ADVOCACY: RETURN ON INVESTMENT

"As one of Maine’s largest employers, we operate in a very competitive market where added costs can significantly impact our ability to succeed. As a result, B/IW operates its business-construction complex U.S. Navy surface ships—by seeking to continually improve upon its manufacturing performance and by driving costs out of the business whether it is the cost of materials, energy or health care. Here in Maine, we are strong supporters of the Maine State Chamber and work as partners in growing our business as well as improving upon Maine’s business climate. Their advocacy on our behalf as well as on behalf of the broader business community helps B/IW remain focused on achieving its goals in Bath as the Maine Chamber ensures our interests are being covered in Augusta."

Jon A. Fitzgerald, Esq., vice president and general counsel at General Dynamics-Bath Iron Works in Bath, Maine

Get a great return on your investment with a Maine State Chamber membership

TAKE A LOOK AT WHAT WE HAVE DONE FOR YOU LATELY

*The following is just a sample of some of our most important legislative victories during the First and Second Sessions of the 128th Legislature.

TAXATION LEGISLATION

**Tax Conformity:** The top priority for the Maine State Chamber this session was tax conformity, which still remains as unfinished business on the Senate report. Two reports emerged from Taxation committee, and the Maine State Chamber supported the Republican report to conform to federal code and provide 100% bonus depreciation for Maine businesses. Estimated impact on just this one portion provides $40 million savings to Maine businesses. Failure to conform will result in an administrative nightmare for Maine individuals and businesses, an untold cost alone. Its fate will be determined if a special session is called.

Pine Tree Development Zones: The Maine State Chamber worked to pass LD 1654. This bill would have extended the Pine Tree Development Zone (PTDZ) program by three years. More than 200 Maine companies are currently certified for the program, which is scheduled to expire at the end of 2018. The bill remains as unfinished business on the House calendar until its fate is determined by special session. It is worth more than $12-15 million to Maine businesses.

Universal Elder and Child Care: The Maine State Chamber worked to defeat LD 1612, which would have established the Universal Family Care Program of universal child care and in home community support services for all individuals and families who are eligible. The bill would have increased income taxes to pay for these services, targeting incomes over $128,400. It also would have applied a tax equal to the Federal Social Security Old Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance program tax (12.4%) and applied it in same manner equally to both employer (6.2%) and employee (6.2%). Self-employed persons would have also been taxed at the same rates. Certain high income earners with unearned income would have also been subjected to an additional 3.8% tax. Estimated cost to Maine businesses and individuals: more than $300 million.

WORKPLACE LEGISLATION

Recreational Marijuana Law: The Maine State Chamber helped to pass the bill which provided structure and workability to Maine’s recreational marijuana law. In doing so, employer’s rights to help maintain a drug free workplace were strengthened, by reversing attempts to make recreational users a “protected class” for employment purposes, resulting in considerable savings from potential litigation and workplace safety costs.

Tip Credit, LD 673: The Maine State Chamber, working with the Maine Restaurant Association and other stakeholders, helped to reinstate the “tip credit,” eliminated in the referendum to increase the minimum wage this past November. Maine becomes one of only two states to ever take such action, and by doing so helped to save our vital tourism industry millions in higher operating costs, and put more money into the pockets of the servers who work in this industry.

Mandatory Paid Sick Leave, LD 1159: The Maine State Chamber helped to defeat legislation that would have required Maine employers with more than 50 employees provide up to 40 hours per year of paid sick leave, and those with under 50 workers to provide the same amount of unpaid sick time. Requiring this would have resulted in a higher cost of doing business here totaling hundreds of thousands of dollars, if not more, forcing businesses to cut hours worked, other types of leave they may currently provide, or even the number of workers they employ.

EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE LEGISLATION

Workforce Development: The Maine State Chamber testified and supported LD 1774 to address Maine’s workforce challenges by providing support for parents living in poverty so that they can acquire the skills and tools needed to successfully achieve associate’s degrees, bachelor’s degrees, or trade credentials, leading to competitive jobs in a wide range of fields.

