

April 11, 2019

LD 1345 defeated in committee

Rep. Gina Melaragno (D-Auburn), the chief sponsor of **LD 1345**, *An Act To Ensure a Fair Workweek*, was clearly feeling the pressure of the business community as she introduced her bill to the legislature's Labor and Housing committee. On April 10 at 8:00 a.m., the committee room was already overflowing with businesses and laborers from nearly every industry operating in Maine. They were all waiting patiently to voice their opposition to Melaragno's bill.

While only three individuals – Rep. Melaragno, the bill's co-sponsor Rep. Heidi Brooks (D-Lewiston), and James Myall of the Maine Center for Economic Policy – spoke in favor of LD 1345, a four-page list of people from every corner of Maine had signed up and were present to speak against it.

The Labor and Housing committee heard from sole proprietors whose business agility depends on the dynamic scheduling and flexibility of employees to cover unanticipated demand. They heard from students who rely upon quick schedule changes to pick up extra hours for pocket money or to pay their student loans.

Above all, the committee heard a consistent message of bewilderment from the crowd as person after person wondered openly about where the bill came from and why they weren't asked for input before the bill was written and introduced. It seemed to many that, without an earnest review, the proposal was simply copied from a proposal or study from out-of-state and pasted into Maine's legislative docket.

The committee had only heard from people on the first of the four-page list of

those scheduled to testify when something unprecedented happened. Under the leadership of Sen. Shenna Bellows (D-Kennebec), who co-chairs the committee with Rep. Mike Sylvester (D-Portland), the committee suspended the public hearing, went directly into a work session on the bill, and unanimously voted to issue an "ought not to pass" report to the full Legislature.

We are pleased to report that, while votes are still pending in the full Legislature, this bill is essentially dead. The Maine State Chamber of Commerce prepared written testimony in opposition to LD 1345 and was present to testify to the onerous nature of the bill. As members already know, this bill would have added significant costs to employers operating in Maine. LD 1345 would have forced employers with five or more employees to define employee work schedules at least two weeks in advance. It would have forced employers to pay a premium of up to double time to employees for a schedule change with less than a 24-hour notice.

The last public voice the committee heard before voting on LD 1345 was the Maine State Chamber's. We wanted to be certain that our position in opposition was clear, and that the committee was aware of our written testimony. Thank you to all the businesses and employees who contacted the committee through email, phone calls, or public testimony. Your voice made a difference!

For more information about LD 1345, please contact Peter Gore by calling (207) 623-4568, ext. 107, or by emailing pgore@mainechamber.org. □

Committee encouraged to remember that "what it means to be from Maine is clean water," as they consider water extraction moratorium

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following testimony was delivered by Ben Gilman on behalf of the Maine State Chamber of Commerce in opposition to LD 197, *An Act To Convene a Working Group To Authorize a Public Trust for Maine's Groundwater and To Impose a 2-year Moratorium on Large-scale Groundwater Extraction*, at a public hearing held on Wed., April 10, 2019, before the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources. We have reprinted it here for your review.

"Senator Carson, Representative Tucker, members of the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, my name is Ben Gilman from Gorham, and I represent the Maine State Chamber of Commerce, a statewide business organization made up of both large and small businesses, here to provide you with our testimony in opposition to **LD 197**, *An Act To Convene a Working Group To Authorize a Public Trust for Maine's Groundwater and To Impose a 2-year Moratorium on Large-scale Groundwater Extraction*.

There are many here today that can speak to the water resource, the management of the resource, the renewable nature of the resource, and the fact that we have done an excellent job of maintaining this

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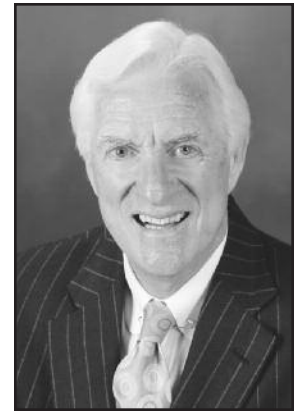
About the Maine State Chamber of Commerce:

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.

A message from the president...

"Where are we at, and where are we headed..."

by Dana Connors



We have just passed the halfway point of the legislative session, in terms of weeks but not in terms of workload. Legislators have some 1,600 bills to date to review this session – many of them complex and expensive in nature. And many of them will have significant impact on Maine employers – much of it negative.

Legislators are grappling with workers' compensation, minimum wage, family/medical leave, paid sick leave, environmental policy, energy options, and workforce development proposals. While each bill may be well intended in spirit, many carry the potential for significant costs increases for employers. And while those costs may not seem substantial if taken individually, the collective costs associated with this session's proposals will add up quickly. Maine is a small business state, with small profit margins they just don't have room to swallow higher costs.

Too much burdensome regulations and costs, applied too fast, will have a stunning, chilling effect on Maine's economy as these employer's search for ways to continue operations here and still maintain a meager profit. Passing costs to customers has the potential to lower sales, and consumers will only pay so much for any product. Reducing staff hours, benefits, or even worse, workers, impacts customer service and deliverables. Big picture – fewer sales means lower sales tax collected by employers, and ultimately impacting the state's revenue and budget.

