

May 30, 2019

## **Workers' compensation omnibus bill remains contentious**

**Bill remain in committee while language is finalized**

The workers' compensation omnibus bill that received competing "ought-to-pass-as-amended" reports last week by the joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing – **LD 756, *An Act To Improve the Maine Workers' Compensation Act of 1992***, sponsored by Rep. Mike Sylvester (D-Portland) – was reviewed by the committee on Tuesday afternoon, May 28, and will next move to the full House and Senate. The bill would expand employee benefits significantly in several areas.

In particular, the majority report, and its significant benefit increases, from the Democrats on the Labor and Housing committee was reviewed by the committee for content and cost impact. Specifically, the majority amendment proposes cost-of-living increase adjustments. These increases would be made for total benefits after five years and for partial benefits after 10 years, if an employee has permanent impairment of 12 percent or greater. The maximum rate would be increased to 125 percent of the state average weekly wage with any discontinued fringe benefit included in an employee's average weekly wage up to the full max rate. Section 213 would be changed to extend partial benefits to 12 years and to change the current long-term benefit provision by lowering the permanent impairment threshold from 18 percent to 12 percent.

Workers' Comp Board (WCB) Executive Director John Rohde provided

his opinion that there would be a flat cost impact, with a 3.9 percent estimated cost offset by nearly identical anticipated cost savings. Rohde relied on a previous individual bill analysis from the National Council of Compensation Insurers (NCCI), as well as some WCB data, seemingly without considering the cost-increasing interactions of the three major areas of increased benefits, but rather simply *adding* percentages. Also lacking from Rohde's analysis was any consideration for the cyclical nature of workers' compensation trends and the potential impact of an economic downturn on future costs. He did not seem to consider the increase in value of lump-sum settlement values or utilization increases associated with more favorable benefits. The bottom line is that the Workers' Compensation Board does not set rates, has no actuary on staff, and has a brand-new director with no experience in these types of calculations. In fact, what should be of greatest concern is that *NO* previous comp board executive director has *ever* attempted to calculate pricing of legislation. And for good reason – they lack the expertise to do so.

From the perspective of Maine's business community, the board's analysis is unacceptable. It is possible that NCCI may provide its own pricing, although its fast-track turnaround is two weeks. It is unlikely that the bill will remain in committee that long.

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## **Governor Mills signs bill requiring legislative hearings on citizen-initiated legislation**

The Maine State Chamber of Commerce testified in support of **LD 1209, *An Act To Require Legislative Hearings on Citizen-Initiated Legislation***, sponsored by Rep. Bradstreet (R-Vassalboro) and Sen. Jeff Timberlake (R-Androscoggin) earlier in this legislative session. This week, Governor Janet Mills signed the bill into law.

LD 1209 requires that a petition for the direct initiative of legislation, once it has been certified by the Secretary of State, be submitted for consideration by the Legislature to receive a public hearing before a joint standing committee of the Legislature or a special legislative committee established by the Legislative Council. The public hearing must be conducted in the same manner as other public hearings.

The Maine State Chamber supported LD 1209 because citizen's initiatives may have far reaching implications to the state, the economy, jobs, and individuals, just like other legislation in which a public hearing is scheduled and the public is notified. We believe that a public hearing allows the bill to be thoroughly reviewed and go through the normal legislative process so that the voters of Maine may have clearer idea of what the legislation does.

Good public policy is best achieved

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## **Vol. 53, No. 18 Impact (207) 623-4568**

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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.

## **Workers' Comp... (Continued from Page 1...)**

In addition to these major benefit changes, the omnibus bill would return the notice requirement from 30 to 90 days; allow a flat 10-percent fee on lump sum settlements; and, allow parents of a deceased worker to claim death benefits if the worker has no dependents. There would be a study on advocates' pay, and working groups would look at work search / vocational rehabilitation and uninsured workers.

All provisions of the omnibus bill would be effective for dates of injury starting on January 1, 2020, except for the death benefits provision, which would be retroactive to January 1, 2019. If this retroactive provision were to pass into law, it would likely be challenged, as the Law Court has already made clear that workers' compensation rights initiate at the date of injury. There has been at least one death case in 2019, which would fall within this provision.

