Legislative BULLETIN
MAINE MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION Vol. XXXI No. 2 January 16, 2009

Governor Baldacci's Proposed Biennial Budget

On Friday last week, Governor Baldacci released his proposed state budget for the 2010-2011 biennium. The budget lays out a spending plan that bridges an $840 million gap between projected state revenues in this slumping economy and the state expenditures that would be made over the next two years if state spending obligations were put on autopilot and left unadjusted.

Nearly 25% of that $840 "structural deficit" is bridged in the proposed budget by flat-funding K-12 education for both years of the biennium at the soon-to-be reduced level for the current fiscal year. The flat-funding "saves" the state approximately $200 million over the biennium it would otherwise need to provide in order to fund the public school systems at the 55% level.

It will take more time and additional fiscal information to identify all the ways the "structural deficit" is brought to zero in this budget. More information, for example, will likely be forthcoming about a significant chunk of the budget proposal which is predicated on receiving an extra $100 million in federal Medicaid resources.

If the federal government is providing special resources to the state to help them weather the economic downturn, that policy of top-down assistance from the larger government to the smaller appears to end there. In addition to the proposal to flat-fund K-12 education for the next two years, the Governor's budget clearly details about $40 million in cuts to municipal government.

The non-education municipal cuts in the proposed budget are as follows:

Revenue Sharing: Elimination of the "5.2%" – $2.66 million. In 2000, the Legislature enacted a change to the revenue sharing program which had two major parts. First, it created the so-called "Rev I" and "Rev II" distribution systems. Second, to capitalize the "Rev II" distribution system, the law enacted in 2000 increased the total amount of revenue sharing from 5.1% to 5.2% of all sales and income tax revenue. Although enacted into law, that 0.1% increase in total revenue sharing has never been implemented. Instead, it has been punted from each biennium into the next. Under the Governor's proposed budget, that increase is eliminated entirely. If the never-implemented increase was allowed to go into effect, the total revenue sharing distribution would increase by $2.66 million.

Revenue Sharing: Cut to Rev I — $26.5 million. Under the Governor's budget, there would be a statutory reduction of the value of municipal revenue sharing, from 5.1% to 4.6% of all sales and income tax revenue. That 10% reduction to municipal revenue sharing cuts $26.5 million over the biennium to help balance the state budget at the expense of municipal budgets. $13 million would be cut out of revenue sharing in FY 2010, and $13.5 million in FY 2011.

The 10% approach is found throughout the Governor's proposed budget. What follows are just a few of the lines in the proposed budget that are cut by 10%. The first few are examples not directly related to local government, such as:

- State funding for the Humanities Council
- Maine Centers for Women, Work and Community under the Labor Department
- Pine Tree Legal Assistance
- Maine Public Broadcasting

Other programs that fall into the 10%-cut category fall closer to home, including:

- Shelter Operating Subsidy under the Maine State Housing Authority
- Maine Rural Water Association under the Maine Municipal Bond Bank
- The JETCC wastewater operators training program
- The Business Equipment Tax Reimbursement Program (BETR)
- The "Circuit Breaker" property tax and rent rebate program
- Tree Growth reimbursement (see below)

Something of a justification for the revenue sharing raid seems to be provided in the Governor's press release detailing the various elements of the budget. That press release discusses a report issued by a management consulting firm called McKinsey and Co. (see sidebar to this article). The McKinsey report apparently identifies between $100 and $180 million in potential savings over a three-year period. One of the areas of savings identified in the report focuses on "greater municipal cooperation on management, purchasing, administrative functions and service delivery". Put into that context, this proposed cut to municipal revenue sharing, in con-

(continued on page 2)

BUDGET (cont'd)

junction with the proposed use of the Local Government Efficiency Fund (which is capitalized with revenue sharing dollars, see below), seems to be offered with the suggestion that the lost revenue could be made up in savings if only municipal clerks did the school district's "back office" business or, in the alternative, the school district personnel performed the duties of the town clerks and municipal administrators throughout the school region.

Jacking down the revenue-sharing percentage to 4.6% signals an interest on the part of the Administration for making this adjustment to revenue sharing permanent. Previous raids to municipal revenue sharing in 1991 and 2006 have simply appropriated the amount of revenue to be raided out of the Local Government Fund, but retained the ongoing structure of the revenue sharing program.

