

2022 Positive Outcomes



We helped guide a collaborative process to build a shared Vision for an Equitable Maine that 65 Maine-based organizations support. Our shared Vision provides a blueprint for the systemic change we need. This year individuals and organizations worked to advance legislation in many areas to move Maine closer to our Vision for an Equitable Maine. The following are some of the initiatives that were successful:

Issue Area	Summary	Outcome
Racial Equity	<p><u>LD 1610, "An Act To Promote Equity in Policy Making by Enhancing the State's Ability To Collect, Analyze and Apply Data"</u> will ensure Maine has smarter data and analysis capabilities to support equitable policies, public access, and engagement. This bill was introduced by House Assistant Majority Leader Rachel Talbot Ross as a companion to LD 2 to strengthen the state's capacity to collect, analyze, and publish data for higher-quality racial impact statements and for better-informed policy making. We must take the steps needed to improve policymakers' ability to target and shrink inequities in our laws and policies.</p>	<p><i>Signed into law</i></p>
	<p><u>LD 906, "An Act To Provide Passamaquoddy Tribal Members Access to Clean Drinking Water"</u> will finally bring clean drinking water to the Passamaquoddy Tribe at Sipayik after a 40-year struggle to address contamination in the water supply from the Passamaquoddy Water District.</p>	<p><i>Signed into law</i></p>
	<p><u>LD 585, "An Act To Restore to the Penobscot Nation and Passamaquoddy Tribe the Authority To Exercise Jurisdiction under the Federal Tribal Law and Order Act of 2010"</u> embodies points of agreement reached between Maliseet, Passamaquoddy, and Penobscot leaders and Governor Mills that would improve collaboration between state agencies and the Wabanaki Tribal Governments, propose tax changes recognizing the unique status of Wabanaki Tribal Governments with the intent to spur economic development and provide the Wabanaki with the exclusive right to develop on-line sports betting as a means to support Wabanaki governmental services.</p>	<p><i>Signed into law</i></p>
Housing	<p><u>"LD 2003, An Act To Implement the Recommendations of the Commission To Increase Housing Opportunities in Maine by Studying Zoning and Land Use Restrictions"</u> will make some improvements in zoning policy to increase affordable housing. Zoning is often used to prevent the development of new housing. In 2021, the Commission to Increase Housing Opportunities in Maine by Studying Zoning and Land Use Restrictions explored opportunities to increase access to housing in Maine by reforming zoning and land use laws. This legislation lays a foundation for more affordable housing. Together with other policy changes to address the lack of affordable housing, improvements to zoning policy will lay a foundation for every community in Maine to welcome housing affordability and diversity.</p>	<p><i>Signed into law</i></p>

Because our new normal should be more equitable.

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Housing	<u>LD 1673, "An Act To Create a Comprehensive Permit Process for the Construction of Affordable Housing"</u> will improve fair housing data collection, helping to lay the groundwork for more equitable housing policies.	<i>Become law without the Governor's signature</i>
Health Care is a Human Right	<u>LD 1501, "An Act To Protect Oral Health for Children in Maine"</u> will expand the school oral health program and restore an oral health director position at the CDC	<i>Passed in the Supplemental Budget</i>
	<u>LD 372, "An Act To Provide Maine Children Access to Affordable Health Care"</u> expands eligibility to 300% of the federal poverty level (FPL) and to 19 and 20 year olds. It will also remove waiting periods.	<i>Passed in the Supplemental Budget</i>
	<u>LD 1781, "An Act To Align Postpartum MaineCare Coverage with Federal Law"</u> expands postpartum MaineCare coverage from 60 days to 12 months in alignment with an option under federal law (this replaces the law that passed in 2021 because that had some problems). It will be retroactive to January 1, 2022. "	<i>Signed into law</i>
	<u>LD 1390, "An Act To Maximize Health Care Coverage for the Uninsured through Easy Enrollment in the MaineCare Program or in a Qualified Health Plan in the Marketplace"</u> creates a check off box on tax forms to indicate you wish to have your eligibility for MaineCare or the Marketplace considered.	<i>Signed into law</i>
	<u>LD 1995, the state supplemental budget</u> provided funding for mental health services specified in LDs 360, 415, 432, 496, 582, 592. The budget invested in Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) for those with severe and persistent mental illness (SPMI), Home and Community Treatment for youth (HCT) with mental health challenges, and will be expanding access to team approached case management and treatment for those struggling with Substance Use Disorder (SUD).	<i>Passed in the Supplemental Budget</i>
	<u>LD 1867, "An Act To Codify MaineCare Rate System Reform"</u> codified a system for regularly updating rates for MaineCare to provide sustainability and assure access to care.	<i>Signed into law</i>
	<u>LD 1722, "An Act To Ensure Access to All Paths to Recovery for Persons Affected by Opioids Using Money Obtained through Litigation against Opioid Manufacturers"</u> directs all funds awarded through opioid litigation and settlements to the Opioid and Substance Use Abatement Fund administered by the Attorney General for the purpose of remediating and addressing the substance use crisis in Maine through prevention, intervention, treatment and recovery.	<i>Signed into law</i>