The committee also reviewed language for the minority report supported by the five Republicans on the Labor and Housing committee. That version of the bill would offer some increases in benefits but would also make other significant

changes to the system. In Rohde's analysis, the Republican version of LD 756 would essentially be cost neutral.

A compromise proposal negotiated by representatives from the business community, as well as insurance and labor, was put forward last week and offered modest benefit increases far less costly than the majority amendment. The compromise did not get further discussion on Tuesday. Rejected last week by committee Republicans, the proposal was still apparently lacking the bipartisan support which was a prerequisite for the Democrats' support.

It had been the stated intent of committee co-chair Sen. Shenna Bellows (D-Kennebec) to move the omnibus bill quickly to the floor, but it is not yet clear when that will happen. As of this edition of **IMPACT**, LD 756 is still in committee. All of the other remaining comp bills – those not included in the omnibus bill – will be dispensed with during the committee's work session on Thursday, May 30.

The Maine State Chamber continues to follow this bill extremely closely. We remain *strongly opposed* to the majority report on LD 756 and *support the negotiated compromise between business and labor stakeholders*. For additional information or questions, please contact Peter Gore by calling (207) 623-4568, ext. 107, or by emailing [pgore@mainechamber.org](mailto:pgore@mainechamber.org). □

## **Citizen-Initiated Legislation...**

**(Continued from Page 1...)**

through robust discussion and debate. By Governor Mills signing this legislation into law, Maine is strengthening the transparency in the referendum process for all voters and ensuring that the people of Maine have access to critical information through the public hearing process so they can make informed decisions on the questions before them. As recent history has shown, these referendums can cause a lot of work for the Legislature after they are enacted by the voters. This bipartisan legislative review is an important step before the issue moves into the public campaign phase that leads up to Election Day. Campaigns tend to be waged in the media via paid advertising and staged

events, forcing the public to choose which competing or conflicting ads to believe. Without the benefit of a legislative hearing, the voting public has no readily accessible place to go for perspective and analysis.

The Maine State Chamber applauds the Legislature and the Governor for working in a bipartisan manner to pass legislation that will benefit all Maine people. This legislation respects the citizen's initiative process and will provide clarity to citizen's initiatives, enabling voters to make well-informed decisions. For more information, please contact Megan Sanborn by calling (207) 623-4568, ext. 108, or by emailing [msanborn@mainechamber.org](mailto:msanborn@mainechamber.org). □

## Invest in Tomorrow Initiative stakeholders endorse package of anti-poverty reforms ahead of public hearing



Dana Connors (at podium) spoke at a recent press conference about the important role that the Invest in Tomorrow bill package plays in building a vibrant workforce.

A collaboration of groups, including Maine Equal Justice, the Maine Community Foundation, the Maine Community Action Association, and the Maine State Chamber of Commerce, announced their endorsement of a package anti-poverty bills at a press conference in the Statehouse on Tuesday, May 28, ahead of a public hearing for both measures.

The press conference brought together the bill's sponsors, House Speaker Sara Gideon (D-Freeport) and Assistant House Minority Leader Trey Stewart (R-Presque Isle), with Invest in Tomorrow partners and supporters.

The bill package is comprised of **LD 1774, An Act to Reduce Child Poverty by Leveraging Investments so Families can Thrive (LIFT)**, and **LD 1772, An Act to Secure Transitions to Economic Prosperity for Maine Families and Children (STEP)**, which offer key changes to improve families' odds of crossing a bridge out of poverty and hardship and into stability and prosperity.

Allina Diaz, a mother of three who is going to school under the Parents as Scholars program said, "As I interact with other students, especially young par-

ents, I see so much untapped potential. Making it easier for these parents to access an education is essential to Maine's growth and it is absolutely life-changing for families and their kids."

The Invest in Tomorrow 2018 report, located online at [www.investintomorrow.me/report](http://www.investintomorrow.me/report), included data and input from nearly 200 organizations and individuals statewide. It highlighted the fact that a shocking proportion – nearly one in eight Maine children – is growing up poor.

The report laid out a roadmap for cutting child poverty in half during the next 10 years – and eliminating it in a generation – by addressing basic needs like housing, health care, and food, while providing economic opportunities through education and training and easing benefit "cliff" effects. These strategic changes are reflected in both LIFT and STEP.