In addition to structurally changing the underlying value of revenue sharing, the Governor's budget places the entire impact of the reduction on the so-called "Rev I" revenue sharing distribution, and essentially preserves the amount of resources that are distributed through the "Rev II" distribution system. The Rev II distribution is designed to provide a greater benefit to the municipalities with higher property tax mill rates.

MMA's Kate Dufour has developed the spreadsheet that details the town-by-town impacts of the proposed revenue sharing cut in 2010 compared to the distribution without the cut. We have posted that spreadsheet on our website, and anyone who would like a copy should contact Laura Veilleux at 1-800-452-8786.

Revenue Sharing: Continuing raids on the Local Government Efficiency Fund – $4 million. Ever since the voters of Maine created the Local Government Efficiency Fund in 2004, the Legislature has raided the account, usually in its entirety. It is hard to think of another program created by the voters that has been treated with such a deep disrespect by the Legislature. Even though the Efficiency Fund was entirely capitalized with already-existing municipal revenue sharing resources and required zero additional money from the state, the Legislature has used the Efficiency Fund as a convenient vehicle by which to raid municipal revenue sharing dollars.

That tradition is continued in the Governor's budget which proposes to raid the Efficiency Fund to the tune of $4 million over the biennium.

After the raid, $1.5 million is left in the Efficiency Fund over the two-year period. The Governor's budget allocates $500,000 in FY 2010 and $1 million in FY 2011 for a narrow, newly-established "Efficiency Fund" purpose. The only grants that could be made available in this new version of the Efficiency Fund would be to those municipalities that enter into cooperative agreements with their Regional School Units (RSUs) in order to share administrative services. Again, the rationale behind this proposal is the "significant local savings" identified in the McKinsey report associated with "municipal consolidation of administrative functions"…a phrase that has become a shopworn mantra used to justify all political decisions to reduce school or municipal subsidy.

Local Road Assistance (URIP) – $5 million. The Governor's proposed budget also cuts $5 million out of the URIP local road assistance program for the second year of the biennium (FY 2011). When the URIP program was created in 2000 as a restructuring of the pre-existing Local Road Assistance Program, it was agreed that URIP would be funded with 10.4% of the amount of revenue appropriated to the Maine Department of Transportation for highway and bridge purposes. Since the creation of the URIP program, that amount has been in the neighborhood of $24 million annually.

Under the Governor's proposed budget, that agreement as established in statute is superseded (the statutory term is "notwithstood") and $5 million is taken out of the FY 2011 URIP appropriation, dropping it to $19 million, in order to help balance the state budget.

10% cut to Tree Growth reimbursement – $1.2 million. In the absence of any legislative raid, $5.85 million would be distributed in 2010 and $6.25 million in FY 2011 in Tree Growth reimbursement to make up for the lost property tax revenue associated with that type of "current use" tax break. At that level of funding, the so-called "90% reimbursement" (which, for a variety of reasons, is not actually 90% reimbursement) would be achieved. The Governor's bill reduces the reimbursement by 10% each year, saving the state and costing the towns $1.2 million over the biennium.

Code Enforcement Officer training. – $270,000. The Governor's proposed budget authorizes the State Planning Office to establish fees to be paid by all municipal code enforcement officers when they take the required SPO training courses to meet the mandatory certification requirements. Until now, the required certification training courses were provided by the SPO without charge. The fee-system is expected to generate $135,000 a year to pay for the Senior Planner position and the other costs associated with the training program. Apparently to keep the imposition of the fee from being identified as a "state mandate", the budget proposal removes the current obligation for municipalities to hire certified code enforcement officers, and puts the obligation on the individual code enforcement officers to be certified if they want to work for the municipalities. A distinction without a difference.

The GPA statistics:

• The proposed budget reveals that the total state and local dollars the Essential Programs and Services (EPS) school funding model calculated as necessary to provide an adequate public education in the next fiscal year (FY 2010) is $1.921 billion. That "EPS allocation" represents a 3.2% increase over the current year's total EPS allocation of $1.861 billion.

• The proposed budget sets the state share of that allocation at just under $959 million, which represents 49.9% of

(continued on page 6)

Legislative Bulletin

A weekly publication of the Maine Municipal Association throughout sessions of the Maine State Legislature.