The Maine State Chamber' advocacy team is at the Statehouse daily, monitoring and speaking out on legislation that is important to our members. However, in this current environment legislators need to hear your voice and your concerns directly We encourage you and your employees to reach out to your locally-elected legislators and share your story, your concerns, your commitment to your communities and your workers, with them. They need to hear firsthand how legislative decisions affect your decisions to operate a business in Maine.

If you would like our help in connecting you with legislators or to discuss the impacts of specific legislation, please don't hesitate to call us. Together, we are the voice of Maine business! ☐

Energy, Utilities and Technology committee considers net neutrality and internet policy as constitutionality of similar proposals challenged in Vermont

Broadband is major factor to Maine's economic growth, provides tremendous benefit and opportunity

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following testimony was delivered by Ben Gilman on behalf of the Maine State Chamber of Commerce in opposition to LD 1364, An Act Regarding Net Neutrality and Internet Policy, at a public hearing held on Wed., April 10, 2019, before the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology. We have reprinted it here for your review.

“Senator Lawrence, Representative Berry, members of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology, my name is Ben Gilman, and I represent the Maine State Chamber of Commerce, a statewide business organization made up of both large and small businesses. I am here to provide you with our testimony in opposition to **LD 1364, An Act Regarding Net Neutrality and Internet Policy.**

The Maine State Chamber of Commerce supports policies and regulations that spur the investment in and build out of high-speed broadband networks for the benefit of Maine residents, businesses, and visitors. The broadband ecosystem is a major contributor to Maine's economic growth and provides the state with tremendous benefits and opportunities. The Maine State Chamber of Commerce does not believe that Maine as a single state should take on the issue of net neutrality; this is a national issue and should be dealt with at the national level. To have one set of internet regulations for businesses that operate in Maine, and another for other states, is not a place we believe Maine should be.

In addition, we should look to one of our neighbors in northern New England to see their experience in dealing with a sim-

ilar piece of legislation. Vermont passed a similar law as being proposed here today in LD 1364. The constitutionality of the Vermont law was instantly challenged in federal court, which if Maine passed this law, it would be challenged as well. Recently, Vermont has suspended its law until the court outcome is determined (see <https://vtdigger.org/2019/03/17/vermont-halt-net-neutrality-law-pending-fcc-case/>). At a minimum, we as a state should await the legal outcome of the Vermont law in deciding whether we as a state move forward with a similar law.

Going forward, we support a regulatory environment that guards against government overreach and allows broadband providers to continue to contribute to local Maine economies by investing in infrastructure, expanding their networks and enhancing the services provided to Maine residents and businesses. The Maine State Chamber of Commerce believes that LD 1364 takes us in the wrong direction. Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with our testimony.”

If you have additional questions about LD 1364 or similar proposals, please contact Ben Gilman by calling (207) 623-4568, ext. 111, or by emailing bgilman@mainechamber.org. □

Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services committee supports student loan bill of rights to license and regulate student loan servicers

The Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services has given its support to **LD 995, An Act To Establish a Student Loan Bill of Rights To License and Regulate Student Loan Servicers**, sponsored by Sen. Eloise Vitelli (D-Arrowsic).

Also known as the “Student Loan Bill of Rights,” the bill would create a state-level student loan ombudsman within the Maine Bureau of Consumer Credit Protection, an agency within the Department of Professional and Financial Regulation. It would also require licensing for loan servicing companies and mandate that those companies follow some of the rules already spelled out in federal law. In addition, the bill would establish a list of prohibited practices for those that service student loans in Maine and prohibit the lenders from misleading borrowers. Lastly, it would allow Maine officials to investigate servicers of student loans.

In her testimony, Sen. Vitelli said that she believes this bill is a way to address the student debt burden in the state and hold lenders accountable. LD 995 will now go to the full legislature to for consideration.

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

Water Moratorium...

(Continued from Page 1...)

resource as a state. I would like to highlight another perspective. As a state, water is one of our brands – what we are known for. In fact, water from Maine is the number one item sold in New York City. I was recently at an education conference in Philadelphia, and everyone around the table had a bottle of water in front of them. The person next to me read the label – *water from Maine*. The conversation ensued about what a wonderful product it was to produce and the conversation spread around the room. I am sure you all can guess where that water was from – Poland Spring. Next time you drink a bottle of Poland Spring water, read the label. What a great message to send out to world – what it means to be from Maine is clean water. Legislation such as LD 197 seek to make it more difficult for business involved in water in Maine to operate – that is not the direction we want to go in as a state or the message we want to send to those outside of Maine.

Specifically, the Maine State Chamber of Commerce opposes LD 197 due to the moratorium it would create in law for the business community in Maine involved in water for their businesses. For more than 100 years, Maine has developed common law surrounding water rights that land owners have an “absolute dominion” to extract water under their own land; LD 197 would alter this dramatically. In one swoop, this law would repeal more than 100 years of established law that the business community has come to rely on, and instead, create a moratorium. The Maine State Chamber advocates for consistency and certainty in our regulatory system. If LD 197 were to pass, it would remove consistency surrounding our water regulations and remove more than 100 years of settled common law. The Maine State Chamber believes this bill will take Maine in the wrong direction in trying to improve our business climate and urge the committee to oppose this bill.”