Estimated Return on Your 2018 Membership Investment: $500+ MILLION

NATIONAL RECOGNITION

The Maine Prosperity Project, a program managed by the Maine State Chamber of Commerce, received the national Prosperity Project Star Achievement Award for its grassroots communications with the Maine business community.

JOIN TODAY!

To join the Maine State Chamber, please contact Ben Gilman by calling (207) 623-4568, ext. 111, or by emailing bgilman@mainechamber.org, or Linda Caprara by calling ext. 106 or by emailing lcaprara@mainechamber.org.

THE VOICE OF MAINE BUSINESS

During both sessions of the 128th Legislature, the Maine State Chamber tracked approximately 300 legislative proposals of importance to Maine businesses.

ABOUT US

The Maine State Chamber achieves victories for employers through targeted advocacy and grassroots efforts. No other organization represents the business community better than the Maine Chamber. With a team of four experienced Statehouse insiders, the Chamber covers the most important issues to the business community, including health care, labor, education, energy, environment, taxation, workforce development, regulations, and more. Check out www.mainechamber.org.

125 Community Drive, Suite 101
Augusta, Maine 04330
207.623.4568 • www.mainechamber.org

TIP CREDIT, LD 673:

Inform ation subject to change. Calculations based on current available estim ates.
Business Day at the Legislature: Annually, this event hosts 300+ employers, as well as Maine legislators and administrators, with the ultimate goal of increasing collaboration to ultimately strengthen the state’s economy and keep Maine competitive. This casual setting provides a unique opportunity to discuss business issues and priorities, and to share first-hand information about the daily struggles businesses face. Business Day at the Statehouse emphasizes the importance of preserving and retaining existing jobs, strengthening Maine’s economy through the creation of new opportunities, and keeping businesses competitive in this very fragile economy.

Washington, D.C. Fly-In: With more and more issues that affect our state being decided in Washington, the Maine State Chamber hosts an annual Washington, D.C. Fly-in each spring. Visits with each of Maine’s delegates are scheduled, and attendees receive each one’s personal attention. A variety of current public policy issues are discussed, including updates on workforce development, immigration laws, health care, energy issues, and transportation funding, to name a few.

Leadership Summit: These Leadership Summits provide opportunities for our board members and invited guests to connect with commissioners, House and Senate leadership, committee chairs, and key committee members. The Maine State Chamber takes pride in providing opportunities for Maine’s business and government leaders to engage in honest, open dialogue about top public policy issues.

Legislative Social: Our annual Legislative Social is an ideal way for Maine business leaders to interact with legislators, business associates, new and prospective Maine State Chamber members, and government representatives in a relaxed setting.

Regional Business Breakfasts: Maine State Chamber’s annual Regional Business Breakfasts bring “the Chamber to your region,” enabling us to hear first-hand about the concerns of each region’s local businesses, as well as providing an opportunity to present the latest public policy information that employers there need to know.

Public Policy Committees: Participating in our public policy committees is the best way to lend your voice to the significant issues facing your business. Each policy committee is made up of Maine State Chamber members who meet on a regular basis during the legislative session to discuss issues in Environmental and Energy, Human Resources Policy, Taxation, and Workforce and Education, and to help shape Chamber policy. Working with our Board of Directors and our advocacy team, the Maine State Chamber’s public policy committees make sure that when the Maine State Chamber speaks, it reflects the concerns and priorities of our members.

Grassroots Action Network: There are times during the course of the legislative session that we ask our members to contact their legislators and educate them on the ways a bill could impact the way companies operate in Maine. Our Grassroots Action Network has been instrumental in the passage and defeat of many bills. With the active involvement of our members and local/regional chamber members, we are increasing the volume of the voice of Maine business and affecting real public policy outcomes to help your business thrive and grow.