Subscriptions to the *Bulletin* are available at a rate of $20 per calendar year. Inquiries regarding subscriptions or opinions expressed in this publication should be addressed to: *Legislative Bulletin*, Maine Municipal Association, 60 Community Drive, Augusta, ME 04330. Tel: 623-8428. Website: www.memun.org

Editorial Staff: Geoffrey Herman, Kate Dufour, Jeff Austin, and Laura Veilleux of the State & Federal Relations staff.

Corrections Corner – A New Edition to the MMA's Legislative Bulletin

During last year's legislative session, Maine's lawmakers enacted LD 2080, *An Act to Better Coordinate and Reduce the Cost of the Delivery of State and County Corrections Services* (PL 2007, chap. 653). The new law consolidates the management of the state prisons and county jails into a unified corrections system. Of particular interest to municipal officials is the section of the law that caps the amount of taxes property owners in each county must contribute toward county jail operations to the amount assessed in 2008. According to the calculations conducted by county officials, in 2008 that figure was $62.5 million and the cap for each county was codified into statute. In other words, this year and going forward, county taxpayers will not have to pay more than $62.5 million (statewide) to fund county jail operations.

Since the enactment of the law much as been done to unify the state prison and county jail systems. Most importantly, the State Board of Corrections (SBOC), which is responsible for overseeing the unification process, has convened several times over the last six months. Irving Faunce, selectman in the Town of Wilton, is the municipal representative on the Board. The Corrections Working Group, made up of county and state officials and created to assist the SBOC in its unification efforts, has also met numerous times over the last six months to get the unification process moving forward.

Although county and municipal officials are involved or familiar with the process, some officials are more informed than others, and at times confusion arises about the implementation of the unification legislation. As a result, MMA will be periodically publishing a "Corrections Corner" article in the *Legislative Bulletin* to identify the issues and concerns raised. This article is the first installment.

Funding County Jails from Two Different Sources. As noted above, the property taxpayer obligation to fund county jails has been capped at the 2008 level. Any increases in county jail operations over the capped property tax revenue amount must be approved by the SBOC and funded with state revenues. One of the issues county officials are facing with the dual funding source system is that for the "calendar year" counties the two sources of revenue to fund the jail system – the state revenue and the property tax revenue — are being appropriated to cover two overlapping fiscal years. For the counties that operate on a calendar year budget, the property tax revenues are collected to cover the January to December time span. In contrast, the state revenue is provided to cover a July 1st to June 30th fiscal year.

As a result, counties operating on a calendar year budget will receive a portion of the funds necessary to run county jail operations through its assessments to the municipalities. The remainder of the necessary revenues, if approved by the SBOC, will be provided through the state's fiscal year budget process, which falls six months out of synch with the year for which the property tax revenue was appropriated.

In addition to establishing the two-tiered revenue system, for those counties operating on a calendar year budget cycle, the unification law provides a process for <u>enabling but not mandating</u> the change to a state fiscal year for all county operations (i.e., jails, deeds, probate, rural patrol, etc.).

Since the two issues (county jail funding and fiscal year change) are addressed in the same bill, some counties have interpreted this to mean that they are mandated to change their fiscal years for county jail operations. As a result, some county officials have been informing municipalities that in 2009, 18-months of county jail operations revenue will need to be raised.

Unless the county is actually changing the fiscal year, that is not the case.

The fiscal year change provision of the unification law merely enables counties to change the fiscal year. This is nothing new for counties, which have been authorized by statute to change their fiscal year for a very long time. An addition to the underlying law governing a county's fiscal year change provided in the unification legislation enable the counties to minimize the impact of the fiscal year change by providing municipal officials the option to pay for the additional six months of county property tax assessments over a five year period. Another addition authorized the county commissioners for one time only to issue bonds or notes in anticipation of taxes to cover the six-month transitional budget. Counties seeking a change in the fiscal year must change the budget year for total county operations, not just for the operations of county jails.

Counties that are not seeking to change the fiscal year to the state's July 1 to June 30 budget year will simply need to deal with the offset timing of state jail resources by recording the finances carefully on their books and planning for the use and distribution of those revenues to preserve appropriate cash flow throughout their fiscal year. In short, there is no authority for the municipal assessment to be any larger than the annual statutory cap except in the circumstance where the county's actual fiscal year is being changed.