"Solving child poverty is everyone's business, so it's important that the Invest in Tomorrow bill package has strong bipartisan support," said Dana Connors, president of the Maine State Chamber of Commerce. "This legislation will provide support and opportunities for families to

*Continued on Page 4...*

## HHS committee considers a pair of bipartisan bills that address generational poverty

The Maine State Chamber of Commerce testified in support of a pair of bi-partisan bills that are aimed to move Maine children and families out of poverty and strengthen Maine's workforce. **LD 1772, An Act To Secure Transitions to Economic Prosperity for Maine Families and Children (STEP)** is sponsored by Assistant House Minority Leader, Rep. Trey Stewart (R-Presque Isle), and **LD 1774, An Act To Reduce Child Poverty by Leveraging Investments so Families Can Thrive (LIFT)** is sponsored by Speaker of the House Sara Gideon (D-Freeport).

Under current state requirements, many low-income families are not getting the support they need. Speaker Gideon's LIFT bill would:

- ♦ Improve access to the Parents as Scholars (PaS) program by allowing schools to enroll low-income parents so they can get a degree or industry-recognized credential, providing a pathway out of poverty and helping to address Maine's workforce shortage;
- ♦ Eliminate the "gross income test" in Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), which prevents families struggling with poverty from accessing temporary assistance. Currently, a family of three making over \$12,276/year can't get help from TANF even though they are living far below the poverty level of \$21,330/year. When you lift the gross income test, a family of three making up to \$18,780/year could access this critical support to help meet basic needs and get help finding a job, education, or training;
- ♦ Establish a Working Group to make improvements at DHHS to help make government accountable to all of us and ensure that programs are working to help LIFT families out of poverty;

*Continued on Page 4...*



## Invest in Tomorrow... (Continued from Page 3...)

move out of poverty and, at the same time, strengthen our workforce today and tomorrow.”

Speaker Sara Gideon, sponsor of the LIFT bill, said, “We know that children who grow up in poverty are less likely to succeed in school, less likely to graduate high school, and more likely to be out of work as adults. We can and we must do better for the kids across our state who deserve the chance at a brighter future. If we make the investments that are called for in these bills, we’re going to see the dividends pay off in a big way for our State today and in the years to come. We have the chance to make real positive change in the lives of Mainers experiencing poverty – for families who are struggling and only want better, brighter futures for themselves and their kids.”

“LIFT and STEP will advance real reform that will have a broadscale impact on children and their families,” said Robyn Merrill, executive director of



Maine Equal Justice. “When the Invest in Tomorrow groups gathered input from across the state, and really looked at what’s driving child poverty, it was clear we needed to focus on making sure families can meet their basic needs and creating pathways to sustainable, good jobs. LIFT and STEP will make important strides and because of them, more fami-

lies will leave poverty behind and their kids will have a shot at a brighter future.”

Invest in Tomorrow published a fact sheet on LIFT and STEP that can be found on their website, [www.investintomorrow.me](http://www.investintomorrow.me), along with the 2018 report and tracked poverty measures. For more information about the Maine Equal Justice, visit: [www.mejp.org](http://www.mejp.org). □

## LIFT / STEP Bills... (Continued from Page 3...)

- ◆ Require DHHS to measure and track Maine’s progress toward ensuring that families get the help they need by setting targets for improvement in anti-poverty programs and tracking progress for accountability; and,
- ◆ Authorize DHHS to streamline eligibility for Transitional Medicaid for working families leaving TANF so more families have continuity of care – this would help address the cliff effect in TANF and Medicaid.

The companion bill sponsored by Rep. Stewart would provide more support to families as they transition off state programs to avoid the so-called “benefits cliff.” Rep. Stewart’s bill would:

- ◆ Invest in the “Whole Family Economic Security Initiatives” approach to service delivery, which combines supports for post-sec-

ondary education and workforce development for parents with quality early care and education for children, all while ensuring that families can meet their basic needs;

- ◆ Significantly reduce the “benefits cliff” families face when they transition off TANF into employment. Benefits “cliffs” can occur when a family’s increase in earnings results in a sudden loss of benefits;
- ◆ Parents and caregivers could count GED coursework and programs that assist people in earning a GED toward meeting eligibility requirements as part of the first 20 hours of their weekly work requirements in TANF. Prioritizing education helps move families toward greater economic opportunity; and,
- ◆ Authorize DHHS to increase the amount of Transitional Food Assistance for working families who are transitioning from TANF to employment, to address high rates of hunger.