If you have additional questions about LD 197 or other environmental proposals, please contact Ben Gilman by calling (207) 623-4568, ext. 111, or by emailing bgilman@mainechamber.org. □

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Tuesday, April 30 ♦ 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.
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Taxation committee tables local option sales tax bills and seeks Attorney General's opinion on constitutionality of proposals

The Joint Standing Committee on Taxation tabled two local option sales tax bills yesterday, defeated the other three, and decided to draft a letter to Maine's Attorney General asking whether the issue of permitting a local option tax is constitutional. The Maine State Chamber opposed all five bills at the recent public hearing.

The three defeated bills are:

- ♦ **LD 65**, *An Act to Allow Municipalities to Impose a Seasonal or Year-Round Local Option Sales Tax*, sponsored by Rep. Beebe-Center (D-Rockland), which would have allowed a municipality to impose a local option sales tax if approved by referendum on a seasonal or year-round basis with no limit on the rate that could be imposed;
- ♦ **LD 156**, *An Act to Allow Regional Service Center Municipalities to Assess an Additional One Percent Tax for Infrastructure Costs*, sponsored by Sen. Miramant (D-Knox), which would have allowed municipalities to impose a local option sales tax of no more than 1% if approved by referendum for the purpose of funding infrastructure costs; and,
- ♦ **LD 1110**, *An Act to Establish a Local Option for Sales Tax*, sponsored Rep. Gramlich (D-Old Orchard), which would have allowed a municipality to impose a local option sales tax, if approved by referendum, on items that were subject to the sales tax, such as retail transactions, prepared foods, liquor, hotel rentals, and certain rentals of automobiles.

In addition, the two tabled bills are:

- ♦ **LD 1254**, *An Act to Authorize a Local Option Sales Tax on Meals and Lodging and Provide Funding to Treat Opioid Use Disorder*, sponsored by Rep. Sylvester (D-Portland), which would allow a municipality to impose a year-round or seasonal local option sales tax, if

approved by referendum, of no more than 1% on prepared food and short-term lodging – that means, a total of 85% of revenue generated would be distributed back to the municipality and 15% would be distributed to all other municipalities that have to use that money for preventing and treating opioid use; and,

- ♦ **LD 609**, *An Act to Provide Municipalities Additional Sales Tax Revenue from Lodging Sales*, sponsored by Rep. Terry (D-Gorham), which would increase the lodging tax by 1%. Incremental revenues generated, minus administrative costs for Maine Revenue Services, will be returned to the generating municipality.

The Committee chose to table LD 1254 and LD 609 so they could seek an opinion from the Attorney General as to whether permitting a local option sales tax is in fact constitutional. The constitutional issue was raised by Maine Revenue Services (MRS). Although MRS testified neither for nor against the local option tax bills, the agency outlined major concerns with the proposals. MRS concerns included the increased complexity for MRS, retailers, and consumers due to the degree of municipal discretion in structuring the local option sales tax; the timing and cost of implementation; issues with the tracking and transfer of revenues; and, constitutional issues.

MRS also stated concerns regarding the timing and cost of the implementation of a local options sales tax and that it could take up to two years to update accounting, noticing, and billing systems, as well as tax returns and tax guidance documents. Retailers would incur the cost of having to update accounting and point of sales systems.

In addition, and perhaps the most concerning of all issues, was whether the permitting of a local option sales tax is

Continued on Page 8...

Gov. Mills announces federal approval of Medicaid expansion

Governor Janet Mills announced that the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has approved Maine's State Plan Amendments to expand Medicaid (MaineCare) under the Affordable Care Act.

CMS approved the state's plan retroactive to July 2, 2018, which was the date indicated in the 2017 ballot initiative supported by nearly 60 percent of Maine voters. MaineCare expansion is projected to provide coverage to approximately 70,000 people throughout the state. With the approval, the federal government will finance more than \$800 million in estimated costs for those who enroll under expansion from July 2, 2018, through state fiscal year 2021. Maine is among 36 states, plus Washington, D.C., that have expanded Medicaid.

Maine voters passed a referendum in November 2017 directing the state to expand MaineCare. The new law required Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to adopt rules to implement the program and grant coverage no later than July 2, 2018. Governor Mills, in her first executive order, instructed DHHS to begin implementation of expansion. In a separate letter, Governor Mills also asked CMS to approve the State Plan Amendments filed by the previous administration, which Maine DHHS corrected to reflect the July 2, 2018, effective date. State Plan Amendments detail how a state operates its Medicaid program and are sent to CMS for review and approval.