Our goal is to continually provide information about the unification process to municipal officials and other interested parties. If any municipal or county official hears or encounters any problems, issues or concerns with the process, please contact MMA's Kate Dufour at 1-800-452-8786 or kdufour@memun.org and we will try to address your concern in a future edition of the "Corrections Corner".

McKinsey Efficiency Report

Last week, the press reported that the Governor has received a report from the management consulting firm, McKinsey & Company, that outlined a possible $180 million in annual savings that the state could achieve through various government efficiencies.

MMA requested a copy of the report from the Governor's Office and received a 30-page power point presentation that appears to explain and highlight some conclusions. It's not clear to us if there is another document which is an actual report or if this power point is the entire report. Anyone who would like a copy of this power point presentation may contact MMA's Laura Veilleux at lveilleux@memun.org

The power point had five areas of focus. There is no explanation for why it focused on these five areas rather than five others. The areas are: K-12 education, health care, corrections, purchasing and municipalities. What follows is a brief review of the two municipally related sections regarding K-12 education and municipalities.

Education

Seven pages of the report were devoted to K-12 education. McKinsey indicated that there are annual savings of $30-50 million to be had with greater efficiencies in K-12 education. The sources of those savings are two-fold. First, McKinsey recommends adjusting (reducing) the EPS targets for non-instructional expenses.

McKinsey's argument is that there is great variability in the amount of per student spending among school districts of similar size and character. As evidence, it cited Dixmont's per pupil spending at $7,453 and Chelsea's per pupil spending of $10,462. McKinsey further argues that there is no correlation in Maine between per pupil spending on "non-instructional" costs and student performance. From these two arguments McKinsey concludes that schools that spend more than average on non-instructional services could reduce that spending without impacting student performance. Thus, it would appear, McKinsey is recommending that the state reduce the amount it provides to schools by reducing the non-instructional components in the Essential Programs and Services (EPS) model.

Is this reasonable? Without much more detail than was been provided in the McKinsey power point, the validity of this recommendation is difficult to assess. It should be noted, however, that the Legislature and Department of Education spend a significant sum every year in contracts with the University of Maine for the specific purpose of assessing the EPS model. These ongoing assessments of the model are done in order to review the very kinds of issues raised by McKinsey. The Department and the Legislature should either follow the recommendations of those assessments or stop spending money on them.

McKinsey's second recommendation is to standardize and consolidate teacher health contracts. The power point asserted that K-12 schools paid $237 million in teacher benefits in 2004-05 (excluding the state's contributions to teacher retirement). McKinsey believes that the local bargaining process could benefit from additional transparency. McKinsey asserts that savings could be achieved if school districts "worked together" to increase negotiating leverage. Finally, McKinsey argues that health care costs could be reduced if schools created incentives for preventative care.

McKinsey also indicated that there would be benefits from further consolidation and regionalization of special education services. It noted the disparity between districts regarding special identification rates. For example, Androscoggin County has 17% of its students assessed as having "emotional disability." Franklin County schools have only 4% of their students so identified. Penobscot County schools have 9% of their students assessed as autistic; Lincoln County has a 3% autistic identification rate. The power point did not identify a dollar amount of savings that could be achieved from more consistency but suggests that service delivery would be improved as would equity among the systems if there were greater consistency.

Municipalities

The section on municipalities in the McKinsey power point consists of two pages. McKinsey asserts that there are $15-30 million in annual state savings from "municipal consolidation" and additional "significant local savings" of an undisclosed amount. The power point doesn't explain how this amount was calculated. In fact, the report doesn't really promote the consolidation of municipalities *per se*. Instead, it promotes regional service delivery for certain types of municipal operations, particularly "back office", "management", "service operations" and "purchasing".

The only specific recommendation is to require all municipalities to adopt the state's "model chart of accounts" as a precondition to receiving revenue sharing. There is some irony about this recommendation.

As MMA has noted many times over the past few years, municipalities took the lead on promoting regional service delivery in 2002 when they included in the school funding citizen initiative (Question 1A) the establishment of the local government efficiency fund. This fund, to be used for the very purposes identified by McKinsey – local government efficiency through regional service delivery – was capitalized with 2% of the municipalities' existing revenue sharing stream. In other words, there was no cost to the state from the establishment of this fund. The municipalities were using their revenue sharing dollars to capitalize this fund. Unfortunately, almost all of the revenues in this fund have been raided by the Legislature every year since Maine's voters adopted the program. In fact, current law says that the fund should receive approximately $5.5 million over the biennium from the municipal revenue sharing distribution. The Governor's budget takes 75% of that revenue to help balance the state budget. Thus, municipalities might be able to achieve greater efficiencies through re-

(continued on page 6)

(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.)

