

## Repealing Maine's General Assistance Program

The Legislature's tradition of holding marathon public hearings on blockbuster proposals that are not going to be enacted into law is beginning to wear thin.

You have to ask yourself how valuable these public hearings are and to whom that value, to the extent it exists, may accrue. It certainly does not accrue to the unfortunate people from the general public who have elected to participate and who are required to sit cramped in the hearing room for hours and hours just to have their three short minutes to blurt out their testimony to an exhausted legislative panel. It also does not appear to accrue to the unfortunate legislators who have to absorb countless hours of often repetitive testimony, delivered by extremely genuine and well-meaning people, but who nonetheless must receive it trapped in their respective committee horseshoes to the point where any less receptive or less altruistic a person would hurl themselves out of the nearest window.

There has to be a better way.

The blockbuster proposal this week was an element of the Governor's proposed biennial budget (LD 390) that would repeal the municipal General Assistance Program lock, stock and barrel.

Related elements of the Governor's budget would prohibit persons convicted of any drug-related felonies from receiving benefits under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, reduce the lifetime limit on eligibility for all TANF recipients from five years to three years, and repeal the several state statutes that allow public assistance benefits, including General Assistance, to be provided to non U.S. citizens residing in the state who have applied for asylum. Seeking asylum status is a federally condoned form of immigration process

for people who need to flee their country of origin before they can go through the refugee application process.

The public hearing marathon began with several hours of preliminaries. In this case, the preliminaries were an hour-long line-by-line recitation of the various proposals in the Governor's budget by the Commissioner of the Department of Health and Human Services, Mary Mayhew. The budget was released in early January. Even before the recitation, the proposals of substance for consideration that day were already well known by

virtually everyone in the hearing room, legislators and general public alike.

Ostensibly, the purpose of these preliminaries is to provide the Governor's rationale for proposing these changes, which according to Commissioner Mayhew can be summarized as an attempt to achieve two goals: (1) aligning state law with federal law in such a way that if the federal government doesn't see fit to provide public assistance to certain classes of residents, the state and local governments shouldn't either, and (2)

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## Bill Seeks to Exempt Animal Bedding Trucks from Posted Road Standards

On Thursday last week the Transportation Committee held a public hearing on LD 208, *An Act To Add Vehicles Hauling Animal Bedding to Those Exempt from Posted Road Restrictions*. Sponsored by Representative MaryAnne Kinney of Knox, LD 208 is framed as emergency legislation that would create a blanket exemption from the state's law governing the posting of roads in mud season for any vehicle hauling animal bedding.

Rep. Kinney, along with a retired dairy farmer from Waldo County, the Maine Farm Bureau and the Maine Dairy Industry Association testified in favor of the bill. Rep. Kinney told the Committee that animal bedding is a necessity for a dairy farm, bedding is in short supply because of a slowdown of activity in the forest industry, and when bedding does become available, the farmers need to have it delivered

as soon as possible. The posted road standards get in the way, and although special permits can be obtained from the town office, the town offices are often closed for periods of time which frustrates the delivery.

The Department of Transportation (DOT) and the Maine Municipal Association testified in opposition to LD 208. DOT took the position that the bill was unnecessary and the Department's spokesperson pointed out that the DOT rules on the subject already expressly suspends the rule when the road is frozen, and further suspends the rule for the trucking of animal bedding, as one of 10 expressly defined "special commodities", which can be delivered in two-axle trucks with a registered gross vehicle weight under 34,000 lbs.

MMA opposed LD 208 by asking the Transportation Committee to

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## Repealing Maine's General Assistance Program (cont'd)

to reduce the state's costs of providing public assistance significantly enough to help reduce the overall state tax burden on Maine citizens. Reducing taxes, in turn, invigorates the economy sufficiently to allow the public assistance recipients to prosper without the need for welfare.

The 26 legislators on the two committees of jurisdiction at this public hearing (the Appropriations Committee and the Health and Human Services Committee) get the first crack at discourse with the Administration regarding these proposals. Therefore, for an additional hour or so in the cramped Committee room, the frustrated audience listens to the back-and-forth, with several legislators asking for evidence to support the claim that a very low income tax rate will improve the lives of the destitute, and with the Administration responding that it stands to reason.

