

May 2, 2019

LD 1283 establishes taskforce to recommend a sustainable funding model for Maine's public higher education infrastructure

The Maine State Chamber of Commerce testified in support of **LD 1283**, *Resolve, To Advance College Affordability by Convening a Task Force to Recommend a Sustainable Funding Model for Maintaining Maine's Public Higher Education Infrastructure*. This resolve would direct the Chancellor of the University of Maine System to convene a task force – to be named the Task Force To Recommend a Sustainable Funding Model for Maintaining Maine's Public Higher Education Infrastructure – to study how to provide adequate supplemental funding to sustain the State's public higher education infrastructure without burdening students who are residents of the State with unreasonable tuition and fee increases. The task force would consider, but is not limited to considering, infrastructure improvements, health and safety repairs, technology improvements, energy efficiency and equipment upgrades and, when necessary, new construction. The task force is directed to report to the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs and the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs by January 2, 2020. The joint standing committees are authorized to submit legislation to the Second Regular Session of the 129th Legislature.

The Maine State Chamber's members have made it clear that they believe strongly that education is the most important investment that can be made to ensure suc-

cessful participation in the new, knowledge-based economy, earnings growth, and improved health status. Post-secondary education and training are critical building blocks to ensure success in the workforce.

Student debt continues to be a point of discussion among all Maine people, we must also continue the discussion about college affordability. Investing in our higher education institutions is the best way to address student debt. Establishing a task force ensures that investments to our public higher education institutions are continued and maintained. The Maine State Chamber believes that a task force is a valuable way to start the conversation about the whole issue of affordability and to study how to provide adequate supplemental funding to sustain the State's public higher education infrastructure without burdening students who are residents of the State and to be able to recommend a sustainable model for policy makers to be able to use and make future policy decisions based upon.

Maine businesses need the University of Maine System to lead the state's workforce development efforts. There is no bigger barrier to the success of our state than the size and skill of the Maine workforce and no organizations are better positioned to help provide employers the professional workforce they need to grow their businesses and our state's economy than our public higher education systems if they are properly resourced. Just like roads,

Continued on Page 2...

Judiciary committee defeats bill to require companies to report charitable donations

Corporate governance structure impacted

On Tuesday, April 30, the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary voted unanimously "ought-not-to-pass" on **LD 1423**, *An Act to Require Corporate Transparency When Taxpayer Funding is Provided*, sponsored by Rep. Heidi Sampson (R-Alfred). Linda Caprara testified on behalf of the Maine State Chamber in opposition to the bill at the public hearing in mid-April.

The bill would have required companies that receive the Business Equipment Tax Exemption or participate in Tax Increment Financing to report charitable donations on its annual disclosure to the Secretary of State. The Maine State Chamber argued this would create a chilling effect on corporations making those donations with the potential for public shaming. LD 1423 also attacked the corporate governance structure that governs how corporations (both non-profit and for profit) and their directors do business internally and their fiduciary responsibilities to their shareholders.

If you have any questions, please contact Linda Caprara by calling (207) 623-4568, ext. 106, or lcaprara@mainechamber.org. □

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About the Maine State Chamber of Commerce: Since 1889, the Maine State Chamber has been fighting to lower your cost of doing business. Through our Grassroots Action Network and OneVoice program, we work with a network of approximately 5,000 companies statewide who see the value in such a service and provide the financial support that keeps our access, advocacy, and assistance efforts going strong. As Maine's Chamber, we make sure that the business environment of the state continues to thrive. The Maine State Chamber of Commerce advocates on behalf of their interests before the legislature and regulatory agencies and through conferences, seminars, and affiliated programs.

Online learning key to helping grow skilled Maine workforce

by Ed Cervone, executive director of Educate Maine

EDITOR'S NOTE: With permission from the author, we are reprinting this letter to the editor, which ran in the Portland Press Herald on April 30, 2019. It can be accessed at [pressherald.com/2019/04/30/letter-to-the-editor-online-learning-viable-pathway-to-growing-skilled-maine-workforce](https://www.pressherald.com/2019/04/30/letter-to-the-editor-online-learning-viable-pathway-to-growing-skilled-maine-workforce). Ed Cervone, executive director of Educate Maine, wrote the letter below in response to an earlier article, entitled "Online learning really clicks with students in Maine," which was printed in the April 7 edition on Page A1 (<https://www.pressherald.com/2019/04/07/online-learning-surges-at-university-of-maine-system>).

Thank you for shining a spotlight on the growing opportunities for Mainers to participate in online college classes and degree completion. Such classes are ideal for many learners, including nontraditional college students who are already busy with full-time jobs and family commitments, or high school students who are jump starting their postsecondary education. The University of Maine System is a leader in this innovative teaching model, and it is my hope that other institutions of higher education become leaders, too.

Only 46 percent of Maine adults have completed postsecondary education resulting in the attainment of a credential of value – be that an associate degree, bachelor's degree, military service, apprenticeship or certification completion. At the same time, we know that some form of postsecondary education will be necessary for two-thirds of Maine

jobs in the next decade.