Education & Cultural Affairs

LD 95 - An Act To Eliminate Penalties for Nonconforming School Administrative Units. (Emergency) (Sponsored by Rep. Edgecomb of Caribou)

This emergency bill eliminates the financial and other penalties that would be applied under current law to those school systems that failed to consolidate under the terms of the 2007 and 2008 school consolidation law.

LD 115 - An Act To Repeal the Laws Governing Consolidation of School Administrative Units. (Emergency) (Sponsored by Rep. Edgecomb of Caribou; additional cosponsors.)

This bill repeals the school consolidation law enacted in 2007 and amended in 2008.

Health & Human Services

LD 119 - An Act To Amend the Laws Governing Public Water System Operation Fees. (Sponsored by Sen. Courtney of York County; additional cosponsors.)

This bill increases the annual base fee imposed by the Department of Health and Human Services on public water systems from $50 to $75. The bill also removes the statutory $30,000 cap on the maximum fee that can be charged against any single water system.

Labor

LD 84 - An Act To Ensure Fair Pay. (Sponsored by Sen. Simpson of Androscoggin County; additional cosponsors.)

This bill prohibits an employer from interfering with, discharging, or otherwise discriminating against any employee who inquires about, discloses, compares or otherwise discusses employee wages.

Legal & Veterans Affairs

LD 116 - An Act To Allow Political Signs on Private Property Only. (Sponsored by Rep. Eberle of South Portland; additional cosponsors.)

This bill allows political signs to be placed only on private property with the express permission of the property owner and is written to prohibit the placement of political signs in the public right of way.

LD 129 - Resolve, Directing the Secretary of State To Conduct a Pilot Program for Early Voting for the November 2009 Election. (Sponsored by Sen. Mitchell of Kennebec County; additional cosponsors.)

This resolve directs the Secretary of State to administer a pilot program that allows selected municipalities to conduct early voting procedures at polling places up to 10 days prior to election day on November 3, 2009. The Secretary is further directed to submit a report by January 12, 2010 to the Legislature detailing the results of the pilot program.

LD 150 - An Act To Allow Voters To Choose Ongoing Absentee Voter Status. (Sponsored by Rep. Hinck of Portland; additional cosponsors.)

This bill allows a registered voter to apply for ongoing status as an absentee voter, in which case an absentee ballot will be automatically delivered by the municipal election clerk to the voter until the voter dies, is removed from the central voter list, the absentee ballot is returned to the municipality as undeliverable, or the voter asks in writing to have the automatic absentee status withdrawn.

State & Local Government

LD 130 - An Act To Allow a Municipality Greater Flexibility To Disburse State Fees. (Sponsored by Sen. Perry of Penobscot County; additional cosponsors.)

This bill allows the municipal officers to adopt a written policy that permits the fee revenue collected by the municipality on behalf of the state to be disbursed back to the state on a warrant signed by one or more of the municipal officers. There is similar authority under current law with respect to payroll warrants and the school warrants. The policy must be filed with the municipal clerk and the municipal treasurer and renewed annually by a vote of the municipal officers.

LD 143 - An Act To Amend the Process for Secession from a County by a Municipality. (Sponsored by Rep. Robinson of Raymond; additional cosponsors.)

This bill amends the process governing municipal secession from a county to allow a municipality to join a county with which it does not share a boundary.

Taxation

LD 87 - An Act To Allow the Same Homestead and Veterans' Exemptions to a Person Who Has a Life Lease as Are Allowed to Those Who Have a Life Estate. (Emergency) (Sponsored by Sen. Jackson of Aroostook County; additional cosponsors.)

This bill extends both the homestead property tax exemption and the veterans' property tax exemption to otherwise qualifying individuals whose interest in the residential property is a "life lease".

Transportation

LD 110 - An Act To Allow School Buses To Travel at the Posted Speed Limit on the Interstate and the Maine Turnpike. (Sponsored by Rep. Cray of Palmyra; additional cosponsors.)

Current law establishes the maximum speed of any school bus at 55 miles per hour. This bill allows school busses to travel at the posted speed limit on interstate highways.