MaineCare started covering enrollees newly eligible under the expansion in January 2019. With this approval, CMS has started sending notices to low-income people who signed up for coverage through HealthCare.gov that they may now be eligible for Medicaid. The Wilton call center will start taking calls in mid-April to answer questions about the MaineCare expansion. As of March 29, 2019, approximately 16,800 individuals have been granted Medicaid coverage under the expansion. □

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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.

Tuesday, April 16, 2019

Health Coverage, Insurance, and Financial Services

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

LD 1162, An Act To Further Expand Drug Price Transparency (Sen. Vitelli of Sagadahoc)

LD 1389, An Act To Address Transparency, Accountability and Oversight of Pharmacy Benefit Managers (Sen. Pouliot of Kennebec)

LD 1409, An Act To Improve Price Transparency of Prescription Drugs Sold in Maine (Sen. Diamond of Cumberland)

LD 1504, An Act To Protect Consumers from Unfair Practices Related to Pharmacy Benefits Management (Sen. Sanborn of Cumberland)

Education and Cultural Affairs

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

LD 318, An Act To Prepare All Students for Work and Life by Requiring That Students Receive Instruction in Vocational Preparation and Practical Life Skills (Rep. Keschl of Belgrade)

Wednesday, April 17, 2019

Education and Cultural Affairs

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

LD 985, An Act To Maintain High School Diploma Standards by Repealing Proficiency-based Diploma Standards (Rep. Fecteau of Augusta)

LD 1347, An Act To Promote High-quality After-school Programs in Public Schools (Rep. Beebe-Center of Rockland)

Energy, Utilities, and Technology

9:00 a.m.; Cross Building, Room 211

LD 1464, An Act To Support Electrification of Certain Technologies for the Benefit of Maine Consumers and Utility Systems and the Environment (Rep. Riley of Jay)

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

Taxation

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

LD 1292, An Act To Lower Maine's Individual Income Tax (Rep. O'Connor of Berwick)

LD 1452, An Act Regarding the Collection of the Sales and Use Tax by Marketplace Facilitators (Rep. Tipping of Orono)

Environment and Natural Resources

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

LD 1433, An Act To Protect the Environment and Public Health by Further Reducing Toxic Chemicals in Packaging (Rep. Fay of Raymond)

Health Coverage, Insurance, and Financial Services

10:00 a.m.; Cross Building, Room 220

LD 1272, An Act To Increase Access to Low-cost Prescription Drugs (Pres. Jackson of Aroostook)

LD 1387, An Act To Increase Access to Safe and Affordable Prescription Drugs (Pres. Jackson of Aroostook)

LD 1499, An Act To Establish the Maine Prescription Drug Affordability Board (Pres. Jackson of Aroostook)

Thursday, April 18, 2019

Innovation, Development,

Economic Advancement and Business

1:00 p.m.; Cross Building, Room 202

LD 890, An Act To Expand Workforce Access by Creating Apprenticeship Programs To Increase Access to Licensure in Certain Occupations (Sen. Keim of Oxford)

LD 1502, An Act To Expand Access to the Workforce through Apprenticeships (Sen. Farrin of Somerset)

Friday, April 19, 2019

Education and Cultural Affairs

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

LD 210, An Act To Increase Technology and Engineering Education for Grades 7 to 12 (Rep. Ordway of Standish)

LD 1369, An Act To Create an Additional Pathway To Certify Industrial Arts Teachers To Foster Career and Technical Subjects in Maine Schools (Rep. Wadsworth of Hiram)

Environment and Natural Resources

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

LD 1467, An Act To Implement Recommendations of the Department of Environmental Protection Regarding the State's Cellular Telephone Recycling Law (Rep. Tucker of Brunswick)

Labor and Housing

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

LD 883, An Act To Establish the Opt-in Maine Paid Family Leave Insurance Program (Rep. Daughtry of Brunswick)

LD 1239, An Act To Mandate Paid Maternity and Parental Leave (Rep. Collings of Portland)

LD 1410, An Act To Create Paid Family and Medical Leave Benefits (Rep. Gideon of Freeport)

Monday, April 22, 2019

Education and Cultural Affairs

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

LD 259, An Act To Require the State To Meet the Mandatory 55 Percent Contribution to Schools (Sen. Miramant of Knox)

Tuesday, April 23, 2019

Education and Cultural Affairs

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

LD 1262, An Act To Allow Funds from the Federal E-Rate Program To Be Applied to Maine Preschool Programs (Sen. Pouliot of Kennebec)

Wednesday, April 24, 2019

Taxation

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

LD 1191, An Act To Exempt Solar Energy Equipment from Property Tax (Sen. Lawrence of York) □



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Local Option Sales Tax... **(Continued from Page 5...)**

constitutional under the Maine Constitution. The Maine Constitution, under Article IX, Section 9, states “the Legislature shall never, in any manner, suspend or surrender the power of taxation.” It is this issue that has some lawmakers uneasy about the constitutionality of the proposals. The committee chairs are planning to work with the committee analyst to draft the letter, which is expected to be sent this week.