That's why nearly 100 businesses and organizations across Maine have joined the coordinated and united MaineSpark campaign to focus on bringing our collective work together to achieve the state's goal that 60 percent of adults in Maine hold a credential of value by 2025. We are doing this work to help Maine grow the skilled workforce we know we need to fill the job vacancies of today and tomorrow, and to create a sustainable economy for future generations.

Achieving this goal will take all forms of learning and pathways, and we need every Maine person involved in making our goal a reality. Online learning is an important piece of this mix. I echo the sentiment shared by University of Maine System Chancellor James Page that we need to meet students where they are, and for many, the only way to do that is online. □

Public Higher Education...

(Continued from Page 1...)

bridges and wastewater, our public university campuses are critical public infrastructure essential to the state's economic growth. The University of Maine System is critical to ensuring Maine employers can fill thousands of open jobs. As stated in our joint *Making Maine Work* report, "approximately 60% of University of Maine System graduates stay and work in Maine. As Maine's student-age population

shrinks, the University System is attracting record numbers of out-of-state students." The University of Maine System is a key component in the state's efforts to increase our population and close the skills gap.

For more information on education and workforce development, please contact Megan Sanborn by calling (207) 623-4568, ext. 108, or by emailing msanborn@mainechamber.org. □

High-quality expanded learning opportunities improve academic performance and deter youth from crime

The Maine State Chamber of Commerce testified in support of **LD 712**, *An Act To Fully Fund After-school and Preschool Programs in the School Funding Formula, Increase the Economically Disadvantaged Student Factor in the School Funding Formula and Increase the School Construction Debt Service Limit*. The testimony presented was in support of the portions of the proposal that seek to expand voluntary public PreK and after-school programs across Maine.

The bill amends the school funding formula to fund after-school programs based on the state share percentage and to fund public preschool programs at 50% of the cost of the programs, or if a school administrative unit's state share percentage is greater than 50%, to fund the unit's public preschool program at the state share percentage.

Maine business leaders believe strongly that education is the single most important investment. High-quality early education and K-12 are imperative building blocks to ensure post-secondary success. Extended learning opportunities – be those before school, after school, or during the summer – are also important pieces to this puzzle.

The Maine State Chamber also supports the growing of more high-quality extended learning opportunities for Maine students. We know that too many young adults in Maine are not workforce ready. While Maine has made great progress raising its high school graduation rates during the past decade to be one of the top rates in the country at 87 percent, only 36% of Maine high school students who took the SAT in 2018 met the benchmarks in both math and reading/writing. Twelve percent of young adults are not in school and not working. Meanwhile, we know that some form of post-secondary education will be necessary for two-thirds of jobs in Maine by 2020.

Disparate access to high-quality expanded learning in the after-school hours and over the summer is a large reason why students are falling behind in school. For example, summer learning loss accounts for as much as two-thirds of the academic achievement gap between low- and high-income students. Expanded learning opportunities also improves workforce participation. Three quarters of Maine parents say that after-school programs help them keep their jobs.

And we know from our many MaineSpark partners that this can take many forms – such as deeper learning experiences that focus on mastering academic content, team building, collaboration, communications skills, and critical thinking – all skills to become great life-long learners. This can be through technical training, applied learning, and tutoring. It can include career and workplace exploration. It can take many forms for our students and is tremendous way to bring local partners such as businesses into students' teaching.

High-quality expanded learning opportunities improve academic performance and deter youth from crime. For more information on education and workforce development, please contact Megan Sanborn by calling (207) 623-4568, ext. 108, or by emailing msanborn@mainechamber.org. □

CTE programs connect skills training and continued post-secondary education

The Maine State Chamber testified this week in support of **LD 1267**, *An Act To Allow The Awarding of Graduation Credits By Career and Technical Education Centers and Regions*. This bill allows career and technical education centers/regions to award credit toward graduation requirements for courses and programs that are approved by the Commissioner of Education. The commissioner is required to establish the credit to be awarded and the content area toward which the school administrative unit must apply the credit. Finally, the commissioner must adopt routine technical rules that develop a procedure for career and technical education centers and regions to submit courses and programs for approval and criteria in each content area that the course or program must meet to be approved.

There is a growing need for skilled workers in Maine and employers have indicated that there is an increasing need for well-trained and well-educated employees. Career and technical education centers and regions are a great way for students to learn both hard and soft skills. CTE schools, once known as vocational training, have shed some of the stigma that they once had, thanks in part to growth of the fields in communications, health care, and engineering. CTE programs also have created clearer connections between skills training and continued post-secondary education. To continue to shed the stigma, to increase the growing number of CTE students, and to continue to interest students in CTE programs, the Maine State Chamber believes all students should be able to be awarded graduation credits for attending CTE classes. Some schools may already award credits, and some do not – this creates an equity disparity.

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Public PreK is important for Maine's future workforce

The Maine State Chamber of Commerce testified in support of three bills this week aimed at a Universal Public Preschool Program and funding to Public Preschool. The Maine State Chamber supports public PreK expansion and believes that public PreK is an important tool to build and strengthen Maine's future workforce.