The members of the general public attending this public hearing were not buying the Administration's claim. Instead, the unvarying thrust of the public testimony was that eliminating the General Assistance program and significantly reducing the availability of other types of public assistance to various classes of Maine residents will: (1) actually hurt people, (2) instigate chaos in municipal social service programming, (3) shift financial burdens onto the property taxpayers, and (4) destroy any lingering sense of partnership between the state government and local governments, and network of church groups, charitable nonprofits and others that in coordination maintain a safety net in place that has actually been part of the state's legacy since Maine's formation.

### Legislative Bulletin

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**Editorial Staff:** Geoffrey Herman, Kate Dufour, Garrett Corbin and Laura Ellis of the State & Federal Relations staff.

That was the testimony, delivered by dozens upon dozens of people, hour after hour, all day long. Over 30 church leaders in unison, across all religions and denominations, made an especially strong showing. Refugees, asylees and asylum seekers offered very tough testimony regarding the turmoil and horrors in their home lands they were fleeing and how their adopted state and adopted city is now their home. Low income advocacy organizations testified in opposition, as did municipal General Assistance administrators from Sanford, Bangor, Lewiston and Portland, explaining to the lawmakers the naked realities of General Assistance as a frugal and no-nonsense program that is mischaracterized by some as out-of-control "welfare." An ex-convict testified about what it was like to get released from prison a few years ago with virtually nothing in the way of a support system to deal with a hostile societal mindset regarding ex-cons.

MMA's Legislative Policy Committee joined these voices in its vote to oppose these several budget proposals for at least two reasons. The first is a humanitarian recognition of the need for a safety net. The second is because the towns and cities are at the lowest end of the majestic slopes inhabited by the federal and state governments, and everything flows downhill. The public assistance proposals in the Governor's budget push onto the local governments expensive programmatic obligations and policy decisions both the federal government and, more recently, the state government would much rather abdicate to the local level.

Will the public hearing have any impact or effect on the outcome of these proposals? It was very unlikely from the start that any of these public assistance proposals would be enacted as proposed. The public hearing may have changed to some degree the value of the elements of the Governor's budget that can be traded when negotiations between the parties, the chambers and the Governor's Office begin.

At the end of a frustrating day, that may represent the value of the marathon public hearing in its entirety. It might affect at the remote margins the value of tradable commodities in the marketplace of public policy.

## Posted Roads (cont'd)

recognize that local roads are exposed to extensive and extremely expensive repair costs when heavy vehicles are allowed to circumvent the posted road limitations. It only takes one event. In addition, the vast majority of Maine's towns and cities adopt the DOT road posting rules by reference, which as the Department pointed out allow animal bedding to be hauled over posted roads without a permit and as an exception to the general rule, provided it is hauled in two-axle vehicles with a gross vehicle weight of 34,000 lbs. (Along with animal bedding, the "special commodities" are home heating fuels, petroleum products, groceries, bulk milk, bulk feed, solid waste, returnable beverage containers, sewage and medical gasses). Although this special treatment by the rules allow those commodities, in the many tons, to be delivered over posted roads, it is apparently not enough for the supporters of LD 208, who are asking to be allowed to carry heavier weights in bigger trucks without having to get any special permit for either the state or local roads.

Rep. James Gillway, the town manager of Searsport and a seven-year member of the Transportation Committee, asked how MMA's Legislative Policy Committee would react to an alternative proposal which would give trucks carrying animal bedding the same treatment as the current regulatory system gives to trucks carrying home heating fuels. Those overweight vehicles can be made subject to any special or additional standards a municipality may want to impose, but they do not need to get special permits from the municipality to go over posted roads if they exceed the respective 23,000 lbs. (for several axle trucks) or 34,000 lbs. (for two-axle trucks) weight standards.

MMA's Policy Committee, on which Rep. Gillway has previously served, took up the request to consider the alternative proposal when it convened on Thursday this week. The Policy Committee's response will be conveyed to the Transportation Committee on Tue., Feb. 28, when LD 208 is taken up at work session.

# Top Ten Lobbyists' Sound-bite Critiques

After years of exhaustive research, we have determined that a very high percentage of the bills presented to the Legislature each year are characterized and, most typically, criticized by the lobbyists in the State House – MMA being no exception – by a surprisingly short list of catch phrases or sound-bite critiques. These catch phrases are designed to distill the negative aspects of the proposed legislation and pour that negativity into a nutshell (so to speak).

What follows are the ten most often used catch phrases, followed by their definition and potential interaction with each other.

**“Slippery Slope.”** The bill proposes a special exception or special benefit of some kind to a certain entity or constituency that will inevitably lead to an untold number of similar requests for similar treatment by other entities and constituencies. “Slippery Slope” is a first cousin to “Camel Nose.”