The Maine State Chamber has long-opposed local option sales taxes for a variety of reasons. Below are some of the reasons cited from the testimony on these bills:

- ♦ **Enacting a local option sales tax increases the total tax burden in the state:** This bill adds another layer of sales tax to items purchased in municipalities that enact it. Local option taxes are nothing more than another way to raise revenue for municipali-

ties and would do nothing to reduce taxes at the local level. After all, any time a municipality needs a new fire truck, a new school, or any new budget item, it could simply impose the tax. Municipalities need to focus on spending efficiencies, not just continually raising taxes on Maine businesses and Maine people.

- ♦ **Local option sales taxes hurt small brick and mortar businesses:** Many folks buy local to support small brick-and-mortar businesses in their municipalities. Local businesses located in one locale compete with local businesses in another. Businesses located in towns that enact a local option sales tax will be at a competitive disadvantage with businesses in municipalities that do not enact a local option sales tax. This will pit one community against another. *Local brick-and-mortar retail businesses will never be able to compete in that high-taxed environment.* The tax will hit their bot-

tom line, and they may not be able to pass the expense on to the consumer. Ultimately, they will lose sales to neighboring towns that don't have local option sales tax.

- ♦ **Local option sales taxes impact local economic development efforts:** Municipalities around the state work hard to try to attract businesses to their locales; many hire economic development directors to do just that. This will do nothing to attract businesses, but instead, would discourage businesses from locating in towns that have additional taxes. This bill will make towns that impose sales taxes less attractive. Once local option taxes are in place, they would be virtually impossible to remove because that municipality would become dependent on the revenue.

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

Digest of New Legislation

Maine Chamber staff has 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 advocacy department by calling (207) 623-4568 or visit www.mainechamber.org.

A total of 314 business-related bills have been tracked to date since the session began on January 2, 2019!

EDUCATION

LD 1428, An Act To Require the State To Fund 50 Percent of Public Preschool Programs.

(Sen. Millett, D-Cumberland) *Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs*. This bill requires the State to fund a minimum of 50% of the costs of an approved public preschool program for each year a school administrative unit operates the program, other than the year in which the school administrative unit receives start-up funds for the program. If funds for essential programs and services do not provide the funding necessary to fund a minimum of 50% of approved public preschool programs, the State is directed to use other funding sources and the Commissioner of Education is directed to include the funding levels necessary in the Department of Education's request to the Legislature for appropriations from the General Fund.

LD 1445, An Act To Provide Debt-free Educational Opportunities for Maine Residents. (Rep. Brooks, D-Lewisotn) *Joint Standing Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Commerce*. This bill establishes the Debt-free Educational Opportunities for Maine Residents program. The bill requires, beginning in fiscal year 2019-20, the Finance Authority of Maine to provide eligible Maine residents a grant in the amount of the cost of tuition and other expenses related to the cost of attendance at an eligible school, including the cost of room and board, books, supplies and fees, charged to a student enrolled in courses leading to completion of an eligible program of study on at least a part-time basis at a public institution of higher education in the State in which the student is enrolled, less all other gift aid. An eligible program of study means a curriculum leading to a baccalaureate degree, associate degree or certificate. An eligi-

ble full-time or part-time student may receive a grant for one academic year and may receive grants for the equivalent of a 4-year baccalaureate program at the eligible school the student is attending.

LD 1478, Resolve, Regarding Legislative Review of Portions of Chapter 115: The Credentialing of Education Personnel, a Late-filed Major Substantive Rule of the Department of Education. Emergency (Rep. Kornfield, D-Bangor) *Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs*. This resolve provides for legislative review of portions of Chapter 115: The Credentialing of Education Personnel, a major substantive rule of the Department of Education that was filed outside the legislative rule acceptance period.

ENVIRONMENTAL

LD 1433, An Act To Protect the Environment and Public Health by Further Reducing Toxic Chemicals in Packaging. (Rep. Fay, D-Raymond) *Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources*. This bill amends the laws regarding the reduction of toxics in packaging to prohibit the sale of food packaging to which phthalates have been intentionally introduced, effective January 1, 2022. It also authorizes the Department of Environmental Protection to by rule prohibit the sale of food packaging to which perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances, or PFAS, have been intentionally introduced upon a determination by the department that a safer alternative to the intentionally introduced PFAS is available, except that such prohibition may not take effect until January 1, 2022 or 2 years following the department's determination that a safer alternative is available, whichever is later. The bill provides an exemption from these prohibitions for a

Continued on Page 10...

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New Legislation...

(Continued from Page 9...)

manufacturer of a food or beverage product that has annual national sales of all food and beverage products produced by the manufacturer of less than one billion dollars. It also authorizes the department to designate additional chemicals of concern in food packaging; to require manufacturers of food packaging that use such designated chemicals to report regarding its use of the chemical and the availability of safer alternatives; and to prohibit the sale of food packaging to which a designated chemical of concern has been intentionally introduced if safer alternatives are reasonably available, effective and affordable to the consumer.