Maine business leaders believe strongly that education is the single most important investment that can be made to ensure successful participation in the new, knowledge-based economy, earnings growth, and improved health status. Post-secondary education and training are critical building block to ensure success in the workforce. High-quality early education and K-12 are imperative building blocks to ensure post-secondary success. Moving each and every Mainer along the educational continuum to their highest educational potential is imperative. We have seen the charts and know that there is a huge difference in lifetime earnings between a college graduate and someone who drops out of high school: \$1.5 million per drop out. These staggering earning losses translate into less spending power, fewer contributions to the tax base, and less productivity.

Education is a critical investment in Maine people and in our economy – and should be treated as such through a coordinated approach starting with prekindergarten. Starting early with PreK, so all students arrive at Kindergarten ready to learn, is an important first step and merits state investments. A 2013 research report by ReadyNation shows that children who participate in high-quality early learning programs have greater success; are 44% more likely to graduate from high school; are 74% more likely to hold a skilled job; and, make 26% more in earnings as adults. These numbers translate into an unbeatable long-term rate of

return – up to \$16 for every \$1 invested.

As stated in our collaborative 2012 *Making Maine Work* report with Maine Development Foundation, “*Investment in Young Children = Real Economic Development*,” for Maine people to truly reach their potential, it all starts at birth. Waiting to invest in Maine's most precious assets, our children, until they enter our K-12 system is, for many, too late. To attain our vision of a high-quality of life for all Maine people, we must ensure that each and every Maine child has access to high-quality care and education from birth. Investment in early education *IS* real economic development. It's not just a social and moral imperative, it is an economic imperative.

In recent years Maine has made steady progress increasing voluntary Pre-K programming in various regions across our state, now serving about 47 percent of our four-year-olds. Here in Maine, the Maine Department of Education data show that an at-risk four-year old who attended public PreK programs scored four to seven percentage points higher on reading and math assessments in the third and fourth grades when compared to their like peers who did not attend PreK.


We also know that across our communities there are additional schools and community partnerships interested in adding public PreK programs, and the \$7 million proposed in the Governor's budget is a first step toward achieving the goal of providing high-quality early learning opportunities for more of our youngest children.

The Maine State Chamber encouraged the committee's members to also consider the mixed delivery model, where public PreK partners with local child care providers, like YMCAs and/or Head Start, to create collaborative programs. In addition to expanding access

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Events
 At Home

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MAINE
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COMMERCE

Regional Business Breakfasts

After the legislature adjourns, our staff routinely travels throughout the state during the spring and summer months to discuss legislative activity and the critical role individual business owners can play in the passage or defeat of legislation. The Maine State Chamber gathers business leaders on a regional level through its **Regional Business Breakfast Meetings**. Local business leaders provide valuable insight that is instrumental to this open dialogue about business issues that affect your business, your community, and your state.

To register for any of these **FREE** events, please contact Angie Arno by calling (207) 623-4568, ext. 104, or by emailing aarno@mainechamber.org. To sponsor one of these events in your area, please contact Melody Rousseau by calling (207) 623-4568, ext. 102, or by emailing melodyr@mainechamber.org.

Each Regional Business Breakfast runs from 7:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.

Tuesday, June 4

Southern Maine Regional Breakfast Meeting

Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield, 2 Gannett Drive, South Portland

Wednesday, June 19

Kennebec Valley Regional Breakfast Meeting

Bangor Savings Bank, Senator Way, Augusta
In collaboration with Kennebec Valley Chamber of Commerce

Wednesday, June 26

Maine Highlands Regional Breakfast Meeting

Hilton Garden Inn, 250 Haskell Road, Bangor
In collaboration with Bangor Region Chamber of Commerce

Thursday, June 27

Northern Maine Regional Breakfast Meeting

University of Maine at Presque Isle, St. John & Aroostook Rooms

Governor Mills introduces bill to establish Maine Climate Council —

During a press conference this week Governor Janet Mills introduced bipartisan legislation to create the Maine Climate Council. The Climate Council will develop the action plan and timetable to meet the state's greenhouse gas reduction goals, to promote jobs and economic benefits for Maine people in the transition to a lower carbon economy, and to support the climate resiliency of Maine's communities.

The Governor announced that this is another step in combating the climate change threat, expanding our clean energy economy, and investing in our future by creating the Maine Climate Council and marshaling experts across the state to take urgent action. The Federal Environmental Protection Agency published a document last week issuing climate change preparedness guidance for communities nationwide already struggling with severe natural disasters. The report acknowledged that climate change "is expected to increase the frequency and intensity of some natural disasters." Governor Mills was joined for the announcement by Republican Senator David Woodsome, the lead sponsor of the bill, as well as Bill Mook, owner of Mook Sea Farms in Wallpole, and Melissa Law, owner of Bumbleroot Farmers in Windham, both spoke about the impact that climate change is having on their businesses. Clean energy and environmental advocates, several key commissioners, and other lawmakers also joined the governor during the press conference.