The Maine State Chamber of Commerce is a member of the Invest in Tomorrow Initiative (see page 3). Invest in Tomorrow is an initiative to address Maine’s child poverty problem by employing strategies to ensure every Maine child has a fair shot at a bright future. The coalition is driven by a broad, cross-sector group of organizations and individuals and is endorsing LIFT and STEP bills because they will make meaningful progress toward these shared goals. The Invest in Tomorrow 2018 report included data and input from nearly 200 organizations and individuals statewide. It highlighted the fact that a shocking proportion – nearly one in eight Maine children – is growing up poor. The report laid out a roadmap for cutting child poverty in half over the next 10 years – and eliminating it in a generation – by addressing basic needs like housing, health care, and food, while providing economic opportunities through education and training and easing benefit “cliff” effects. These strategic changes are reflected in both LIFT and STEP.

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## 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.

**A total of 343 business-related bills have been tracked to date since the session began on January 2, 2019!**

### EDUCATION

#### **LD 1760, An Act To Support Children's Healthy Development and School Readiness.**

(Senate President Jackson, D-Aroostook) *Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services.* This bill creates the First 4 ME Early Care and Education Program under the Department of Health and Human Services to provide comprehensive, high-quality early child care and education services for at-risk children under 6 years of age who have not entered kindergarten and the children's parents by funding projects that integrate comprehensive resources and services with traditional center-based and family child care settings. The projects are sponsored by coalitions of stakeholders, providers and other community members within the communities that the projects serve. Each project is led and coordinated by a community contractor who staffs the project's operations and contracts with community providers to provide health care, education or parenting services, which may include services provided in a licensed child care center or by a licensed family child care provider, in a home visit or by an individual providing services to a family member within the individual's or family member's residence. The community contractor employs or contracts with community coaches who train and provide support to community providers. This bill also directs the department to request proposals for up to 10 pilot projects to implement the program and to report to the Legislature on the progress of the pilot projects toward the objectives, goals and intended outcomes of the projects in 2024.

#### **LD 1778, An Act To Amend the Laws Concerning the Children's Cabinet and**

*Its Advisory Councils.* (Sen. Millett, D-Cumberland) *Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs.* This bill:

- 1 Amends certain provisions governing the Children's Cabinet;
- 2 Eliminates the Maine Children's Growth Council;
- 3 Eliminates the Child Care Advisory Council; and,
- 4 Establishes the Maine Children's Cabinet Early Childhood Advisory Council to develop and evaluate under the direction of the Children's Cabinet a plan for the healthy development of the State's young children and their families.

**LD 1785, An Act To Amend Certain Education Laws.** (Rep. Kornfield, D-Orono) *Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs.* This bill makes the following changes to the education laws:

- 1 It repeals a provision of law relating to a central information system on resources for people with disabilities.
- 2 It repeals a provision of law relating to hazardous chemicals in schools.
- 3 It repeals provisions of law relating to school construction projects approved by the State Board of Education prior to July 1, 1977.
- 4 It replaces the term "limited English proficiency student" with the term "English learner."
- 5 It repeals a provision of law relating to Alcohol Awareness Day.
- 6 It authorizes a school board to provide school nurse services through an agreement with an individual registered professional nurse.
- 7 It repeals provisions of law relating to the Department of Education

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## 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, June 3, 2019**

**Education and Cultural Affairs  
1:00 p.m.; Cross Building, Room 208  
LD 1785, An Act To Amend Certain  
Education Laws (Rep. Kornfield of  
Bangor) □**

### **Omission from May 16 edition...**

In our May 16 edition of *Impact*, Sen. Shenna Bellows (D-Kennebec) was unintentionally omitted from the list of additional key legislators present for the evening's program. We apologize for the oversight and thank Sen. Bellows and all the legislators who frequently and willingly participate in these important conversations. □

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## LIFT / STEP Bills...

(Continued from Page 4...)

The Maine State Chamber of Commerce supports policies and regulations that spur the investment in and help grow our economy. Right now, employers in health care, construction, finance, manufacturing, and other sectors report difficulty in finding workers with the right skills.