LD 112 - An Act To Prohibit the Use of Handheld Cellular Telephones while Driving. (Sponsored by Rep. Crockett of Augusta; additional cosponsors.)

This bill prohibits the use of a handheld cellular telephone while operating a motor vehicle and makes the offense a traffic infraction. Among other types of drivers, the bill allows law enforcement officers, firefighters, drivers of emergency vehicles, and municipal public works personnel to use handheld cellular telephones when they are driving within the scope of their employment.

LD 126 - An Act To Amend Certain Laws Affecting Transportation. (Sponsored by Rep. Hogan of Old Orchard Beach)

This bill makes several technical amendments to Maine's transportation laws, including a reorganization of the law governing the relative obligations of the Department of Transportation and abutters to state or state-aid roads regarding initial and subsequent driveway culvert installation.

LD 145 - An Act To Require the Secretary of State To Notify Vehicle Owners of Impending Registration Expiration. (Sponsored by Rep. Richardson of Warren)

(continued on page 6)

BUDGET (cont'd)

the EPS allocation. About $2 million worth of that appropriation is identified as funding 23 personnel positions in the Department of Education, or 25% of the Department's 91 "General Fund" employees.

• If the circumstances were different, and the 55% funding level was to be achieved this year, the General Purpose Aid to Local Schools appropriation (GPA) would have been approximately $100 million more ($1.056 billion).

• At this level of state funding, the proposed budget establishes the required "mill expectation" for the next school year as 6.68 mills.

REPORT (cont'd)

gional service delivery if the state government would merely stop raiding revenue sharing's Efficiency Fund.

Unfortunately, there is no substance to react to in the McKinsey power point. We can not judge the validity of the power point's argument.

One potential problem the analysis may suffer from is the fallacy of assuming that just because one municipality was able to achieve some savings from some consolidation, that all 491 municipalities could achieve similar savings from the same consolidation. For example, without any identification, the report notes that some municipalities somewhere saved some money by consolidating the assessing service, others by bulk purchasing their fuel. That may be true. You cannot, however, assume that the same level of savings can be achieved throughout the state.

Assessing, for example, is a service that is widely provided by the private sector in Maine. Over 150 municipalities currently contract with one of seven private companies for their assessing services. In this respect, the service is already provided in a regional manner among those communities (and others in smaller private-sector relationships) in a healthy balance of regional efficiency and local oversight.

With respect to the bulk purchase of fuel, our experience suggests that this is not the year to be bragging about the savings associated with bulk fuel purchase. Any number of municipalities deeply regret signing up within larger consortiums for the bulk purchase of fuel last summer because they were influenced in that process to jump at "lock-in" rates that easily double the current price at the pump.

Finally, it is entirely unclear how the state (rather than the municipalities) would achieve "savings" if the assessing service were provided regionally or more towns purchased their fuel through co-operatives. Municipalities receive no support from the state that is related to specific expenditures on assessing or any other municipal activity. The $15- $30 million in "savings" to the state associated in the McKinsey report with municipal administrative consolidation appears to be a self-fulfilling reference to the proposed reduction in municipal revenue sharing.

We expect that there will be more than two pages of justification for these cursory assertions before they are implemented.

HOPPER (cont'd)

This bill would require the Secretary of State to provide the owners of motor vehicles with formal notice of their impending registration expiration. Apparently for the purpose of funding the notification requirement, the bill also increases the motor vehicle registration fee by $1, from $35 to $36.

LD 152 - An Act Relating to Autocycles. (Sponsored by Rep. Connor of Kennebunk; additional cosponsors.)

This bill defines the "autocyle" motor vehicle as an enclosed motorcycle having no more than 3 wheels in contact with the ground, establishes the equipment standards on such vehicles that must be met in order to be registered and allowed on the roads, and establishes the licensure standards and road restrictions that apply to the operations of an autocycle.

Utilities & Energy

LD 113 - An Act Regarding Construction and Excavation near Burial Sites. (Sponsored by Rep. Casavant of Biddeford; additional cosponsors.)

Current law generally prohibits any construction or excavation within 25 feet of a burial site or cemetery, with certain exceptions. This bill creates an additional exception, which is when the construction is necessary to connect a private sewer line to a public sewer system, no other practicable alternative exists, and the construction of the connection is approved by the municipality's governing body.