Governor Mills announced her intention to create the Maine Climate Council in February when Maine joined the U.S. Climate Alliance. The Climate Council will consist of several department commissioners, key state leaders, science and technical experts, business and non-profit leaders, municipal leaders, a tribal repre-

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FAME promotes April as Youth Financial Literacy month

Tenth-annual "Fostering Financial Education in Maine Schools Conference" to be held Friday, May 10 in Augusta

Youth Financial Literacy Month is in full swing at the Finance Authority of Maine (FAME). Throughout the month of April, FAME's College Access and Financial Education Team has been offering a variety of statewide initiatives and educational workshops intended to promote the importance of financial education to Maine citizens.

In honor of April as Youth Financial Literacy month, FAME is excited to celebrate the upcoming tenth anniversary of the "Fostering Financial Education in Maine Schools Conference" (<http://mejumpstart.org/fostering-financial-education-in-maine-schools-conference/>). The conference will be held on Friday, May 10 at the Augusta Civic Center, with a special pre-conference on Thursday, May 9 at the Senator Inn. The goal of the conference is to provide Maine educators with the necessary tools, resources, and best practices for implementing Maine's learning standards for personal finance and economics. The event is free for classroom teachers, and funds are available to cover substitute teacher expenses. This year's speakers include Laura Levine, president of the National JumpStart Coalition, as well as State Senator Matthew Pouliot of Kennebec County. The conference is made possible by the Maine JumpStart Coalition, the Maine Office of Securities, the Maine Credit Union League, Town & Country Federal Credit Union, and many others.

"FAME's financial education efforts are a key element of our mission. We provide outreach to students of all ages at

schools throughout the state, from Aroostook to York counties, in order to help prepare Maine students for financially successful futures," stated FAME Chief Executive Officer Bruce Wagner. "We are proud to be a sponsor of the upcoming financial education conference for Maine teachers and community educators."

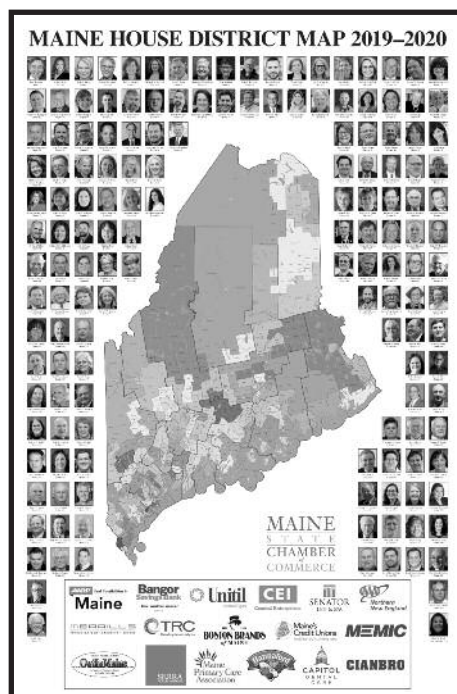
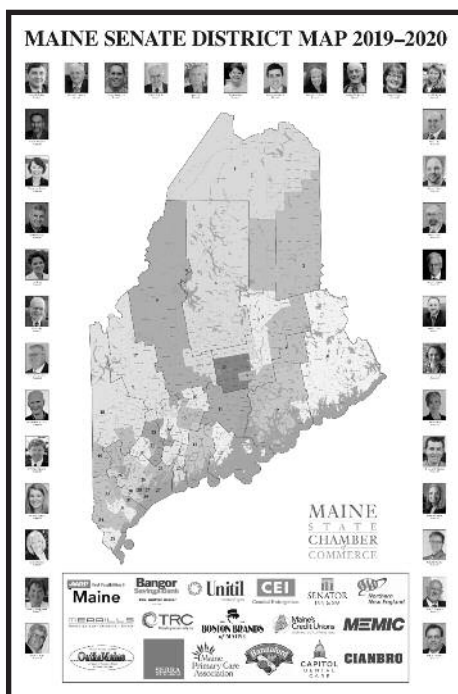
In addition to the conference and numerous statewide financial education activities, FAME is continuing its national expansion of Claim Your Future® (<https://www.claimyourfuture.com/>), a program designed to encourage students to explore education and training after high school, future careers, and money management. The online version of Claim Your Future has been played by students in over 90 countries and in every U.S. state. Due to strong demand for the classroom game kit, FAME has adapted the program so that other organizations can co-brand and customize the program for their own constituents.

FAME is a quasi-independent state agency that provides innovative financial solutions to help Maine citizens pursue business and educational opportunities. FAME helps to lead the creation of good paying jobs for Maine citizens by working at the nexus between economic and workforce development. To learn more about FAME, please visit www.famemaine.com. For more information, please contact William Norbert, governmental affairs & communications manager at the Finance Authority of Maine, by calling (207) 620-3540 or 1-800-228-3734, or by emailing wnorbert@famemaine.com. □

LEGISLATIVE POSTERS NOW AVAILABLE

MAINE STATE CHAMBER of COMMERCE

The Maine State Chamber of Commerce has produced the two-year legislative posters again this year. Each of the two legislative posters contains color photos of all Senate and House members of the 129th Legislature, as well as a map of the state's legislative districts.