Part of the solution to address Maine's aging and shrinking workforce must be to focus on Maine's adult learner population. LD 1772 and LD 1774 help advance more low-skilled, low-wage adult workers in today's economy. These two bills recognize that many individuals' barriers to employment are broader than simple skill deficiencies. They will help pave pathways from education to employment for these adults, while providing them with the support they need to succeed, resulting in real positive results. These pieces of legislation will help connect the dots between education and training, they will help increase wages, expand opportunities for better paying jobs and for children's chances for a bright future. Not surprisingly, parents who have stronger literacy skills and more education themselves are better situated to help their children learn.

These bills will help address the economic challenges facing businesses, individuals, and communities, and in building a skilled workforce to support sustainable economic growth will create more opportunities for workers and businesses to prosper. These bills will help more parents pursue education as a pathway out of poverty, ensure more families with children are able to meet their basic needs, and help both children and their parents move out of poverty.

Poverty knows no political bounds. We are all impacted, and we all have a stake in solving it. We must come together to help our children thrive, to strengthen our families, communities, and workforce. Together, these pieces of legislation represent thoughtful and meaningful bipartisanship. The Maine State Chamber believes these two pieces of legislation are something everyone can get behind because we all want to see children grow up to succeed in Maine's economy. □

## New Legislation...

(Continued from Page 5...)

- activities relating to school substance use disorder services and performance-enhancing substances and the Obesity and Chronic Disease Fund.
- 8 It removes the limitation on the total cost of the components of essential programs and services.
  - 9 It changes the amount of the adjustment for economically disadvantaged students.
  - 10 It removes a requirement that school construction project plans and specifications must be approved by certain state entities.
  - 11 It removes the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, Bureau of General Services from the requirement to perform certain activities relating to school construction projects.
  - 12 It includes psychometrically valid English language proficiency screening

for potential English learners in the screening that local units may develop.

- 13 It removes a reference to Maine Merchant Marine Day in the powers and duties of the State Board of Education.
- 14 It amends the powers and duties of a cooperative board for a career and technical education region.
- 15 It amends the laws governing elementary and secondary tuition students.
- 16 It adds a definition of "rural school administrative unit" for purposes of allocating federal funds under the federal Every Student Succeeds Act.
- 17 It increases from 90 days to 150 days the period of time in which a charter school authorizer must submit an annual report.

### **WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

**LD 1685, An Act To Facilitate Entry of Immigrants into the Workforce.** (Rep. Cloutier, D-Lewiston) *Joint Standing Committee on Innovation, Development,*

**Continued on Page 8...**

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## Former Connecticut Governor Dannel Malloy to lead University of Maine System

— **Board unanimously votes to appoint proven executive leader and public servant as Maine’s next chancellor to guide and expedite educational reform**

The University of Maine System Board of Trustees unanimously voted to appoint former Connecticut Governor Dannel P. Malloy the next Chancellor of the University of Maine System. The appointment concludes more than a year of succession planning that included the development of a multi-year Declaration of Strategic Priorities and a national search for a leader. Chancellor James Page will retire on June 30, 2019.

Chancellor-designate Malloy will begin his service on July 1, 2019, becoming the 13th chancellor of the University of Maine System since its formation in 1968. The Board will formally introduce Maine’s new chancellor at a morning break in its annual Title IX training for university leaders at the University of Maine campus in Orono.

“Dan Malloy is an executive leader and public servant committed to taking on complex change initiatives and getting the job done,” said James Erwin, chair of the UMS Board of Trustees. “As governor, he delivered reforms and structural changes to state government that were not always popular, and certainly not expedient, but that advanced the long term interest of his state and its citizens.

“We are committed to continuing down the path envisioned for public higher education in Maine by Chancellor James Page. The Strategic Priorities the Board adopted in December and the selection of Dan Malloy as our next chancellor are clear indications of the Board’s resolve to expedite our One University reforms.

“Under Dan’s leadership we will help lead Maine’s response to our workforce shortage and skills gap by connecting more of what we teach directly to a job, by

reaching more adult learners and other Mainers underserved by higher education and lifting their Maine-career aspirations, and by continuously including new approaches to what we teach and how we teach it to meet the competitive challenges of today’s higher education marketplace.”

