

2021 Legislative Action Items



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.

Positive Outcomes: 2021 | Legislative Action Items: 2021

Racial Equity	<p>Tribal Sovereignty: LD 1626, “An Act Implementing the Recommendations of the Task Force on Changes to the Maine Indian Claims Settlement Implementing Act” would give the tribes in Maine the same federally recognized sovereignty rights of tribes in other states.</p>	<p><i>Carried over to the 2022 legislative session.</i></p>
	<p>Data to Shrink Racial Disparities: LD 1610, “An Act To Promote Equity in Policy Making by Enhancing the State’s Ability To Collect, Analyze and Apply Data” would improve the State’s ability to collect, centralize, and use data to improve equity in state policy making. This is the counterpart bill to LD 2 that will implement Racial Impact Statements.</p>	<p><i>Carried over to the 2022 legislative session.</i></p>
Health Care (and food security)	<p>Health Care for Mainers who are Immigrants: LD 718, “An Act To Improve the Health of Maine Residents by Closing Coverage Gaps in the MaineCare Program and the Children’s Health Insurance Program” would provide access to MaineCare for people who cannot afford health coverage regardless of immigration status. The Legislature supported coverage for children and pregnant people in the state budget but other adults who are immigrants are still barred from coverage.</p>	<p><i>Amended version passed in the state budget and LD 718 was carried over.</i></p>
	<p>Treatment for People: LD 360, “Resolve, To Reduce Barriers to Recovery from Addiction by Expanding Eligibility for Targeted Case Management Services” would have expanded eligibility for Targeted Case Management (TCM) for people receiving treatment for substance use disorder. LD 360 was combined with LD 415 to increase the rate for TCM.</p>	<p><i>LD 415 was carried over to the 2022 legislative session.</i></p>
	<p>Community-Based Care: LD 582, “An Act To Support the Fidelity and Sustainability of Assertive Community Treatment” would change the definition of “assertive community treatment” to better align the definition with an evidence-based treatment model. This bill would provide access to treatment for those with the most severe mental illness who too often are living on the street, or churning between jail, the street, and shelters.</p>	<p><i>Carried over to the 2022 legislative session.</i></p>

Because our new normal should be more equitable.

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Health Care (and food security)	<p>Address the Waiting List for Care: LD 1360, “An Act To Provide Services to Maine’s Most Vulnerable Citizens by Eliminating the Waiting Lists for Certain MaineCare Services” would provide funding to clear the MaineCare Section 29 waiting list and to reduce waiting lists for MaineCare Section 21 services.</p>	<p><i>Carried over to the 2022 legislative session.</i></p>
	<p>Help Mainers in their Home State: Resolve 1173, “To Develop a Plan To Treat in Maine Those Children with Behavioral Health Needs Currently Treated Outside the State” would require the state to coordinate with families of children who are receiving residential treatment services for behavioral health issues outside the State to develop plans to bring the children back to the State to receive the required services and would require the state to negotiate related reimbursement rates in order to provide services to the children.</p>	<p><i>This bill failed to pass.</i></p>
	<p>Timely Mental Health Support for Kids: LD 496, “An Act To Clear Waiting Lists and Ensure Timely Access to Mental Health Services for Maine Children” would help children access needed services. We currently have over 700 children on wait lists for community mental health care that can help keep them from escalating into the emergency room, residential treatment, or from corrections involvement. It also calls for investments in basic outpatient care for those on MaineCare, as waitlists for mental health therapy are in the thousands now for those covered by MaineCare. This bill could also be a possible vehicle to direct the state to develop a plan to quickly bring home those children remaining in treatment out of state for their mental illness (see Resolve 1173 listed above).</p>	<p><i>Carried over to the 2022 legislative session.</i></p>
	<p>Food Security for Older Mainers: LD 485, “An Act To Continue Funding for Home-delivered Meals for Homebound Seniors and To Address Growing Demand” would provide funding for this critical program that increases food security for older people.</p>	<p><i>Carried over to the 2022 legislative session.</i></p>
Worker Health, Safety & Power	<p>Earned Vacation Time: LD 225, “An Act Regarding the Treatment of Vacation Time upon the Cessation of Employment” would treat vacation pay as earned pay when peoples’ employment ends.</p>	<p><i>Carried over to the 2022 legislative session.</i></p>
	<p>Strengthen Enforcement of Employment Laws: LD 1711, “An Act To Enhance Enforcement of Employment Laws” would have provided people with whistleblower rights when they allege a violation of certain labor laws giving them the right to bring a private enforcement action.</p>	<p><i>Vetoed by governor, veto sustained.</i></p>

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Fair Taxes Support a Stronger Future for Everyone	Leveling the Playing Field: LD 1704, “An Act To Change the Exclusion Amount under the Estate Tax and Provide Additional Funding for the Housing Opportunities for Maine Fund” would have repealed tax cuts on Maine’s wealthiest estates and use the revenue to boost a chronically underfunded housing program for low-income Mainers.	<i>This bill failed to pass.</i>
	Paying our fair Share: LD 498, “An Act To Reauthorize a 3 Percent Tax on Income over \$200,000 To Lift All Maine Workers out of Poverty” would have established 3% tax on income over \$200,000 to fully fund state Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) to match the federal EITC.	<i>This bill failed to pass.</i>
Promote housing as a human right and preventive healthcare measure	Protection for Renters: LD 1143, “An Act To Protect Tenants from Unnecessary Evictions” would have stopped no-cause evictions for the most vulnerable tenants who do not have leases.	<i>This bill failed to pass.</i>
Reimagining Public Safety & Ending Mass Incarceration	Investing in rehabilitation and peoples’ potential: LD 1668 would have required a plan to close Long Creek Youth Development Center and reinvest the funds into community-based alternatives to incarceration	<i>Vetoed by governor; veto sustained</i>
Climate Action, Environmental Protection, and Healthy People	Protecting our environment: LD 1639, “An Act To Protect the Health and Welfare of Maine Communities and Reduce Harmful Solid Waste” would have stopped the practice of filling Maine landfills with out-of-state waste.	<i>Carried over to the 2022 legislative session.</i>
	Protecting our forests: LD 125, “An Act To Prohibit the Aerial Spraying of Glyphosate and Other Synthetic Herbicides for the Purpose of Silviculture” would have banned aerial herbicide spraying for forestry management.	<i>Vetoed by governor; veto sustained</i>
Education and Training	Supporting the workforce and children: LD 1652, “An Act To Build a Child Care System by Recruiting and Retaining Maine’s Early Childhood Educators Workforce” is focused on early childhood professionals that work in licensed child care programs, with wage supplements, scholarships for Higher Ed, funding for CTE, apprenticeships, data collection and workforce reports, and articulation agreements to improve career pathways	<i>Carried over to the 2022 legislative session.</i>
	Bolstering child care: LD1678, “An Act To Support Child Care Providers and School Readiness through Tax Credits” would set up 3 different tax credits in Maine, one for child care programs, one for the teachers/staff who work in chld care, and one for parents of young children who attend child care	<i>Carried over to the 2022 legislative session.</i>