

# 2023 Ongoing Initiatives



We helped guide a collaborative process to build a shared **Vision for an Equitable Maine** that 61 Maine-based organizations support. Our shared Vision provides a blueprint for the systemic change we need. This year many initiatives that would advance our vision became law. Others did not, and we still have work to do to get them across the finish line. The following initiatives still require more action.

Issue Area	Summary	Outcome
<b>Racial Equity</b>	<p><b><i>Tribal Sovereignty: LD 2007, "An Act Implementing the Recommendations of the Task Force on Changes to the Maine Indian Claims Settlement Implementing Act"</i></b> would restore self-government to Maine's tribes is necessary for racial equity. It would implement consensus recommendations from a bipartisan task force convened by the Maine Legislature to address long-standing issues with the land claims act passed in 1980 that governs the relationship between the state and the tribes in Maine.</p>	<p><i>Carried over to the 2024 legislative session.</i></p>
	<p><b><i>Improving Racial Impact Statement process in lawmaking: LD 1432, "An Act to Amend the Laws Governing Racial Impact Statements"</i></b> would improve the Racial Impact Statement process at the Legislature as part of lawmaking. Racial impact statements (RIS) give policymakers information about racial disparities to allow them to consider the impact of future laws on racial, indigenous, and tribal populations. An RIS pilot program in the 130th Legislative Session provided valuable information about the ways these statements can support equitable policymaking and the process for using RIS to support our legislative process. This legislation builds off the pilot program to ensure legislators have the information they need to craft equitable policies.</p>	<p><i>Carried over to the 2024 legislative session.</i></p>
<b>Promote housing as a human right and preventive healthcare measure</b>	<p><b><i>Housing stability for renters with low incomes: LD 1710, "An Act to Enact the Housing Opportunity for Maine Act (The HOME Act)"</i></b> would help more people keep up with rising rents by creating a rental assistance program and protect tenants from discrimination. It would also provide consumer protections to tenants whose rent is unaffordable. Maine is experiencing a severe housing crisis, resulting in a growing number of unhoused people across our state and challenges for our workforce.</p>	
	<p><b><i>"Student homelessness LD1422: An Act to End Homelessness and Assist Students Who Are Homeless by Establishing a Rental Subsidy"</i></b></p>	<p><i>Carried over</i></p>

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	<p><b>Save our Shelters LR 2714</b> Raise the state's annual shelter financial commitment to 12.5 m annually. "Low-barrier shelter funding and MaineCare funds waiver to use funds for emergency housing and services LR 2714. Sec. AAAA-4. Department of Health and Human Services to apply for state plan amendments to align certain MaineCare rules with Housing First Program. Within 9 months of the effective date of this Part, the Department of Health and Human Services shall apply to the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services for relevant state plan amendments for rule Chapter 101: MaineCare Benefits Manual, Chapter II, Section 13, Targeted Case Management Services, and the Housing Outreach and Member Engagement Provider program within rule Chapter 101: MaineCare Benefits Manual, Chapter II, Section 91, Health Home Services - Community Care Teams, to maximize the alignment of these rules with the Housing First Program under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 22, section 20-A, subsections 1 and 5. The department shall initiate rulemaking within 120 days of receiving state plan approval of the requested changes.</p>	
<p><b>Health Care (and food security)</b></p>	<p><b>Health Care for Mainers who are Immigrants: LD 199</b>, would provide access to MaineCare for adults who cannot afford health coverage regardless of immigration status. The Legislature passed coverage for children and pregnant people in 2021 but other adults who are immigrants are still barred from coverage.</p>	<p><i>Passed in the House but failed to pass in the Senate.</i></p>
<p><b>Fair Taxes Support a Stronger Future for Everyone</b></p>	<p><b>LD 1337: An Act to Require a Corporation That Files a Tax Return in the State to File a Tax Disclosure Statement.</b> Taxpayers and legislators should know whether or not the millions of dollars that are being spent on tax breaks for corporations are effective and which companies are actually paying what they owe.</p>	<p><i>Carried over</i></p>
<p><b>Boost Incomes; Shrink Income Inequality</b></p>	<p><b>LD 1877, "An Act to Reduce the Number of Children Living in Deep Poverty by Adjusting Assistance for Low-income Families"</b> would make overdue reforms to the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. TANF provides income support for low-income families with children in Maine. But at current benefit levels, most families receiving TANF can't afford rising rents and rising costs for essentials. LD 1877 would increase benefits to provide more financial security to Maine families and help parents access transportation to work, training, and education opportunities so they can move their families to economic stability.</p>	<p><i>Carried over to the 2024 legislative session.</i></p>
<p><b>Democracy Reform</b></p>	<p><b>Defeated LD1265 and LD34</b> - that would have created more barriers to voting with voter ID requirements. Anticipate these issues continuing</p>	

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<b>Climate Action, Environmental Protection, and Healthy People</b>	<b><i>LD 988 Resolve, Directing the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry to Conduct an Accessibility Study of All Maine State Parks and Historic Sites and to Develop a Plan to Remove Access Barriers</i></b>	<i>Carried over to the 2024 legislative session</i>