“Dan Malloy understands what higher education means for the future of a state and its people and is willing to put himself on the line to ensure that that future is bright,” said Charles Hewett, Ph.D., executive director of the Institute for Digital Engineering and Life Sciences and former executive vice president and chief operating officer at Jackson Laboratory.

### **Executive Leadership and Public Service...**

Former Governor Malloy brings 22-years of public service and executive leadership to the University of Maine System including eight years as Governor of the State of Connecticut and 14-years of service as the Mayor of Stamford, Connecticut. The two-term governor was first elected in 2010 and won re-election in 2014. He chose not to seek re-election in 2018.

Accomplishments during his tenure leading the State of Connecticut included the creation of 124,000 private sector jobs and prioritizing the state’s long-term fiscal health through structural reform. The Malloy administration achieved a 13% reduction in the size of the state government workforce, secured agreements with the state bargaining unit resulting in \$40 billion in savings to taxpayers, replenished the state rainy day fund to more than \$2 billion, and fully funded the actuarially required state pension payment every year.

“My time in electoral politics is



over, but I am still passionate about providing public service leadership that matters,” said Chancellor-Designate Dannel Malloy. “Maine has set a national example for public higher education reform, and I am eager to work with the Board, the presidents, faculty, staff, and university supporters to build on this progress for Maine’s learners.

“The Board’s Strategic Priorities sets expectations and direction for our work. We have to act with urgency — Maine’s workforce challenges grow larger by the day. Decisions will come fast, but they will be informed. I will be devoting many of my first days to visiting the campuses. I want to meet with new colleagues, hear from students, and see first-hand how our universities are serving the people and communities of Maine.

“I want to thank the Board for this opportunity to serve and Chancellor Page for providing a vision for public higher education in Maine and for his gracious offer of support during our transition.”

Following his public introduction on Thursday morning, May 30, Chancellor-Designate Malloy will travel to Augusta with Chancellor Page to meet with leaders from the Maine Community College System, the business community, and the Statehouse.

Maine’s incoming chancellor will have breakfast with students and staff at

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## ***New Legislation...*** ***(Continued from Page 6...)***

*Economic Advancement and Commerce.* This bill establishes and provides funding for the Foreign Credentialing and Skills Recognition Revolving Loan Program to be administered by the Finance Authority of Maine. Under the program, the authority may provide interest-free loans to foreign-educated or foreign-trained, experienced immigrants who need assistance while awaiting federal employment authorization to pay the costs of certain actions and activities that will improve their work-readiness once they receive their work permits.

**LD 1772, *An Act To Secure Transitions to Economic Prosperity for Maine Families and Children.*** (Rep. Stewart, R-Presque Isle) *Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services.* This bill:

- 1 Increases the income amounts that are disregarded when calculating benefits from the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program, or TANF program, for recipients who have earnings from employment. It also replaces for a limited period food assistance lost as a result of increased earnings from employment and the increased income amounts that are disregarded;
- 2 Increases the transitional food benefits available under the TANF program from \$50 per month per family to \$100 per month per family;
- 3 Establishes a whole family economic security initiative as part of the TANF program to increase the economic security of the entire family; and
- 4 Requires the Department of Health and Human Services to count the participation of a participant in the ASPIRE-TANF program in basic skills education, which includes programs to assist individuals in obtaining a high school equivalency diploma, toward the first 20 hours of the participant's weekly work participation requirements.

## **WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

**LD 1774, *An Act To Reduce Child Poverty by Leveraging Investments so Families Can Thrive.*** (Speaker of the House Gideon, D-Freeport) *Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services.* This bill makes the following changes, which are intended to reduce child poverty, increase food security and create stronger bridges to employment for families with children:

- 1 It requires the Department of Health and Human Services to collect data to measure access to and the performance of certain programs administered by the Department of Health and Human Services and establish improvement targets on an annual basis to monitor year-to-year improvements related to program accessibility and participant well-being.
- 2 It reallocates the provisions relating to transitional Medicaid from the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 22, chapter 1053-B, which pertains to temporary assistance for needy families, to Title 22, chapter 855, which pertains to aid to needy persons, to reflect that the federal Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, Public Law 104-193, 110 Stat. 2105 no longer just applies to families losing eligibility for Medicaid as a result of losing eligibility for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program but instead applies to all parents who lose eligibility for Medicaid.
- 3 It removes the requirement that a family must have received Medicaid assistance for at least 3 of the last 6 months in order for that family to receive transitional Medicaid.
- 4 It requires that the Department of Health and Human Services provide transitional Medicaid for a 12-month extension period pursuant to the state option provided in 42 United States Code, Section 1396r-6, Subsection (a), Paragraph (5) when a person's

