rules, including rules regarding compensatory time for employees of nonprofit corporations.

## February 6, 2023

[LD 499](#) *An Act to Change Maine's Tax Laws* (Sponsored by Sen. Chipman of Cumberland Cty.) **DEAD** This concept draft bill would change Maine's tax laws.

[LD 492](#) *An Act to Repurpose Vacant Shopping Mall and Retail Space to Mixed-use Housing and Retail* (Sponsored by Rep. Campbell of Orrington) **Enacted; PL 2023, c. 490** As amended and enacted, this bill adds a requirement that, as necessary to meet statewide regional housing production goals, a municipality is required to adopt ordinances allowing the development of residential units in buildings on property zoned for commercial use including vacant or partially vacant retail space.

[LD 471](#) *(New title) An Act to Establish the Maine State Flag Commission* (Sponsored by Rep. Terry of Gorham) **On Appropriations Table** This concept draft bill would make necessary changes to state law.

As amended, this bill includes a question on the November 2026 ballot asking voters if they favor making the former state flag, commonly referred to as the Pine Tree Flag, the official flag of Maine. The bill also establishes and directs the five-member Maine State Flag Commission to assist the Secretary of State in developing and coordinating the design of the flag subject to the November 2026 referendum election.

[LD 457](#) *An Act to Amend Maine's Tax Laws* (Sponsored by Sen. Chipman of Cumberland Cty.) **Carried Over** This concept draft bill would amend Maine's tax laws.

## February 2, 2023

[LD 444](#) *An Act to Designate First Responders and Other Public Safety Professionals as a Special Risk Population for the Purposes of Improving Insurance Coverage for the Effects of Trauma* (Sponsored by Sen. Bailey of York Cty.) **Carried Over** This concept draft would designate public safety professionals and first responders as a special risk population for the purposes of improving insurance coverage to detect and provide preventive care for the cumulative physical and mental health effects of exposure to consistent negative events and trauma.

[LD 427](#) *An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Invest in Research, Development and Commercialization in Maine's Marine Technology and Aquaculture Sector* (Sponsored by Rep. Rielly of Westbrook) **Carried Over** This bond bill issues \$25 million for research, development and commercialization in the State's marine technology and aquaculture sector to be used for infrastructure, equipment and technology upgrades to enable organizations to gain and hold market share and to expand employment or preserve jobs.

[LD 423](#) *An Act Making Certain Supplemental Appropriations and Allocations and Changing Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government* (Sponsored by Rep. Sachs of Freeport) **Carried Over** This placeholder bill would make supplemental appropriations and allocations from the General Fund.

[LD 416](#) *An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue for Research and Development and Commercialization* (Sponsored by Sen. Pierce of Cumberland Cty.) **Carried Over** This bond bill issues \$100 million for technological innovation leading to commercialization in the targeted sectors of life sciences and biomedical technology, environmental and renewable energy technology, information technology, advanced technologies for forestry and agriculture, aquaculture and marine technology, composites and advanced materials and precision manufacturing.

[LD 402](#) *An Act to Change Maine's Transportation Laws* (Sponsored by Sen. Chipman of Cumberland Cty.) **Carried Over** This concept draft bill would change transportation laws in the State.

[LD 401](#) *An Act to Improve Transportation in Maine* (Sponsored by Sen. Chipman of Cumberland Cty.) **Carried Over** This concept draft bill would improve transportation in the State.

### **January 31, 2023**

[LD 387](#) *An Act to Promote Affordable Housing by Providing a Tax Exemption for Housing Choice Vouchers* (Sponsored by Rep. Blier of Buxton) **DEAD** This bill provides an income tax deduction for income received by a landlord in the form of Section 8 housing choice vouchers administered by the Maine State Housing Authority.

[LD 380](#) *(New title) An Act to Transfer the Monhegan Water Company to Monhegan Plantation and to Repeal the Monhegan Water Company Charter* (Emergency) (Sponsored by Rep. Crafts of Newcastle) **[Emergency Enacted; P&SL 2023, c. 17 \(2/29/24\)](#)** This concept draft bill would support Monhegan Plantation in addressing any needs arising throughout 2023-2024 legislative session.