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Consumer Rights	<p><i>LD 913, "An Act To Make Certain Civil Court Records Accessible by the Public Only at the Courthouse"</i> prevents tenant blacklists from coming to Maine. The benefits of moving court records online shouldn't come at the expense of housing, employment, and credit opportunities for low-income Mainers. When it comes to evictions, the moment a case is filed, the tenant has a permanent eviction record and that can burden their housing search for life. Now, when the tenancy ends amicably with a court agreement or when the court rules in favor of the tenant, the eviction record will not be available online.</p>	<p><i>Signed into law</i></p>
Fair Taxes Support a Stronger Future for Everyone	<p><i>Increased Maine's Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)</i>, which provides a refundable tax credit to working Maine people and families. This increase is estimated to help 100,000 people, primarily families with incomes of less than \$57,414, by increasing the maximum benefit by an average of \$400 per family, bringing the total EITC benefit per family to an average of \$764 per year.</p>	<p><i>Passed in the Supplemental Budget</i></p>
	<p><i>LD 428, "An Act To Prevent Tax Haven Abuse"</i> will close unfair corporate loopholes. Corporations avoid paying their fair share of taxes by taking advantage of complex systems to hide profits in countries with lower tax rates. Tax havens shrink Maine's tax base and shift the cost of public services onto local businesses and residents.</p>	<p><i>Become law without the Governor's signature</i></p>
Food Security	<p><i>LD 174, "An Act To Implement the Recommendations of the Ending Hunger by 2030 Advisory Group"</i> will fund a process to continue to move forward on the recommendation of the Ending Hunger by 2030 Task Force, including funds so that impacted people can participate. That last aspect was championed by Resources for Organizing Social Change and is a big win.</p>	<p><i>Signed into law</i></p>
Safety, Health and Power of Working Mainers	<p><i>LD 607, "An Act To Restore Overtime Protections for Maine Workers"</i> helps restore the promise of the 40-hour workweek and helps more Mainers get the wages they deserve. Extra work deserves extra pay. But over decades, overtime protections had been watered down so that fewer people were earning time-and-a-half pay when they worked long hours."</p>	<p><i>Signed into law</i></p>
	<p><i>LD 575, "An Act To Establish a Conditional Presumption of Compensability for Certain Employees in Cases of Impairment from Hypertension or Heart Disease"</i> created a rebuttable presumption that a corrections officers who contracts heart disease or hypertension received that affliction due to employment, ensuring that corrections workers have good health care for these work-related injuries.</p>	<p><i>Signed into law</i></p>