**“Camel Nose.”** Short for “If you let the camel’s nose under the tent, the entire camel will soon follow.” The critique is that the bill proposes a relatively insignificant special deal or treatment for a large entity or large class of entities, which will undoubtedly utilize the opening for full entry into the special benefit.

**“Solution in Search of a Problem.”** Lack of foundation. Lack of just cause. The bill proposes to change the law without clearly identifying or verifying the problem to be addressed.

**“Ready, Fire, Aim.”** The bill implements a significant policy change before assessing the consequences. A first cousin to “Unintended Consequences.”

**“Unintended Consequences.”** Perhaps the most common critique of proposed legislation. A characterization of a bill that is often preceded with the observation that the legislation was obviously “well intended,” it being common for lobbyists to praise a bill’s sponsor before criticizing the sponsor’s bill. Colorful variations include “That island (meaning the issue the bill is focused on) is surrounded by many hidden reefs.” or, more coarsely, “There are a lot of alligators in that swamp.”

**“Sauce for the Goose.”** Short for “The sauce for the goose is the sauce for

the gander.” (British) or “What’s good for the goose is good for the gander.” (American). This expression is a second cousin to “Level Playing Field” (see below) and is meant to criticize a bill that treats similarly situated entities in a disparate manner.

**“Level Playing Field.”** In the genetic line of consanguinity with “Sauce for the Goose.” The lobbyists using this expression while identifying the problem with a bill creating competition barriers will often have their arms outstretched, palms flat and facing up, with one hand, alternatively, higher and then lower than the other hand to visually convey the fluctuating unfairness of it all.

**“Patchwork Quilt.”** Short for “This bill will result in or otherwise encourage a lack of uniformity and predictability among regulatory jurisdictions.” Often used as a critique of legislation that is favorable to the application of municipal

home rule. For some reason, “patchwork quilts” are bad.

**“Baby and the Bathwater.”** Short for “Don’t throw out the baby with the bathwater” and a third cousin to “Unintended Consequences,” this critique asserts that the bill inappropriately imperils good or sound public policy in its (otherwise well-intended) effort to eliminate a slew of bad public policies.

**“Devil in the Details.”** With all the necessary observations about the good intentions of the bill’s sponsor, and in the same DNA cluster as “Unintended Consequences” and “Ready, Fire, Aim,” this critique holds that within the “four corners” of the legislative initiative, there are no sufficient protections such that the implementation of the legislation, through rule making, perhaps, or by state agency interpretation, could cause harm to certain constituencies.

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## 2017 Federal Issues Paper

### Municipal Officials Prepare for Washington, D.C.

The 2017 edition of the Federal Issues Paper (FIP) will be printed next week, finalizing a process that began in earnest two months ago. The document, which is published annually, serves as a means for informing members of Maine’s Congressional Delegation of the federal issues of greatest importance to municipal officials. The opportunity to discuss the issues presented in the report with federal-level policymakers is provided during the National League of Cities’ Congressional City Conference. During this year’s conference, which will kick off on March 11, municipal leaders from Auburn, Augusta, Bangor, Brewer, Ellsworth, Kennebunkport, Madawaska, Portland and South Portland will meet with elected federal officials to advocate for constituent needs in Maine.

This year’s FIP focuses on how federal level investments in infrastructure-based programs and policies favorably impact towns and cities. Specifically, this edition of the paper targets:

1. Federal funding for infrastructure, generally, including transportation, drink-

ing water, stormwater and wastewater facilities, broadband capacity, etc.

2. Federal funding for the Community Development Block Grant program (CDBG).

3. And, the preservation of tax exempt status for municipal bonds.

As in years past, each chapter of the paper includes the traditional introductory overview of the featured subject matter. This year’s FIP, however, takes on a grass-roots approach by providing examples of how these federal programs directly impact Maine’s communities, residents and visitors. In Eastport, for example, federal grants have enabled the city to fund a breakwater reconstruction project, a mill improvement project, and wastewater treatment upgrades. In Portland, CDBG funds have been used to fund infrastructure improvements in eligible areas and support general planning activities to benefit low- and moderate-income residents. The tax exempt status of municipal bonds enabled the town of Madison to finance a needed transmission line upgrade to an expanding

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## LEGISLATIVE HEARINGS

*Note: You should check your newspapers for Legal Notices as there may be changes in the hearing schedule. Weekly schedules for hearing schedules and work sessions can be found at: <http://legislature.maine.gov/Calendar/#PHWS/>.*

### **Monday, February 27**

**Appropriations & Financial Affairs**  
**Room 228, State House, 10:00 a.m.**  
**Tel: 287-1316**

LD 390 – Governor’s proposed biennial budget (in conjunction with the Joint Standing Committee on State & Local Government)

Local Government Efficiency Fund (Part U). The proposed budget includes a \$10 million appropriation - \$5 million in each year of the biennium - to capitalize the Fund for the Efficient Delivery of Local and Regional Services.