This emergency Private and Special law, if enacted by the plantation voters, allows for the dissolution and acquisition of the assets and liabilities of the Monhegan Water Company by Monhegan Plantation for the purpose of establishing and operating the water district.

[LD 373](#) *An Act to Improve Labor Conditions for Maine Workers* (Sponsored by Sen. Tipping of Penobscot Cty.) **Carried Over** This concept draft bill would enact measures designed to improve labor conditions for Maine workers by applying best practices and the latest research.

[LD 372](#) *An Act to Increase Enforcement and Accountability for Wage and Hour Violations* (Sponsored by Sen. Tipping of Penobscot Cty.) **Carried Over** This concept draft bill would increase enforcement and accountability for wage and hour violations.

[LD 371](#) *An Act to Address Certain Local Zoning Ordinances* (Sponsored by Sen. Timberlake of Androscoggin Cty.) **DEAD** This concept draft bill would address certain local zoning ordinances.

[LD 369](#) *An Act to Allow Repurposed Military Vehicles to Be Registered and Operated on Maine Roads* (Sponsored by Sen. Libby of Cumberland Cty.) **Carried Over** This bill allows demilitarized vehicles to be registered and operated on Maine roads provided the required registration fees and excise taxes are paid. The bill also establishes a weight limit not to exceed 10,000 pounds and subjects demilitarized vehicles to current inspection requirements, unless exempted by the Chief of the State Police.

[LD 367](#) *An Act to Authorize General Fund Bond Issues to Improve Highways, Bridges and Nonhighway Modes of Transportation* (Sponsored by Sen. Farrin of Somerset Cty.) **DEAD** This bond bill issues a total of \$200 million for transportation purposes, with \$100 million to be put out to referendum on November 7, 2023 and the remaining amount to referendum on November 5, 2024. In both cases, \$85 million is dedicated for improvements to roads and bridges and \$15 million for non-highway modes of transportation.

[LD 360](#) *An Act to Amend the Androscoggin County Charter* (Sponsored by Sen. Timberlake of Androscoggin Cty.) **DEAD** This concept draft bill would address the Androscoggin County charter.

[LD 355](#) *(New title) An Act to Eliminate the Cannabis Advisory Commission* (Sponsored by Sen. Hickman of Kennebec Cty.) **Carried Over** As amended, this bill eliminates the Cannabis Advisory Commission, which was created to study the laws related to cannabis and annually reporting its findings and recommendations to the Legislature.

[LD 353](#) *An Act Concerning Substance Use Disorder, Treatment, Recovery, Prevention and Education* (Sponsored by Sen. Farrin of Somerset Cty.) **DEAD** This concept draft bill would improve and expand treatment and recovery services for persons with substance use disorder, strengthen prevention efforts and modernize education requirements for clinicians.

**January 30, 2023**



[LD 337](#) *(New title) An Act to Amend the Law Governing the Regulation of Manufactured Housing to Increase Affordable Housing* (Sponsored by Rep. Golek of Harpswell) **Enacted; PL 2023, c. 337** As amended by the sponsor, this bill provides that manufactured housing is allowed anywhere in the municipality where single-family housing units are allowed and are subjected to the same zoning requirement as those placed on single-family dwellings.

As amended, this bill provides that a municipality must allow manufactured housing wherever single-family dwellings are allowed, subject to the same design criteria as the municipality may establish for single-family dwellings. Current law governing land use ordinances states that municipalities must allow manufactured housing in certain locations on undeveloped lots where single-family dwellings are allowed.

[LD 332](#) *(New title) An Act to Provide Funds Necessary for the Production and Delivery of Election Materials by the Secretary of State and to Reconvene the Working Group to Study Polling Places at Schools* (Sponsored by Sen. Hickman of Kennebec Cty.) **On Appropriations Table** This concept draft bill would make changes to the laws governing elections.