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## **Governor Mills nominates former chair of Legislature's Energy, Utilities, and Technology committee to lead Maine PUC**

**Former Senate Majority Leader Phil Bartlett helped shepherd some of the state's leading energy initiatives into law during time in Legislature**

On Tuesday, May 28, Governor Janet Mills announced that she has nominated former Maine Senate Majority Leader and Chair of the Legislature's Energy, Utilities and Technology Committee, Phil Bartlett, to serve as Chair of the Maine Public Utilities Commission (PUC). During his time in the Legislature, Bartlett, an attorney, forged bipartisan support for several of the state's landmark energy initiatives, including Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) legislation, as well as a bill to increase Maine's renewable portfolio standard, and bills to support renewable energy development. He also chaired the Legislature's Joint Select Committee on Maine's Energy Future.

"Phil Bartlett is a dedicated public servant and an experienced leader on energy policy who will uphold the Public Utilities Commission's core responsibility of ensuring every Maine consumer has safe, adequate and reliable utility services at reasonable rates," said Governor Mills. "As chair of the PUC, Phil's background in economics and utilities and his commitment to the State of Maine will be a significant asset to our state's ratepayers."

"I am honored that Governor Mills has nominated me to serve the people of Maine, and I look forward to working to protect the rights of consumers and ratepayers statewide," said Phil Bartlett.

Elected four times, Bartlett served in the Maine Senate from 2004 to 2012 and was elected by his peers to serve as Senate Majority Leader from 2008 to 2010. Bartlett chaired the Energy, Utilities and Technology committee, as well as the Joint Select Committee on Maine's Energy Future, and he served on the Government Oversight committee, the Natural Resources committee, and the Labor committee.

Bartlett, 42, is a native of Gorham and a graduate of Gorham High School. He graduated Summa Cum Laude from Tufts University with a major in Economics and Political Science and has a J.D. from Harvard Law School. He taught micro and macroeconomics at the collegiate level. He has practiced law with Scaccia, Bartlett & Chabot since 2004. He lives in Portland with his daughter, Abigail.

Bartlett's nomination is subject to review by the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology and final confirmation by the Maine State Senate. If confirmed, Bartlett will replace former PUC Chair Mark Vannoy whose term ended last month.

The Maine Public Utilities Commission regulates electric, natural gas, telecommunications, and water utilities to ensure that Maine consumers enjoy safe, adequate and reliable services at rates that are just and reasonable for both consumers and utilities. The commission oversees emerging competitive markets for some of these services. The PUC's three full-time commissioners serve staggered terms of six years. The governor designates one commissioner as chairman. The commissioners make all final commission decisions by public vote or action of the majority. □

## **New Legislation...**

**(Continued from Page 8...)**

- eligibility was terminated because of an increase in earned income or hours of employment or a loss of a time-limited earnings disregard.
- 5 It eliminates the TANF gross income test for applicants to conform the eligibility methodology for both applicants and recipients.
  - 6 It establishes a procedure by which the Department of Health and Human Services must consider referrals made in accordance with department rule from educational institutions and similar programs as applications for the Parents as Scholars Program under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 22, section 3790.
  - 7 It provides funds from the TANF block grant to provide personalized professional guidance, support and navigation services for participants in the Parents as Scholars Program in order to promote program completion and student success and requires the Commissioner of Health and Human Services to convene a working group to make recommendations related to the most effective way to achieve this goal, along with other suggestions to improve the program.
  - 8 It requires the Commissioner of Health and Human Services to convene a working group to review and make recommendations to improve the operations of systems and programs administered by the Department of Health and Human Services providing services to people in need.
  - 9 It provides that additional costs to the State resulting from implementation of this legislation must be paid from funds provided to the Department of Health and Human Services under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families block grant or from resources representing the State's maintenance of effort to qualify for federal funds. □





On Thursday, May 30, Chancellor-designate Dannel Malloy meets with Dana Connors, president of the Maine State Chamber, as part of an initial visit with business and Statehouse leaders.