**Environment & Natural Resources**  
**Room 216, Cross State Office Building, 10:00 a.m.**  
**Tel: 287-4149**

LD 182 – An Act to Protect Firefighters by Establishing a Prohibition on the Sale and Distribution of New Upholstered Furniture Containing Certain Flame-retardant Chemicals.

**Marine Resources**  
**Room 206, Cross State Office Building, 10:00 a.m.**  
**Tel: 287-1337**

LD 115 – An Act To Protect the Marine Worm Industry.

LD 200 – An Act To Allow Certain Municipal Shellfish Conservation Wardens To Seize and Sell Marine Organisms Taken in Violation of a Shellfish Conservation Ordinance.

**Taxation**  
**Room 127, State House, 1:00 p.m.**  
**Tel: 287-1552**

LD 311 – An Act To Eliminate Corporate Welfare and Provide Tax Relief.

LD 368 – An Act To Welcome Statewide Economic Investment.

LD 513 – An Act To Eliminate the State Income tax for Maine Public Employees Retirement System Pensions.

**Veterans & Legal Affairs**  
**Room 437, State House, 10:00 a.m.**  
**Tel: 287-1310**

LD 403 – An Act Regarding Referendum Recounts.

LD 439 – An Act To Allow Voters To Choose Ongoing Absentee Voter Status.

LD 440 – An Act To Expand Absentee Balloting To Include Certain Residents in Independent Living Facilities.

LD 564 – Resolution, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine To Increase the Number of Signatures Required for a Direct Initiative of Legislation.

### **Tuesday, February 28**

**Labor, Commerce, Research & Economic Development**  
**Room 208, Cross State Office Building, 1:30 p.m.**  
**Tel: 287-1331**

LD 466 – An Act To Protect Employees from Abusive Work Environments.

LD 489 – An Act To Ensure Firefighters Receive Cancer Treatment Pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 39-A.

**Marijuana Legalization Implementation**  
**Room 216, Cross State Office Building, 1:00 p.m.**  
**Tel: 287-4149**

The Committee will host a forum to receive public comment on implementing legalization of recreational marijuana.

### **Wednesday, March 1**

**Criminal Justice & Public Safety**  
**Rm. 436, State House, 9:00 a.m.**  
**Tel: 287-1122**

LD 169 – An Act To Support Sexual Assault Survivors.

**Education & Cultural Affairs**  
**Room 202, Cross State Office Building, 9:00 a.m.**  
**Tel: 287-3125**

LD 333 – An Act To Stabilize Maine’s Educational Leadership and Vision.

LD 355 – An Act Regarding Special Education Costs.

**1:00 p.m.**

LD 420 – An Act To Require Same-year State Valuations for Education Funding Purposes for Municipalities That Lose More Than 35 Percent of Their Tax Base.

**Energy, Utilities & Technology**  
**Room 211, Cross State Office Building, 9:00 a.m.**  
**Tel: 287-4143**

LD 90 – An Act To Amend the Charter of the Rumford Water District.

LD 423 – An Act To Extend Internet Availability in Rural Maine.

LD 461 – Resolve, Regarding Legislative Review of Chapter 220: Removal of Provider of Last Resort Service Obligation, a Major Substantive Rule of the Public Utilities Commission.

**Environment & Natural Resources**  
**Room 216, Cross State Office Building, 10:00 a.m.**  
**Tel: 287-4149**

LD 349 – An Act To Establish a Mattress Stewardship Program.

LD 375 – An Act To Establish a Carpet Stewardship Program.

LD 385 – An Act To Establish a Stewardship Program for Certain Rechargeable Batteries.

**State & Local Government**  
**Room 214, Cross State Office Building, 9:30 a.m.**  
**Tel: 287-1330**

LD 15 – An Act Concerning the Property Tax Levy Limit.

LD 23 – An Act To Provide for Legislative Review of Federally Mandated Major Substantive Rules under the Maine Administrative Procedure Act.

LD 150 – An Act Regarding the Funding of Volunteer Fire Departments.