The free posters are available for pick up at the Maine State Chamber's office in Augusta, while supplies last.

The Maine State Chamber would like to thank the sponsors of our 2019-2020 legislative posters:

AAA-Northern New England; AARP Maine; Bangor Savings Bank; Boston Brands of Maine; Capitol Dental Care; CIANBRO; Coastal Enterprises, Inc.; Hannaford Supermarkets; Maine Credit Union League; Maine Primary Care Association; MEMIC; Merrill's Investigations & Security; OutInMaine LLC; The Senator Inn & Spa; Serra Public Affairs; TRC Companies; and, Unitil Corp.

Public PreK... (Continued from Page 4...)

for more children, the Maine State Chamber also hopes that the Legislature will consider expanding current PreK programming to full day.

Here in Maine 73% of all children under the age of six has all parents in the workforce. We know that working parents want their children enrolled in high-quality early learning programs and that full-day programs, especially those that include wrap-around care (before- and after-school), are what works best with working parents' schedules. Such continuity of care provides young students with the ability to create attachments to the same caregivers, which is one component of quality.

For more information on education and workforce development, please contact Megan Sanborn by calling (207) 623-4568, ext. 108, or by emailing msanborn@mainechamber.org. □

Climate Council... (Continued from Page 5...)

sentative, and a representative of Maine youth. It will be charged with leading Maine's efforts to reduce Maine's Greenhouse Gas emissions by 45 percent by 2030 and at least 80 percent by 2050, and with achieving 80 percent renewable energy in Maine's electricity sector – specifically energy consumed in Maine – by 2030 and 100 percent by 2050. The Climate Council will also convene several working groups from within its membership to focus on how the state can tackle challenges within these specific areas. In addition to recommending new policy and innovative strategies to reach these emission and energy goals, the council will update the Maine State Climate Plan every four years and will solicit input from the public and report out progress on its goals every two years to the people of Maine. The first Climate Action Plan is due to be submitted to the legislature by December 1, 2020. □

Public Hearings

Public hearings are open to everyone. This public hearing schedule is subject to change. Questions may be directed to the Secretary of the Senate's Office at (207) 287-1540. For the most current schedule, please visit <http://legislature.maine.gov/committee/#Committees> or contact the committee clerk.

MONDAY, MAY 6, 2019

Education and Cultural Affairs

10:00 a.m.; Cross Building, Room 208

LD 632, An Act To Promote Free, Appropriate Public Education (Rep. Warren of Hallowell)

Judiciary

9:00 a.m.; State House, Room 438

LD 666, An Act To Protect Pregnant Workers (Rep. Carney of Cape Elizabeth)

LD 759, An Act To Increase Efficiency in Enforcement of the Maine Human Rights Act (Rep. Talbot Ross of Portland)

LD 847, An Act To Ensure Persons with Disabilities Have Access to Public Rest Rooms (Rep. Riley of Jay)

LD 1245, An Act To Protect Victims of Domestic and Sexual Violence in Certain Provisions under the Maine Human Rights Act (Rep. Stover of Boothbay)

LD 1294, Resolve, Directing the Maine Human Rights Commission To Implement a Pilot Program To Investigate and Report on Incidents of Harassment Due to Housing Status, Lack of Employment and Other Issues (Rep. Talbot Ross of Portland)

Labor and Housing

9:00 a.m.; Cross Building, Room 202

LD 756, An Act To Improve the Maine Workers' Compensation Act of 1992 (Rep. Sylvester of Portland)

LD 1500, An Act To Improve Workers' Compensation Protection for Injured Workers Whose Employers Have Wrongfully Not Secured Workers' Compensation Insurance (Pres. Jackson of Aroostook)

LD 1501, An Act To Change the Law Governing Occupational Disease Claims under the Maine Workers' Compensation Act of 1992 (Pres. Jackson of Aroostook)

LD 1600, An Act To Support E-9-1-1 Dispatchers and Corrections Officers Diagnosed with Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (Rep. Dillingham of Oxford)

LD 1623, An Act To Improve Employee Representation under the Maine Workers' Compensation Act of 1992 by Amending the Laws Governing Attorney's Fees (Pres. Jackson of Aroostook)

LD 1624, An Act To Prevent Discrimination under the Maine Workers' Compensation Act of 1992 (Pres. Jackson of Aroostook)

LD 1625, An Act To Eliminate the Durational Cap on Partial Benefits under the Workers'

Compensation Laws (Pres. Jackson of Aroostook)

Taxation

10:00 a.m.; State House, Room 127

LD 1647, An Act To Provide Tax Fairness to Maine's Middle Class and Working Families (Rep. Berry of Bowdoinham)

LD 1652, An Act To Make Technical Changes to the Taxation of Marijuana (Rep. Tipping of Orono)