Where We Stand: Our Where We Stand report provides a strategic overview of the most important issues facing the business community in the upcoming legislative session based on the results from the Maine State Chamber’s annual member survey of a wide variety of policy issues. Coinciding with the beginning of the new legislative session, the document represents the collective work of our policy committees, grassroots input from local businesses through local/regional chambers, and our board of directors. It is designed to help business people, policy makers, and concerned citizens focus on the opportunities and the challenges ahead of us as we work to create greater prosperity for all of Maine’s citizens.

Our Legislative Week Ahead, a snapshot of the biggest legislative issues of the week, provides a weekly video forecast of the biggest issues facing lawmakers in Augusta during the upcoming week. Our Advocacy team breaks down the issues and what they mean to your business. New episodes are posted each Monday to the Chamber’s webpage at www.mainechamber.org.

The Maine Chamber Minute (www.mainechamber.org/chamberminute) provides brief video updates on pending legislation and important events, programs, or activities that help Maine’s business community stay current on issues that impact job creation and economic growth in the state.

FocusMaine (www.focusmaine.org) is dedicated to strengthening and revitalizing opportunity and prosperity in Maine by accelerating the creation of quality jobs within a few sectors that have high growth potential.

The Maine Economic Research Institute’s mission is to improve Maine’s business environment by providing objective information to enhance economic policy making and through improved public policy.

MaineSpark MaineSpark is fueled by an education and workforce coalition with a common goal: by 2025, 60% of Mainers will hold the credentials that position Maine and the families who live here for success.

Estimated Return on Your 2018 Membership Investment: $500+ MILLION
MEMBER SERVICES

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Even more return on your investment with a Maine State Chamber membership

TAKE A LOOK AT OUR MEMBER PROGRAMS, STATEWIDE AND REGIONAL EVENTS, AND OUR OUTREACH TO SERVE MAINE EMPLOYERS EVERYDAY

*The following is just a sample of some of our current and on-going initiatives:

PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES

Our newest initiative, Keep Maine Competitive, is a truly bi-partisan coalition of business and trade associations collaborating to ensure Maine’s competitiveness. The group is currently working to oppose the 3.8% income tax surcharge on the November 2018 ballot, which seeks to allot funds for universal elder home care.

Our statewide InternHelpME.com program links employers, students, colleges and universities, working to attract and retain talent for Maine’s future workforce.

The Maine State Chamber Purchasing Alliance, Inc. (http://www.mainechapter.org/blueoptions.php) offers small businesses with 2-50 employees, as well as self-employed people, who are members of a local or regional chamber of commerce, a suite of ten health plans called Chamber BlueOptions.

Our Grassroots Action Network involves members and their employees in the legislative process through outreach campaigns and grassroots initiatives designed to increase The Voice of Maine Business and impact real public policy outcomes.

EVENTS AND CONFERENCES

Annual Dinner: Held each October, our Annual Dinner is a top-notch event focused on celebration, recognition, and tribute. In 2018, nearly 600 attendees had a front row seat to our televised gubernatorial debate, produced in partnership with News Center Maine. Historically this event is our opportunity to recognize the investments of Maine companies through the presentation of our annual awards, as well as a chance to commemorate the Maine State Chamber’s recent accomplishments.

Board Orientation & Appreciation Dinner: Preceded by an orientation and review for board members, the Board Appreciation Dinner provides a relaxed venue for board members to get to know each other and the Maine State Chamber staff. This is our opportunity to thank veteran board members and welcome new members to our Board of Directors.

Business Day at the Legislature: Annually, this event hosts 300+ employers, as well as Maine legislators and administrators, with the ultimate goal of increasing collaboration to ultimately strengthen the state’s economy and keep Maine competitive. This casual setting provides a unique opportunity to discuss business issues and priorities, and to share first-hand information about the daily struggles businesses face. Business Day at the Statehouse emphasizes the importance of preserving and retaining existing jobs, strengthening Maine’s economy through the creation of new opportunities, and keeping businesses competitive in this very fragile economy.