LD 328 – An Act To Provide Funds To Encourage Regional Planning and Reorganization.

**Taxation**  
**Room 127, State House, 1:00 p.m.**  
**Tel: 287-1552**

LD 82 – An Act To Exempt Permanently Disabled Veterans from Payment of Property Tax.

LD 117 – An Act To Strengthen the Farm and Open Space Tax Law.

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## LEGISLATIVE HEARINGS (cont.)

LD 204 – An Act To Exempt Veterans with ALS from the Excise Tax on Automobiles.

LD 289 – An Act To Extend the Veterans Property Tax Exemption to Veterans Who Have Served on Active Duty.

LD 338 – An Act To Exempt Certain Disabled Veterans from the Motor Vehicle Excise Tax.

### Thursday, March 2

#### Judiciary

Room 438, State House, 2:00 p.m.

Tel: 287-1327

LD 125 – An Act To Allow an Order Not To Resuscitate To Be Presented in the Form of an Indelible Mark.

#### Transportation

Room 126, State House, 1:00 p.m.

Tel: 287-4148

LD 28 – An Act To Allow Alternate Flashing Headlights on a School Bus.

LD 118 – An Act To Require Moped Riders under 18 Years of Age To Wear a Helmet.

LD 137 – An Act To Increase the Safety of Motorists on Public Ways.

LD 293 – An Act To Require Horse-drawn Carriages and Wagons To Be Equipped with Reflectors.

LD 294 – Resolve, To Name the Bridge over the Penobscot River in the Towns of Enfield and Howland King's Bridge.

LD 371 – An Act To Allow a Truck Carrying Perishable Products To Operate on a Posted Road without a Permit.

LD 393 – An Act To Clarify That the Department of Transportation Is Exempt from Property Assessment Liabilities When Acquiring Property by Condemnation.

LD 434 – An Act To Allow Certain Vehicles To Make a Right Turn on a Red Light Even When Prohibited.

LD 435 – Resolve, To Study the Feasibility and Cost of Providing Passenger Rail Service to the City of Bangor.

### Friday, March 3

#### Appropriations & Financial Affairs

Room 228, State House, 10:00 a.m.

Tel: 287-1316

LD 390 – Governor's proposed biennial budget (in conjunction with the Joint Standing Committee on Education & Cultural Affairs)

**K-12 Education funding (Part C).** This proposal would change the structure of the state's 55% K-12 Education funding obligation, sets the mill rate expectation, moves "system administration" outside the EPS model and onto the local cost, changes the "minimum subsidy" adjustment, sets the Special Education per-pupil weights, sets student-to-teacher ratios with respect to Title 1 subtractions, and directs the development of an entirely new school funding model, in addition to other miscellaneous changes.

**Fund for the Efficient Delivery of Educational Services (Part UUU).** The proposed budget includes a \$10 million appropriation - \$5 million in each year of the biennium - to capitalize the Fund for the Efficient Delivery of Educational Services.

## IN THE HOPPER

(The bill summaries are written by MMA staff and are not necessarily the bill's summary statement or an excerpt from that summary statement. During the course of the legislative session, many more bills of municipal interest will be printed than there is space in the *Legislative Bulletin* to describe. Our attempt is to provide a description of what would appear to be the bills of most significance to local government, but we would advise municipal officials to also review the comprehensive list of LDs of municipal interest that can be found on MMA's website, [www.memun.org](http://www.memun.org).)

### Environment & Natural Resources

LD 683 – An Act To Fund the Maine Solid Waste Diversion Grant Program and To Phase Out Certain Containers from the Bottle Redemption Laws. (Sponsored by Rep. Parry of Arundel; additional cosponsors.)

This bill amends Maine's "bottle bill" law to end its application to beverage containers containing 46 ounces or more of a beverage. The 5 cent deposit fee would be ended on December 1, 2017 and the ability for a consumer to redeem those empty containers for the 5 cent deposit would end on January 1, 2018. For a five year period, the manufacturers of refillable beverage containers between 46 fluid ounces and 4 liters in size would pay a recycling fee of \$0.005 per container (one tenth of a nickel) to the Maine Solid Waste Management Fund for use by the Maine Solid Waste Diversion Program.

LD 684 – An Act To Increase Vegetative Buffers in the Shoreland Zone. (Sponsored by Rep. Blume of York; additional cosponsors.)