TUESDAY, MAY 7, 2019

Energy, Utilities and Technology

1:00 p.m.; Cross Building, Room 211

LD 1494, An Act To Reform Maine's Renewable Portfolio Standard (Sen. Vitelli of Sagadahoc)

WEDNESDAY, MAY 8, 2019

Environment and Natural Resources

1:00 p.m.; Cross Building, Room 216

LD 1649, An Act To Implement Recommendations of the Department of Environmental Protection Regarding the State's Product Stewardship Program Framework Laws (Rep. Tucker of Brunswick)

THURSDAY, MAY 9, 2019

Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services

1:00 p.m.; Cross Building, Room 220

LD 51, An Act To Implement the Recommendations of the Task Force on Health Care Coverage for All of Maine (Sen. Sanborn of Cumberland)

LD 52, An Act To Provide an Affordable and Accessible Health Care System for all Residents of Maine (Sen. Gratwick of Penobscot)

LD 109, An Act To Create a Public Health Insurance Option (Rep. Berry of Bowdoinham)

LD 407, An Act To Promote Universal Health Care, Including Dental, Vision and Hearing Care (Rep. Brooks of Lewiston)

LD 437, An Act To Improve Access to and Affordability of Health Care in Maine (Sen. Pouliot of Kennebec)

LD 1243, An Act To Assist Small Businesses in Providing Health Care for Their Employees

(Rep. Morales of South Portland)

LD 1281, Resolve, To Create a Committee To Explore Regional Cooperation for Affordable Health Insurance (Rep. Tepler of Topsham)

LD 1591, An Act To Provide Access to Health Care for Maine Citizens (Rep. Brennan of Portland)

LD 1611, An Act To Support Universal Health Care (Rep. Brooks of Lewiston)

LD 1617, An Act To Create a Single-payer Health Care Program in Maine (Rep. Sylvester of Portland)

FRIDAY, MAY 10, 2019

Education and Cultural Affairs

9:00 a.m.; Cross Building, Room 208

LD 718, An Act To Increase Funding for Adult Basic Literacy, Workplace Education and College Preparedness (Rep. Talbot Ross of Portland)

LD 1382, An Act To Establish Computer Science Courses and Content in Kindergarten to Grade 12 Schools (Rep. Pierce of Falmouth)

LD 1521, An Act To Expand Skill Development Opportunities for Maine Youth (Sen. Keim of Oxford)

Environment and Natural Resources

10:00 a.m.; Cross Building, Room 216

LD 112, An Act To Implement Changes to Maine's Solid Waste Laws Pursuant to a Review of the State Waste Management and Recycling Plan (Rep. Tucker of Brunswick)

MONDAY, MAY 13, 2019

Education and Cultural Affairs

1:00 p.m.; Cross Building, Room 208

LD 1607, An Act To Create the Department of Early Care and Learning (Sen. Millett of Cumberland)

LD 1641, An Act To Strengthen the School Transportation Workforce (Sen. Herbig of Waldo)

WEDNESDAY, MAY 15, 2019

Education and Cultural Affairs

1:00 p.m.; Cross Building, Room 208

LD 610, An Act To Provide Funding for Maine Public (Rep. Jorgensen of Portland) □

Digest of New Legislation

Maine Chamber staff have studied each of these recently printed bills to assess potential impact on business trends. If you have concerns regarding any bill, please communicate those concerns to a member of our governmental services staff at (207) 623-4568.

EDUCATION

LD 1606, *An Act To Increase Funding for Career and Technical Education Programs.*

(Sen. Dill, D-Penobscot) *Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs.* This bill provides an additional \$1,500,000 per year for the cost of career and technical education pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A, section 15688-A, subsection 1. This bill also removes the so-called hold harmless provision that limits the amount of any decrease or increase in the total allocation for a career and technical education center or career and technical education region, effective January 1, 2020.

LD 1607, *An Act To Create the Department of Early Care and Learning.*

(Sen. Millett, D-Cumberland) *Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs.* This bill is a concept draft pursuant to Joint Rule 208. This bill proposes to create the Department of Early Care and Learning as a cabinet-level state agency within the executive branch of State Government. The department would assume primary responsibility for matters regarding children under 6 years of age in the State, including the care, health care and education of the children that are now the responsibility of the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Education. The major components of the bill are as follows.

- 1 Definitions. As used in this bill, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms have the following meanings.
 - A “Board” means the Board of Early Care and Learning.
 - B “Commissioner” means the Commissioner of Early Care and Learning.
 - C “Department” means the Department of Early Care and Learning.
 - D “Early care and education” means programs and services relating to high-quality care, health care and education of children under 6 years of age.
- 2 Department; commissioner. The department is created as a department of the executive branch of State Government and a separate budget unit that has the duties, responsibilities, functions, powers and authority accorded to state agencies under state law. The department is administered by a commissioner who is the chief administrative and executive officer of the department required by law to be appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate and reports directly

to the Governor. The commissioner is responsible for the performance and exercise of the duties, responsibilities, powers, functions and authority of the department. The commissioner has the power to distribute the functions and duties given to the commissioner among the various units of the department to integrate the work properly and to promote the most economical and efficient administration of the department. The powers and duties given to the commissioner or the department are assumed and carried out by the units that the commissioner designates and may in turn be delegated to subordinates by those unit directors with the approval of the commissioner.