Washington, D.C. Fly-In: With more and more issues that affect our state being decided in Washington, the Maine State Chamber held its sixth D.C. Fly-in in April 2018. Visits with each of Maine’s delegates were scheduled, and attendees received each one’s personal attention. A variety of current public policy issues were discussed, including updates on workforce development, immigration laws, health care, energy issues, and transportation funding, to name a few.

Health Care Forum: This informative and timely presentation explored the status of the federal health care reform law “after the Supreme Court decision.” A panel of experts provided the most current information on what the future may hold for businesses and employees.

Leadership Summit: These Leadership Summits provide opportunities for our board members and invited guests to connect with commissioners, House and Senate leadership, committee chairs, and key committee members. The Maine State Chamber takes pride in providing opportunities for Maine’s business and government leaders to engage in honest, open dialogue about top public policy issues.

Legislative Social: Our annual Legislative Social is an ideal way for Maine business leaders to interact with legislators, business associates, new and prospective Maine State Chamber members, and government representatives in a relaxed setting.

Regional Business Breakfasts: Maine State Chamber’s annual Regional Business Breakfasts bring “the Chamber to your region,” enabling us to hear first-hand about the concerns of each region’s local business, as well as providing an opportunity to present the latest public policy information that employers there need to know.

Scramble for Scholars Golf Tournament: Since 1995, the Maine State Chamber of Commerce has proudly assisted 103 students through the generosity of its members. Including our 2018 awards, these scholarships represent a total of $148,500 in tuition assistance to date.

Topic-Specific Workshops: In addition to our slate of annual programs and events, the Maine State Chamber of Commerce organizes several workshops and seminars to address the most current topics of importance to Maine businesses.

Continued on reverse...
who have a disability. Through these relationships, students get help reaching their career goals.

The Campus Career Connect (C3) pairs adult workforce volunteers with community college students who have disabilities. Through these relationships, students get help reaching their career goals.

The Environmental & Energy Technology Council of Maine (www.e2tech.org), a network of companies, non-profits, educational institutions, and government agencies involved in Maine’s energy and environmental technology sector, is charged with advancing job growth, research and development, and new product commercialization.

FocusMaine (www.focusmaine.org) is dedicated to strengthening and revitalizing opportunity and prosperity in Maine by accelerating the creation of quality jobs within a few sectors that have high growth potential.

Maine & Company (www.maineeco.org) helps companies find Maine locations to expand or relocate by providing critical information for decision-making.

The Maine Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives (www.macce.biz) provides a forum where local and regional chamber executives meet to share ideas, network with peers, and build partnerships with other chambers of commerce across Maine.

Maine Career Connect (www.mainecareerconnect.org) works on behalf of professional organizations to solve their issues regarding the recruitment and retention of skilled employees. Through nurturing, networking, and forging new professional and personal connections, new hires and their families are better rooted and ready to make Maine the best place to work, play and call home.

The Maine Economic Research Institute’s mission is to improve Maine’s business environment by providing objective information to enhance economic policy making and through improved public policy.

MaineSpark is fueled by an education and workforce coalition with a common goal: by 2025, 60% of Mainers will hold the credentials that position Maine and the families who live here for success. The Maine State Chamber Workers’ Compensation Group Trust is a self-insured group entity that provides workers’ compensation group coverage to its business members as a long-term workers’ compensation solution.

**Estimated Return on Your Membership Investment:** $300+ MILLION

**NATIONAL RECOGNITION**

Each year, the Maine State Chamber continues to receive national recognition at the joint Annual Meeting of the Council of State Chambers and Association of State Chamber Professionals. Consistently, for more than seven years, we have been presented with member retention awards. In 2013, the Maine State Chamber received the prestigious “President’s Award” for its achievements and excellence in its advocacy efforts, program development, publications, initiatives, member programs, and events. We are proud of these achievements and remain committed to serving our member businesses!