As amended, this bill directs the Secretary of State to convene a nine-member working group, including representation from the Maine Town and City Clerks' Association and the Maine Municipal Association, tasked with studying the use of school buildings for elections, including the number used in Maine and the practices used in other states to protect the security of school students and staff, as well as election staff and voters. No later than December 15, 2024, the secretary is required to submit a report to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over veterans and legal affairs, which is authorized to report out legislation in 2025. The bill also establishes the Production and Delivery of Election Materials Fund as a non-lapsing, interest-bearing account within the Department of the Secretary of State to support the costs associated with producing ballots, registration applications, forms, and other election related materials and supplies.

[LD 324](#) *An Act to Prevent the Wrongful Firing of Maine Workers* (Sponsored by Sen. Tipping of Penobscot Cty.) **DEAD** This concept draft bill would enact the Secure Jobs Act, which establishes a framework for employee discipline and discharge, prohibits the unjust discharge of an employee, requires employers to use progressive discipline measures, limits the use of electronic monitoring, provides for severance pay, provides remedies for wrongfully discharged employees, and authorizes the recovery of damages.

[LD 322](#) *An Act to Improve the Unemployment Insurance System* (Sponsored by Sen. Tipping of Penobscot Cty.) **DEAD** This concept draft bill would improve the unemployment insurance system.

[LD 321](#) *An Act to Create a Bill of Rights for Temporary Workers* (Sponsored by Sen. Tipping of Penobscot Cty.) **DEAD** This concept draft bill would create a bill of rights for temporary workers.

[LD 314](#) *An Act to Establish the Permanent Commission on the Status of Housing in Maine* (Sponsored by Sen. Hickman of Kennebec Cty.) **DEAD** This concept draft bill would establish the Permanent Commission on the Status of Housing in Maine. The commission would be a quasi-independent agency funded through the Department of Economic and Community Development. Members of the commission would include housing advocates and organizations, policy makers, housing developers, housing experts, landlords and tenants. The commission would identify the hurdles to developing more housing units and recommend solutions to each branch of government.

### January 27, 2023

[LD 306](#) *An Act Related to Water* (Sponsored by Rep. Gramlich of Old Orchard Beach) **DEAD** This concept draft bill would amend the laws related to water.

[LD 288](#) *(New title) An Act Concerning Housing and Support Services for At-risk Youth and Youth Involved in the Juvenile Justice System* (Sponsored by Rep. Lookner of Portland) **On Appropriations Table** This concept draft bill would require the development and implementation of a program to provide housing and community-based support services for at-risk youth and youth who have committed juvenile crimes.

As amended, this bill appropriates \$20 million in one-time funding to the Department of Health and Human Services to enhance current and develop new programs geographically dispersed across the State that provide at-risk youth and youth involved in the juvenile justice system low-barrier access to shelters, youth centers, comprehensive needs assessments, and wraparound services.

[LD 280](#) *An Act to Make Maine Schools Safer and Healthier by Increasing the Maximum Debt Service Limit* (Sponsored by Rep. Millett of Cape Elizabeth) **Carried Over** This bill changes the maximum debt service limit for school capital improvements for fiscal year 2024 to fiscal year 2027 from \$150 million to \$250 million.

[LD 279](#) *An Act to Protect Against Discrimination by Public Entities* (Sponsored by Speaker Talbot Ross of Portland) **Enacted; PL 2023, c. 489** As amended and enacted, this bill provides that a public entity is not required by the Maine Human Rights Act to permit an individual to participate in services, programs or activities if that individual poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others that cannot be eliminated by a modification of the public entity's policies, practices or procedures or by the provision of auxiliary aids or services.

[LD 277](#) *An Act Regarding Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances* (Sponsored by Rep. Fay of Raymond) **DEAD** This concept draft would amend the laws regarding perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances.