- 3 Programs and services of department. The department is directed to provide children and families with programs and services to assist the children and families in meeting essential needs, including:
 - A Head Start and child care services;
 - B Maternal and child health services, including home visiting programs;
 - C Prekindergarten programs and services;
 - D Child care services licensing, subsidies and quality control management;
 - E Preschool special education under Part B of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; and
 - F Early intervention services for infants and toddlers under Part C of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.
- 4 Duties and responsibilities of department. The department has the following duties and responsibilities:
 - A Administering programs and services necessary for the operation and management of voluntary prekindergarten;
 - B Administering programs and services necessary for the operation and management of preschool and child development programs, including Head Start and child care regulation;
 - C Acting as the agent of the Federal Government to ensure that state programs and services conform with federal requirements and to administer federal funds granted to the State to assist in the activities of the department;
 - D Assisting local units of administration in the State to ensure the availability of the programs and services

- E provided by the department;
- E Regulating early care and learning programs, including licensing and inspecting the programs to ensure adherence to state law and department rules;
- F Performing functions relating to improvement in the quality, availability and affordability of child care in the State;
- G Serving as the Head Start state collaboration office;
- H Administering the licensure and regulation of day care centers, group day care homes and family day care homes;
- I Providing consultation and making recommendations concerning the establishment and implementation of early care and learning services and programs;
- J Reporting and making recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature as required by law or as determined necessary by the commissioner;
- K Performing any other duties, responsibilities or functions agreed upon between the department and the Department of Health and Human Services; and,
- L Performing any other duties, responsibilities or functions agreed upon between the department and the Department of Education.
- 5 Powers of department. The department has the following powers:
 - A Adopting rules and procedures to carry out department duties and responsibilities;
 - B Contracting for services;
 - C Hiring or assigning employees and staff;
 - D Applying for and accepting from any other agency of government, person, group or corporation any funds that may be available to carry out the duties and responsibilities of the department;
 - E In an adjudicatory proceeding conducted by the department, issuing subpoenas to require the attendance and testimony of witnesses and the production of evidence or discovery relating to an issue of fact in the proceeding and designating employees of the department to issue such subpoenas;
 - F Suing and being sued; and
 - G Performing any legal act relating to the care, health care or education of children under 6 years of age in the State.

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New Legislation... (Continued from Page 9...)

6 Board of Early Care and Learning. The Board of Early Care and Learning is established within the department to assist the department and commissioner in carrying out the duties and responsibilities of the department.

A The board consists of 9 members, including:

- (1) The Commissioner of Health and Human Services as an ex officio member;
- (2) The Commissioner of Education as an ex officio member;
- (3) The Chancellor of the University of Maine System as an ex officio member;
- (4) A representative of the business community with a demonstrated commitment to education, appointed by the Governor;
- (5) An early care and education teacher selected from a list of 3 nominees provided by the Maine Education Association, appointed by the Governor;
- (6) A parent or legal guardian of a child under 6 years of age receiving early care and education services or services from a family child care provider, appointed by the Governor;
- (7) A person representing a provider of early care and education services who has practical experience in the management and administration of early care and education services, appointed by the Governor;
- (8) A person with expertise in the evaluation and assessment of successful preschool education programs, appointed by the Governor; and,
- (9) A pediatrician with a focus on child development or a person who is nationally recognized for research in the field of educational psychology, appointed by the Governor.

In making appointments, the Governor is directed to seek to appoint members who are from geographically diverse regions of the State, who are familiar with the differing interests, perspectives and needs of urban, rural and suburban regions and who reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of the children of the State. Each member chosen must have a demonstrated interest in and commitment to early care and learning.

In appointing members to initial terms, the Governor is directed to designate 3 members for 5-year terms and 3 members for 4-year terms. Subsequent appointments must be for 5-year terms. An appointed member may not serve more than 3 consecutive 5-year terms. A member serves until the member's successor is appointed.

The board elects a chair from the board's membership and other officers that the board considers necessary. A quorum consists of 5 members, and a quorum is necessary for the board to conduct business. The board is directed to adopt bylaws to govern the conduct of the board's activities. Appointed members of the board receive per diem and reimbursement of expenses in conformity with the rates and allowances determined for members of other state boards who receive per diem and reimbursement of expenses.

B The purposes of the board include:

- (1) Consolidating and coordinating resources and public funding for early care and learning to ensure the sound and coordinated development of related programs and services;
- (2) Ensuring that parents of children under 6 years of age have a decisive role in the planning, operation and evaluation of programs and services that aid families in the care of children under 6 years of age;
- (3) Providing consumer education and accessibility to early care and learning resources for all communities in the State;
- (4) Advancing the quality of early care and learning to support the healthy development of and preparation for success in school for children;
- (5) Developing a seamless delivery system of early care and learning administered by federal, state and local agencies and providers through local points of entry;
- (6) Developing and managing effective data collection to support necessary functions of and accurately evaluate a coordinated early child care and learning distribution system; and,
- (7) Reviewing and making recommendations regarding the budget of the department.