LD 1467, An Act To Implement Recommendations of the Department of Environmental Protection Regarding the State's Cellular Telephone Recycling Law. (Rep. Tucker, D-Brunswick) *Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources.* This bill, which is reported out by the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources pursuant to Joint Order 2019, House Paper 883, implements the Department of Environmental Protection's recommendations regarding the State's cellular telephone recycling law as included in the department's annual report on the State's product stewardship programs. The bill amends the State's cellular telephone recycling law to remove the requirement that cellular telephone service providers submit annual reports to the department regarding the collection and disposal, reuse or recycling of used cellular telephones.

LD 1533, An Act To Eliminate Single-use Plastic Carry-out Bags. (Rep. Stover, D-Boothbay) *Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources.* This bill prohibits a retail establishment from using single-use carry-out bags to bag products at the point of sale or otherwise make single-use carry-out bags available to customers, with exemptions for certain types and uses of plastic and paper bags. Retail establishments may provide recyclable

Continued on Page 11...



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

paper bags to bag products at the point of sale for at least 5¢ per bag, with exceptions to the fee requirement for certain types of retail establishments. The prohibition is effective April 22, 2020.

REFERENDUM PROCESS REFORM

LD 1438, *An Act To Clarify the Intent of Referendum Questions for Voters.* (Rep. Corey, R-Windham) *Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs.* This bill requires the Secretary of State, with the assistance of the Attorney General and the Revisor of Statutes, to prepare a summary of each referendum question that explains the referendum question to the voter and to place this summary on the ballot after the corresponding referendum question. This summary may not exceed 250 words, except that additional words may be used if the Secretary of State considers it necessary and space on the ballot permits.

TAXATION

LD 1423, *An Act to Require Corporate Transparency When Taxpayer Funding is Provided.* (Rep. Samson, D-Alfred) *Joint Standing Committee on Taxation.* The bill would require that companies that receive BETE or participate in TIFS or credit enhancement agreements include a list of all donations to nonprofit corporations or public entities in its annual report.

LD 1440, *An Act to Create Transparency in Tax Increment Financing and Credit Enhancement Agreement Proposals.* (Rep. Sylvester, D-Portland) *Joint Standing Committee on Taxation.* The bill would require that TIF applicants include in the application the name of the applicants, and the amount of assistance be made public. This information is currently confidential.

UTILITIES AND ENERGY

LD 1463, *An Act To Support Electrification of Certain Technologies for the Benefit of Maine Consumers and Utility Systems and the Environment.* (Rep. Riley, D-Jay) *Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and*

Technology. This bill:

- 1 Amends provisions in the law regarding the conservation programs of the Efficiency Maine Trust by clarifying that conservation programs seek to increase the efficiency with which electricity is used and defining “beneficial electrification” as the electrification of a technology that would otherwise require energy from a fossil fuel that provides a benefit to a utility, a ratepayer or the environment by improving the efficiency of the electricity grid or reducing consumer costs or emissions, including carbon emissions;
- 2 Requires the Efficiency Maine Trust to conduct a study regarding the barriers to beneficial electrification of the transportation and heating sectors in the State; and,
- 3 Requires the Public Utilities Commission to issue a request for proposals from utilities and entities that are not utilities to conduct a pilot program to support beneficial electrification of the transportation sector of the State.

LD 1465, *An Act To Diversify Maine’s Energy Portfolio with Renewable Energy.* (Rep. Hubbell, D-Bar Harbor) *Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology.* This bill does the following.

- 1 It increases the portfolio requirement for new renewable resources from 10% to 50% by 2030 and makes several changes to resource eligibility for the requirement to encourage solar generation and highly productive hydropower resources and to provide minimum efficiency standards for biomass resources.
- 2 It directs the Public Utilities Commission to procure long-term contracts over a 5-year period for 800 megawatts of grid-scale renewable resources, 90 megawatts of community-based renewable resources and 135 megawatts of renewable resources owned by commercial and industrial electricity customers. For each of these 3 types of renewable resources, the bill requires the commission to conduct annual solicitations for the long-term contracts and specifies requirements for

the procurement process, resulting contracts and resource qualification.

- 3 It requires that the Public Utilities Commission rules governing net energy billing allow up to 200 customers to share ownership of an electricity generating facility for net energy billing, allow electricity generating facilities of up to one megawatt installed capacity to qualify for net energy billing and require the commission to review net energy billing when the cumulative capacity of electricity generating facilities that participate in net energy billing in the service territory of a transmission and distribution utility reaches 10% of the utility’s peak demand.
- 4 It directs the Public Utilities Commission to develop a plan for implementing a thermal renewable resource portfolio standard to encourage commercial and industrial pellet and wood heating systems, residential biomass systems and combined heat and power systems fueled by biomass. It requires the commission to submit a plan for the thermal renewable resource portfolio standard by January 1, 2020.
- 5 It directs the Public Utilities Commission to develop, implement and evaluate a distributed generation pilot program to encourage on-site renewable energy generation. It requires the commission to evaluate the pilot program after 3 years of operation and report its findings and recommendations to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over energy matters by April 15, 2023.