## **UMS Chancellor... (Continued from Page 7...)**

the University of Maine at Augusta on Friday, May 31, and tour the Veterans Academic Center. Later in the morning, he will visit with nursing students and student government leaders at the University of Southern Maine in Portland.

Chancellor-Designate Malloy will be returning to Maine throughout the month of June to meet with university leaders and stakeholders in preparation for assuming the chancellorship following Chancellor Jim Page's retirement on June 30, 2019.

"In our rural campus communities of Fort Kent, Farmington, Presque Isle, and Machias we understand how public higher education contributes to the vitality and economic future of where we live," said Kelly Martin, Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees. "Our campuses are anchor institutions for our regions, and we are eager to introduce Dan Malloy to our programs, students, and partners."

"We have made great progress under Chancellor Page's leadership. We needed to be sure our leadership succession planning and national search for a new chancellor produced a leader with the experi-

ence and skills to continue and expedite our progress," said Sam Collins, Trustee and Chair of the Search Committee.

"The Board unanimously endorsed Dan's appointment because he understands what is at stake for Maine. We also agreed that while a chancellorship is a nonpartisan appointment, many of the leadership attributes that contributed to Dan's success in elected office will be important to his work in the University of Maine System."

Included among the chancellor's responsibilities is advocacy for public higher education with elected officials, external stakeholders, and the general public. Board Policy 214 provides guidance for the chancellor and campus presidents to ensure the political nature of this work remains nonpartisan and politically impartial.

### **Public Higher Education Leadership and Support...**

As governor, Dan Malloy was a strong supporter of public higher education reform and innovations that improved affordability and outcomes for students and created stronger links to workforce opportunities in Connecticut. Accomplishments made during the Malloy administration include:

- ◆ Creation of the Board of Regents for Higher Education, bringing 17 community colleges and state universities into Connecticut State Colleges and Universities;
- ◆ Student-focused advancements like simplification of the credit transfer process and the launch of a "Guided Pathways" initiative to help students efficiently earn credentials, transfer, and attain jobs;
- ◆ Two major expansion efforts at the University of Connecticut that invested more than \$2.3 billion in the state's flagship institution to support the development of the state's bioscience industry and to increase enrollment in engineering and STEM fields;
- ◆ The creation of seven advanced manufacturing centers that tripled the capacity of the advanced manufacturing center program helping to provide skilled workers for the state's manufacturing sector; and,
- ◆ Through the Connecticut Department of Labor, the Malloy administration expanded the state's apprentice program by approximately 40% and into several new sectors of the economy including nursing, healthcare, information technology, advanced manufacturing, and insurance. At the end of his second term 6,343 apprentices were getting an opportunity to earn a portable credential through on-the-job and classroom training.

Dan Malloy is the current Rappaport Distinguished Visiting Professor at Boston College Law School and taught undergraduate political science for twelve semesters as an adjunct professor at the University of Connecticut. He holds a B.A. in Political Science, Sociology from Boston College and is a graduate of Boston College Law School.

Dan Malloy was also a member of the local Board of Education in Stamford, Connecticut. □



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As legislative adjournment nears, our staff routinely travels throughout the state during the spring and summer months to discuss legislative activity, as well as the critical role and valuable insight local business leaders contribute to the legislative process, which is instrumental to the open dialogue about business issues that affect your business, your community, and our state.

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MAINE  
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**Regional  
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**Androscoggin Valley Regional Breakfast**

Tuesday, June 25

7:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.

Hilton Garden Inn, Auburn

**Maine Highlands Regional Breakfast**

*In collaboration with Bangor Region Chamber*

Wednesday, June 26

7:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.

Hilton Garden Inn, Bangor

*The Maine Department of Economic and Community Development will also join us for a Strategic Plan presentation and listening session, facilitated by Sarah Curran, senior policy analyst for the Governor's Office of Policy and Management.*

**Northern Maine Regional Breakfast**

Thursday, June 27

7:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.

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

*The Maine Department of Economic and Community Development will also join us for a Strategic Plan presentation and listening session, facilitated by Commissioner Heather Johnson.*

**Kennebec Valley Regional Breakfast**

Friday, June 28

7:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.

Bangor Savings Bank, Augusta