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Safety, Health and Power of Working Mainers	<p>LD 1724, "An Act To Create a Logging Dispute Resolution Board and To Require Proof of Ownership Documents To Be Available within 14 Days of Request" will increase the rights of loggers and give them a seat at the table. Loggers and wood haulers work extremely long hours, often for low pay and no benefits for large, powerful timber corporations who profit from their labor. Logging is one of the most difficult and dangerous occupations in Maine and is only made worse by a long standing power imbalance in the industry that forces loggers and forest products haulers to accept unfair contract rates for their services. The creation of a Logging Dispute Resolution Board to hear disputes related to the logging industry will help level the playing field, weed out bad actors in the market, give workers a seat at the table and provide a clear process to resolve issues.</p>	<p><i>Became law without Governor's Signature</i></p>
	<p>The supplemental budget included an exemption from state income taxes for retiree pensions for the first \$25,000 of pension income in 2022. Retirement pension income from any source will be tax exempt up to \$35,000 by 2025. This will increase retirees' economic security. There were also big wins for public sector workers, including a retroactive retiree COLA increase of 1% for eligible retirees, an increase in the pension base to determine those eligible for a retiree COLA, and more than \$12 million to increase pay for childcare workers and early childhood educators.</p>	<p><i>Signed into law</i></p>
	<p>LD 1969, "An Act Concerning Equity in Renewable Energy Projects and Workforce Development" advances labor and equity standards by requiring that energy projects over two megawatts that receive state assistance pay workers a prevailing wage, encourage registered apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs, develop a diverse workforce, and encourage Project Labor Agreements - a tool to ensure good jobs and that work is done on time and under budget.</p>	<p><i>Became law without Governor's Signature</i></p>
Education and Training Opportunity	<p>LD 177, "An Act To Improve Labor Laws for Workers in Maine" provides ongoing funding to support registered apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs.</p>	<p><i>Signed into law</i></p>
	<p>LD 1838, "An Act To Improve Student Access to Postsecondary School Transcripts and Diplomas" prohibits colleges and universities from withholding transcripts from students who owe modest debts — up to \$2,500 for four-year programs and up to \$500 for two-year programs, which between the University of Maine system and Maine's community colleges impacts nearly 10,000 students. Students who owe more will have the right to their transcripts and diplomas after entering a repayment plan with their college or university, and will not have to make a payment before taking possession of their documents.</p>	<p><i>Signed into law</i></p>

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Education and Training Opportunity	<p><i>LD 1816 “An Act To Improve Communication between School Boards and Educators by Requiring Notice of Discussion of Labor Matters”</i> creates the Charlie Scontras Labor and Community Education Center, honoring the life’s work of Maine’s late, great labor historian, Charlie Scontras and strengthens labor education by establishing a community-facing labor education center at USM. This labor center will offer labor education for students, unions and especially the community at large. The bill also provides additional ongoing funding to the UMaine Bureau of Labor Education.</p>	<p><i>Signed into law</i></p>
	<p><i>LD 1652, “An Act To Build a Child Care System by Recruiting and Retaining Maine’s Early Childhood Education Workforce”</i> was put into the state supplemental budget, with over \$12 million in state funding for ongoing monthly wage supplements for every early childhood professional teaching and caring for young children in licensed child care programs in Maine.</p>	<p><i>Passed in the budget</i></p>
Education and Training Opportunity & Income Equality	<p><i>LD 1748, “An Act Regarding the So-called Leveraging Investments so Families Can Thrive Report Produced by the Department of Health and Human Services”</i> will improve access to higher education for parents with low incomes and makes improvements in TANF/ASPIRE to provide more accountability to program participants and require culturally and linguistically appropriate and trauma-informed services.</p>	<p><i>Signed into law</i></p>
Democracy Reform	<p><i>LD 1155, “An Act To Require Election Transparency and Audits”</i> will strengthen Maine’s elections by implementing true, secure post-election audits, providing dedicated training resources for local election officials, and increasing election transparency. It achieves this in part by adding much-needed capacity to the Secretary of State’s office.</p>	<p><i>Signed into law</i></p>
Climate Action, Environmental Protection, and Healthy People	<p><i>LD 2018, “An Act To Implement Recommendations Regarding the Incorporation of Equity Considerations in Regulatory Decision Making”</i>, defines, prioritizes, and supports meaningful community engagement and equitable decision-making to ensure that environmental policies are developed, implemented, and enforced in close partnership with the communities impacted “first and worst” by environmental and climate threats – those that have been historically underrepresented in policymaking. This legislation flowed from a report required last year by LD 1682, which incorporated equity concerns into state decision-making around decarbonization and electric grid modernization.</p>	<p><i>Signed into law</i></p>