This "concept draft" bill proposes to amend the laws governing shoreland zoning to increase the vegetative buffer requirement from 75 feet to 150 feet for certain areas in the shoreland zone, and to remove the grandfathering provisions that allow smaller vegetative buffers on the grandfathered parcels.

### Inland Fisheries & Wildlife

LD 694 – An Act To Create a Local Option for a Sunday Exception Allowing Deer Hunting with Rifles. (Sponsored by Rep. Ackley of Monmouth; additional cosponsors.)

This bill authorizes a municipality, plantation or a county with regard to its unorganized territory to petition the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to allow deer hunting on Sunday within the municipality's or plantation's jurisdiction during the regular deer hunting season, and further authorizes the IF&W Commissioner to allow Sunday hunting when so-petitioned. If authorized through the petition process, a person may hunt for deer on Sunday within the municipal jurisdiction provided the hunter has obtained and is carrying the written consent of the property owner with a map of the property.

### Marijuana Legalization Implementation

LD 667 – An Act To Repeal the Legalization of Marijuana. (Sponsored by Sen. Cyrway of Kennebec Cty; additional cosponsors.)

This bill suspends the legalization of marijuana as approved by the voters on November 8, 2016 and schedules a referendum question to go back out to the voters in November 2017 to allow the voters to formally repeal the legalization law.

LD 672 – An Act To Clarify a Municipality's Authority To Adopt and Enforce Land Use Regulations for Marijuana Facilities. (Sponsored by Sen. Breen of Cumberland Cty; additional cosponsor.)

This bill clarifies that a municipality may adopt and enforce land use regulation that applies to marijuana facilities that grow, process, package, distribute, sell or provide either medical or recreational marijuana in the same regulatory manner as any other activities generating similar land use and compatibility effects.

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## **HOPPER (cont.)**

### **Marine Resources**

LD 646 – An Act Regarding Municipal and Regional Shellfish Management Programs. (Sponsored by Rep. Simmons of Waldoboro; additional cosponsors.)

This bill makes two changes to the law governing the municipal authority to adopt shellfish conservation ordinances. The bill restricts the area within the municipal boundary that such an ordinance can affect to the intertidal zone within the municipality rather than the municipality, generally. The bill also authorizes the Commissioner of the Department of Marine Resources to grant powers to regional shellfish management programs that go beyond the authority granted to municipal shellfish conservation programs, and allows the municipal ordinances to authorize the regional management programs to undertake those additional powers.

### **Taxation**

LD 707 – An Act To Base the Motor Vehicle Excise Tax on the Purchase Price of the Motor Vehicle. (Sponsored by Rep. Ordway of Standish; additional cosponsors.) (By Request)

Maine law since 1929 has applied the motor vehicle excise tax rates to the maker's list price of the motor vehicle, with some exceptions for large trucks. This bill changes the base of the motor vehicle excise tax to the purchase price of the vehicle, rather than the list price.

### **Transportation**

LD 649 – An Act To Allow for Charitable Donation Stops on Local Roads Only. (Sponsored by Rep. Dillingham of Oxford; additional cosponsors.) (By Request)

Current law establishes as an infraction the activity of causing moving motor vehicles to be stopped on a roadway for the purpose of soliciting contributions, subscriptions, etc., except when conducted by a charitable nonprofit corporation that has received municipal and law enforcement approval. This bill limits the right for charitable

nonprofits to conduct the activity of soliciting financial contributions to town ways only.

### **Veterans & Legal Affairs**

LD 715 – Resolution, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine To Amend the Citizen Initiative Process. (Sponsored by Rep. Craig of Brewer; additional cosponsors.)

This resolution sends out to the voters a proposed amendment to the state's Constitution that changes the signatures required to advance citizen-initiated legislation. The current signature standard is 10% of the total number of votes for Governor in the most recent gubernatorial election. This proposed amendment would change the tally to 15% of the registered voters in each county. The resolution would also amend the Constitution to direct the Secretary of State to hold at least one public debate on any citizen initiated measure at least 30 days prior to the referendum vote in each state senate district, where the proposed initiative must be read aloud in its entirety.

## **2017 FIP (cont.)**

indoor tomato growing operation.

There are many examples.

Taking into consideration that much of the attention at the federal level is fixated, perhaps necessarily so, on the complexities of a transition in administration, it is hoped that the examples and the information provided in this year's FIP will redirect some attention to issues of state and municipal importance. MMA greatly appreciates the assistance municipal officials have provided in the development of the 2017 edition of the Federal Issues Paper and wishes those traveling to Washington, D.C. safe travels and good luck.