LD 1494, *An Act To Reform Maine’s Renewable Portfolio Standard.* (Sen. Vitelli, D-Sagadahoc) *Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology.* This bill increases the percentage of supply sources for retail electricity sales in the State that must be accounted for by new renewable capacity resources from 10% to 50% by 2030. It also makes several changes to resource eligibility to meet these requirements. The bill also creates a renewable portfolio standard for thermal energy resources. The bill also directs the Public Utilities

Continued on Page 12...

New Legislation...
(Continued from Page 11...)

Commission to procure long-term contracts for an amount of renewable capacity resources that is equal to 1/2 the amount of the portfolio requirements for these resources. The bill requires the commission to conduct annual competitive solicitations for the long-term contracts.

LD 1517, An Act To Facilitate the Deployment of Small Wireless Facilities in Maine. (Rep. Picre, D-Falmouth) *Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology.* This bill provides that a small wireless facility must be a permitted use within the public right-of-way, subject to any duly adopted, nondiscriminatory conditions otherwise applicable to permitted uses within the municipality and consistent with state and federal law, including, without limitation, any permitting requirements in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 35-A, chapter 25.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION
LD 1500, An Act To Improve Workers' Compensation Protection for Injured Workers Whose Employers Have Wrongfully Not Secured Workers' Compensation Insurance. (President Jackson, D-Aroostook) *Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing.* This bill amends the Maine Workers' Compensation Act of 1992 to create protections for injured workers whose employers have not secured workers' compensation insurance in accordance with current law. The bill creates liability for situations when an employee is injured while working for an uninsured subcontractor. In such situations, the prime contractor will be responsible for payment of workers' compensation benefits as if it were the direct employer of the injured employee, unless there is an intermediate subcontractor with workers' compensation insurance coverage, in which case, the intermediate subcontractor is responsible for payment of all benefits due under the Act. These provisions take effect January 1, 2020 and are repealed July 1, 2022. The bill also

amends the laws governing the Employment Rehabilitation Fund. Until July 1, 2022, the fund will be used to pay workers' compensation benefits to injured employees working for illegally uninsured employers when there is no other prime contractor or subcontractor liable for payment of benefits. Until July 1, 2022, the fund will not transfer a portion of its funds to the General Fund and penalties recovered for violations of the Maine Workers' Compensation Act of 1992 will be directed to this fund exclusively, instead of being shared with the Workers' Compensation Board Administrative Fund or the General Fund.

LD 1501, An Act To Change the Law Governing Occupational Disease Claims under the Maine Workers' Compensation Act of 1992. (President Jackson, D-Aroostook) *Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing.* This bill amends the law governing occupational disease claims under the Maine Workers' Compensation Act of 1992.

Continued on Page 13...

“Those who want to make changes [to workers’ compensation] miss the point that they can not achieve their goals without throwing the compromise off balance.”

—Maine Sunday Telegram, September 15, 1992

Let’s all work to maintain that delicate balance.



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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, director of health care 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 arno@mainechamber.org.

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New Legislation...

(Continued from Page 12...)

The bill repeals the chapter in the laws governing workers' compensation entitled “Occupational Disease Law” and:

- 1 Defines “personal injury” under the laws governing workers' compensation to include any condition or disease contributed to by an employee's occupational cumulative trauma or exposure that arises out of and in the course of employment;
- 2 Specifies that the employer in whose employment the employee was last injuriously exposed to the occupational trauma or exposure is fully liable for all incapacity resulting from the occupational trauma or exposure, and the date of injury for an occupational cumulative trauma or exposure injury is the date that the employee becomes incapacitated from the occupational cumulative trauma or exposure;
- 3 Provides a method for calculating the amount of the employee's compensation if, on the date of incapacity resulting from occupational cumulative trauma or exposure, the injured employee no longer works in the same occupation in which the employee worked when the employee incurred the last injurious occupational cumulative trauma or exposure;
- 4 Specifies that, with respect to a personal injury that involves a condition or disease contributed to by the employee's occupational cumulative trauma or exposure that arises out of and in the course of employment, the employer in whose employment the employee was last injuriously exposed to the occupational trauma or exposure is fully liable for all incapacity resulting from the occupational trauma or exposure; and
- 5 Establishes that the date of injury for an occupational cumulative trauma or exposure injury is the date that the employee becomes incapacitated from the occupational cumulative trauma or exposure.

Continued on Page 14...

New Legislation... (Continued from Page 13...)

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

LD 864, An Act To Make Whole Family Support Available Statewide. (Rep. Stewart, R-Presque Isle) *Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services.* This bill requires community action agencies to establish support programs to serve families to assist parents with children as they pursue stable employment, pursue education intended to lead to employment or otherwise pursue self-sufficiency. The bill also provides funding for community action agencies to establish the support programs.