C The duties and responsibilities of the board include:

- (1) Developing and overseeing the management of:
 - (a) The administration of a high-quality system of public and private early care and learning;
 - (b) Subject to available fund-

ing, the implementation of a program of voluntary and universally accepted high-quality early childhood education for all preschool-age children in the State;

- (c) A kindergarten readiness assessment for preschool-age children and a comprehensive evaluation of early care and learning, including the establishment of baseline data to inform the design and implementation of a universally accessible, high-quality early care and learning program for all preschool-age children in the State; and,
- (d) A workforce development system designed to support the education, training and compensation of the early care and learning workforce, including all family child care, infant, toddler, preschool and school-age children program and services centers and providers; and,

- (2) Reporting biannually to the Governor, the Secretary of the Senate, the Clerk of the House of Representatives, the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over health and human services matters and the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over education matters on the board's and the department's activities, progress in achieving goals and implementing programs of the department and progress in the State regarding moving toward a system of universal early care and learning for preschool children 3 to 5 years of age.

7 Assistance and coordination. All other state departments, agencies, officers and employees are directed upon the request of the commissioner or board and to the extent permissible by law to make available department and agency services, resources, personnel and facilities to ensure the most effective coordination and use of state resources, personnel and facilities for the benefit of families and children under 6 years of age and to assist the department in carrying out the department's duties and responsibilities.

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New Legislation... (Continued from Page 10...)

- 8 Transition. By October 1, 2020, the transition regarding the reassignment of the duties and responsibilities of the Department of Health and Human Services and Department of Education to the department takes effect in the following ways:
- A All references to, responsibilities of and authority conferred upon the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Education and the predecessors of those departments regarding the powers, duties, responsibilities, programs, services and functions assigned to the department are deemed to refer to and vest in the department. The department is the successor in every way to the powers, duties, responsibilities, programs, services and functions assigned to the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Education as the powers, duties, responsibilities, programs, services and functions pertain to the powers, duties, responsibilities, programs, services and functions assumed by the department.
- B All accrued expenditures, assets, liabilities, balances of appropriations, allocations, transfers, revenues or other available funds in an account or subdivision of an account of the Department of Health and Human Services or the Department of Education that pertain to the powers, duties, responsibilities, programs, services and functions assumed by the department are transferred in the transition to the proper accounts of the department by the State Controller or by financial order upon the request of the State Budget Officer and with the approval of the Governor.
- C All rules of the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Education, as they pertain to the duties of the department, that are in effect on the effective date of the transition remain in effect until rescinded, revised or amended.
- D All contracts, agreements and compacts of the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Education, as they pertain to the powers, duties, responsibilities, programs, services and functions of the department, that are in effect on the effective date of the transition remain in effect until the contracts, agree-

ments and compacts expire or are altered by the parties involved in the contracts, agreements or compacts.

- E All records of the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Education as they pertain to the powers, duties, responsibilities, programs, services and functions of the department are transferred to the department as necessary to implement the transition.
- F All employees and positions of the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Education necessary to carry out the powers, duties, responsibilities, programs, services and functions of the department are transferred to the department.
- G All office equipment, furniture and other property or assets of the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Education that are used or held exclusively or principally by personnel transferred under paragraph F are transferred to the department.
- H All transfers of employees and assets from the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Education to the department are subject to the approval of the commissioner, and a transfer of an employee or asset may not occur if the commissioner determines that the employee or asset should remain with the transferring department.
- I Employees of the department who were employees of the Department of Health and Human Services or the Department of Education immediately prior to the effective date of the transition retain all employee rights, privileges and benefits, including sick leave, vacation and seniority, provided under the Civil Service Law or collective bargaining agreements. The Department of Administrative and Financial Services, Bureau of Human Resources is directed to assist the affected departments with the orderly implementation of the transition under this paragraph.
- J The Department of Administrative and Financial Services, Bureau of the Budget is directed to work with the employees of the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Education with regard to the powers, duties, responsibilities, programs, services and functions transferred to the department to develop the budget for the department. □

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Health Care Forum

***Wednesday, May 22 | 9:00 a.m. to Noon
Bangor Savings Bank, Senator Way, Augusta***



Health care and health insurance was the single biggest public policy issue that impacted - and motivated - voters this past November at the polls. Newly-elected officials from both sides of the aisle - in Maine and in Washington - have pledged to do something “meaningful” to address cost and access to health care. On May 22, the Maine State Chamber of Commerce is hosting its annual informative and timely presentation on the status of health care here and beyond, and what you as a business in Maine need to know as we head into 2019, and what specifically is being considered here in Maine this session. We will be joined by Katie Mahoney, vice president of health policy and a national speaker from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, as well as other state-based experts on health insurance and health care delivery.

To register for this event, please visit mainechamber.org or contact Angie Arno by calling (207) 623-4568, ext. 104, or by emailing aarno@mainechamber.org.

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