## January 20, 2023

[LD 248](#) *An Act to Amend the State's Liquor Laws* (Sponsored by Sen. Hickman of Kennebec Cty.) **DEAD** This concept draft bill proposes to amend the liquor laws.

[LD 246](#) *An Act to Amend the Campaign Finance Laws* (Sponsored by Sen. Hickman of Kennebec Cty.) **DEAD** This concept draft bill proposes to amend the campaign finance laws.

[LD 236](#) *An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Support the Economic Development of the Fishing Industry and the Portland Harbor Dredging Project* (Sponsored by Rep. Brennan of Portland) **DEAD** The bond bill issues \$10 million to support the economic development of the fishing industry and the Portland harbor dredging project.

[LD 235](#) *An Act to Promote Economic Development in the Fishing Industry by Funding a Dredging Project in Portland Harbor* (Sponsored by Rep. Brennan of Portland) **DEAD** This bill provides a one-time General Fund appropriation of \$10 million in FY 2024 to the Department of Transportation for a dredging project in Portland Harbor.

[LD 226](#) *An Act to Address Maine's Affordable Housing Crisis* (Sponsored by Rep. Millett of Cape Elizabeth) **Carried Over** As amended, this bill appropriates \$40 million annually in FY 2024 through FY 2028 to the Maine State Housing Authority to support affordable housing development and first-time homeownership programs. Beginning on February 1, 2024 and annually thereafter, the bill also requires the authority to submit a report to the Joint Stand Committee on Housing and Labor or the Joint Select Committee on Housing describing how the revenues were invested.

[LD 212](#) *An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Upgrade Municipal Culverts at Stream Crossings* (Sponsored by Rep. Fay of Raymond) **Carried Over** This bond bill issues \$50 million to fund a competitive grant program that matches local funding for the upgrade of municipal culverts at stream crossings in order to enhance and restore rivers, streams and fish and wildlife habitats and to allow communities to better prepare for extreme storms and floods.

[LD 210](#) *An Act to Expand the List of Persons Exempt from the Real Estate Transfer Tax* (Sponsored by Rep. Hasenfus of Readfield) **Carried Over** This bill adds siblings, stepchildren and step-grandchildren to the list of family members whose deeds are exempt from the real estate transfer tax.

## January 13, 2023

[LD 191](#) *An Act to Amend the Laws Regarding Certain Business Equipment Tax Benefits* (Sponsored by Sen. Stewart of Aroostook Cty.) **Carried Over** This bill excludes from eligibility for the business equipment tax exemption and the business equipment tax reimbursement a person that, based on third-party certifications, bans, boycotts or otherwise restricts or prevents the sale or distribution of any product that is legally produced, harvested, or grown in Maine.

[LD 179](#) *An Act to Provide Support for Restorative Justice Practices in Maine* (Sponsored by Rep. Beebe-Center of Knox Cty.) **DEAD** This concept draft bill would support restorative justice practices in Maine.

### January 12, 2023

[LD 154](#) *An Act Regarding Special Education Funding for So-called Minimum Receiver School Administration Units* (Sponsored by Rep. Mathieson of Kittery) **DEAD** As amended, the bill provides that, beginning in fiscal year 2025, the minimum state share of a school administrative unit's special education costs under the Essential Programs and Services school funding formula must be 55%.

### January 10, 2023

[LD 143](#) *An Act to Support Rural Service Programming and Promote Volunteerism* (Sponsored by Rep. Rielly of Westbrook) **Carried Over** This bill appropriates an average of \$600,000 annually to compensate 15 individuals participating in the Maine Service Fellows Program.

[LD 142](#) *An Act to Fund Climate-related Service Work* (Sponsored by Rep. Rielly of Westbrook) **Carried Over** This bill provides ongoing funds to support four Maine Climate Corps Program leadership positions and 50 eligible participants of the Maine Climate Corps Program.