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Climate Action, Environmental Protection, and Healthy People	<p><i>LD 1639, An Act To Protect the Health and Welfare of Maine Communities and Reduce Harmful Solid Waste</i>, closes the loophole in Maine’s waste management laws that allowed Massachusetts and other New England states to truck their construction and demolition waste to the state-owned Juniper Ridge Landfill in Old Town. The loophole classified waste as “in-state” once it entered a solid waste processing facility in Maine, no matter where it originated, and allowed nearly 40 tons of out-of-state waste to be dumped at Juniper Ridge nearly every day.</p>	<p><i>Signed into law</i></p>
	<p><i>LD 2013, An Act Relating to PFAS Contamination in the State</i>, acknowledges that PFAS contamination endangers Maine farmers and Maine’s agricultural economy and creates a \$60 million Impacted Farmers Mitigation Fund to support health monitoring, medical care, land buy-backs, and ongoing research and education. The fund will be administered by a new advisory committee within the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry.</p>	<p><i>Signed into law</i></p>
	<p><i>LD 1911, An Act To Prevent the Further Contamination of the Soils and Waters of the State with So-called Forever Chemicals</i>, makes Maine the first state in the nation to ban the application of PFAS-contaminated sludge and sludge-derived compost in order to prevent the further contamination of farmland. PFAS are persistent, toxic chemicals that have been so widespread for so long that they contaminate our wastewater – and PFAS-contaminated wastewater sludge has been spread on farmland as fertilizer for decades.</p>	<p><i>Signed into law</i></p>
	<p><i>LD 1959, An Act To Ensure Transmission and Distribution Utility Accountability</i>, requires Maine’s large electric utilities to develop integrated grid plans to improve electric system reliability and resiliency; enable the cost-effective achievement of the greenhouse gas reduction obligations and climate policies in Maine’s Climate Action Plan; and assist in the transition to a clean, affordable, and reliable electric grid. LD 1959 also mandates that the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) publish quarterly report cards on utility performance and impose administrative penalties for a utility’s poor performance, and provides for a process for divesting an underperforming investor-owned utility of its utility assets to a qualified buyer.</p>	<p><i>Signed into law</i></p>

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Climate Action, Environmental Protection, and Healthy People	<p><i>LD 1974, An Act To Establish and Fund the Maine Climate Corps Program,</i> establishes a Climate Corps that will mobilize citizens through formal volunteering and service to help lead climate mitigation and adaptation projects throughout the state; strengthen Maine communities and support historically marginalized populations facing the impacts of climate change; and provide much-needed workforce development in the environmental and clean energy sectors.</p>	<p><i>Signed into law</i></p>
	<p><i>LD 1902, Resolve, To Establish a Pilot Program To Encourage Climate Education in Maine Public Schools,</i> establishes the Climate Education Professional Development Pilot Program in direct response to the needs of Maine teachers. Recognizing that Maine students must be prepared to respond to the climate crisis, the state's climate action plan recommends increasing public education offerings related to climate and energy (Strategy H) – and in the 2019 Census for Community-Based Environmental Learning in Maine, teachers identified climate education as the area they most need help. LD 1902 establishes a three-year pilot program within the Department of Education to provide grants for professional development for K-12 educators on climate science, encourage partnerships between schools and community organizations, and support the preparation of courses on interdisciplinary climate education. The state budget allocates \$2 million to the pilot and the Department of Education may supplement that with outside funding.</p>	<p><i>Signed into law</i></p>