### January 9, 2023

[LD 122](#) *(New title) An Act to Update the Electric Vehicle Rebate Program and to Establish a Pilot Program to Support the Uptake of Medium Duty and Heavy Duty Zero-emission Vehicles* (Sponsored by Sen. Ingwersen of York Cty.) **Enacted; PL 2023, c. 535** This concept draft bill authorizes the Efficiency Maine Trust to: (1) establish a incentive program using federal or other funding sources to support the uptake of medium-duty and heavy-duty zero-emission vehicles by businesses in the Maine; and (2) establish a vehicle-to-grid pilot project to evaluate the benefits of using battery electric medium-duty and heavy-duty zero-emission vehicles, such as electric school buses and freight trucks, as energy storage resources that can deliver electricity to the grid when the vehicles are not being used for their primary purpose.

This Act increases the maximum retail price of an electric vehicle (EV) that may qualify for the EV incentive program from \$50,000 to \$55,000 and clarifies that, to qualify for an incentive, the requirement that the purchase or lease be from an in-state entity only, also applies to purchases or leases from licensed automobile dealers and authorized licensees of the original equipment manufacturer. The Act also: (1) requires that a recipient of an incentive under the EV incentive program maintain a Maine registration for 36 months to retain the full amount of the incentive; (2) clarifies that the Efficiency Maine Trust must establish incentive amounts that will most effectively increase the use of eligible electric vehicles in Maine; (3) directs the trust to establish a pilot program to provide incentives for the purchase or lease of medium duty and heavy duty EVs for use in commercial applications; and (4) no later than December 31, 2026, requires the trust to provide a report to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over energy matters on the activities and findings of the program.

[LD 93](#) *(New title) An Act to Ensure Access for All Caregivers to Diaper Changing Stations in Public Restrooms* (Sponsored by Rep. Collamore of Pittsfield) **Carried Over on the Appropriations Table** As amended, with exceptions this bill requires that all public restrooms located in state owned buildings constructed or remodeled on or after the effective date of this section be equipped with diaper changing stations.

[LD 91](#) *An Act to Adopt the National 2022 Amendments to the Uniform Commercial Code.* (Sponsored by Rep. Moriarty of Cumberland) **Carried Over** This concept draft bill seeks to update the Uniform Commercial Code with the national 2022 revisions by: (1) creating a new Uniform Commercial Code Article on Controllable Electronic Records; (2) updating Article 9 to allow perfection of security interests in digital assets; (3) promoting new rules for mixed transactions involving both goods and services; (4) updating rules for electronic negotiable instruments; and (5) updating terminology to account for electronic signatures and documents.

[LD 86](#) *An Act to Restore the Former State of Maine Flag.* (Sponsored by Rep. Paulhus of Bath) **Enacted; PL 2023, c. 487** As amended and enacted, this bill directs that the current State of Maine flag be replaced with the version in use before 1909, which must be approved by the Secretary of State before being kept in the office of the Adjutant General.

#### **January 4, 2023**

[LD 75](#) *An Act to Establish Maximum Contaminant Levels Under the State's Drinking Water Rules to Prohibit Certain Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances.* (Sponsored by Sen. Bennett of Oxford Cty.) **DEAD** This bill amends the law authorizing the adoption of state drinking water rules that establish a maximum contaminant level equivalent to zero nanograms per liter for certain perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances.

[LD 63](#) *An Act to Clarify That Certain Imported Motor Vehicles Are Not Off-road Vehicles.* (Sponsored by Rep. Rudnicki of Fairfield) **DEAD** This bill stipulates that the definition of "off-road vehicle" in the motor vehicle laws does not include an imported motor vehicle this is at least 25 years old.

[LD 40](#) *An Act to Amend the Cannabis Laws.* (Sponsored by Sen. Hickman of Kennebec Cty.) **Carried Over** This concept draft bill amends the cannabis laws.

#### **December 30, 2022**

[LD 20](#) *An Act to Further Protect Survivors of Economic Abuse.* (Sponsored by Rep. Fay of Raymond) **DEAD** This concept draft bill proposed to further protect survivors of economic abuse.