LD 1420, Resolve, To Establish a Task Force To Study the Current Status and Future Sustainability of Aquaculture in the State. Emergency (Rep. McCreight, D-Harpswell) *Joint Standing Committee on Marine Resources.* This resolve establishes the Task Force To Study the Current Status and Future Sustainability of Aquaculture in the State. The task force membership consists of Legislators, representatives of entities knowledgeable about or involved in aquaculture and representatives of state agencies, associations and commercial fisheries. The task force's duties include a review of the report from the Governor's Task Force on the Planning and Development of Marine Aquaculture in Maine dated January 30, 2004 and an assessment of the current status of aquaculture in the State, current production levels and production capacity and environmental effects and the carrying capacity of the coastal marine environment, as well as an examination of aquaculture best practices, relationships with other fisheries, current economic and workforce effects, future opportunities and current and proposed community outreach and education. The task force is required to submit an interim report no later than September 1, 2019 and a final report no later than December 11, 2019 to the Joint Standing Committee on Marine Resources and the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, which may each submit legislation based on the report to the Second Regular



**Maine Resource
Recovery Association**

**26th Annual Recycling and Solid
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April 29-30, 2019

Point Lookout Northport, Maine

Do you have recycling or solid waste questions? Then this is **THE** event to get the answers.

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Keynote Addresses by

Bridget Croke – VP, Closed loop fund

Mathieu Guillemette—Director, Services to Municipalities-Eco Enterprises Quebec

Jerry Reid – DEP Commissioner of Maine

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Come hear from Industry experts on topics such as:

- **What's next for Product Stewardship?**
- **Recycling Markets**
- **Reducing Food waste**
- **Composting**
- **Plastics & Glass**
- **Changing Behavior to encourage environmentally sustainable practices**

Come meet with Vendors and Network with Experts in the Recycling and Solid Waste Industry!

Deadline for Registrations is Friday April 19th! Your Registration Packet can be found on our website: www.mrra.net.

We hope to see you there!!!

Session of the 129th Legislature.

LD 1520, An Act To Create and Sustain Jobs through Development of Cooperatives and Employee-owned Businesses. (Sen. Libby, D-Androscoggin) *Joint Standing Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Commerce.* This bill supports employee-owned businesses and cooperatives in the following ways.

- 1 It excludes from Maine income tax the amount of gain, up to a maximum of \$750,000 recognized by a business owner in transferring the business to an employee stock ownership plan, eligible worker-owned cooperative, consumer cooperative or affordable housing cooperative.
- 2 It excludes from Maine income tax interest from loans that finance transfers of ownership from a business to an employee stock ownership plan, eligible worker-owned cooperative, consumer cooperative or affordable housing cooperative.
- 3 It requires the Department of Economic and Community Development, Office of Business

Development to encourage and assist employee-owned businesses by requiring the office to: develop educational programs, including convening an annual conference on employee ownership issues; provide information about employee ownership and technical assistance to retiring business owners, employees of plants threatened with closure and entrepreneurs interested in creating businesses with broadly shared ownership; link Maine businesses interested in implementing employee ownership to available financial, technical and legal resources; and help businesses interested in implementing some form of employee ownership to obtain financing, as well as undertake other duties.

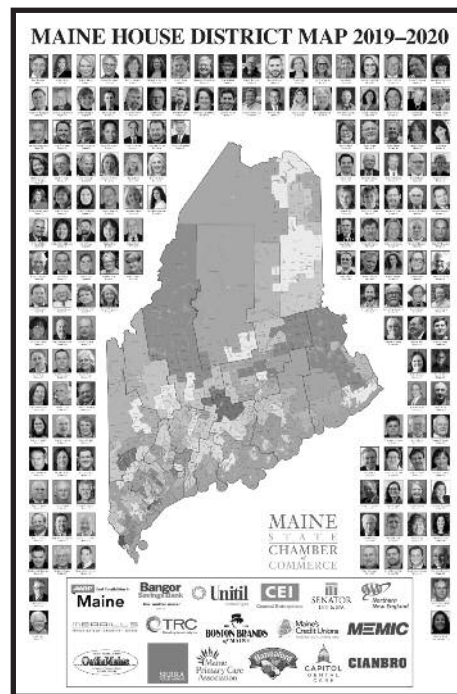
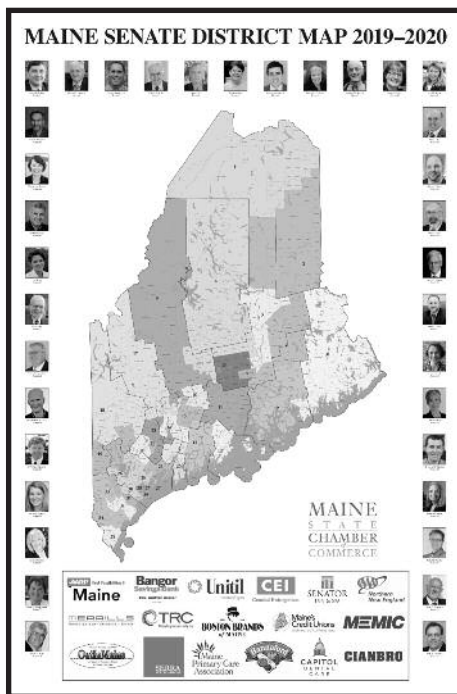
- 4 It requires the Commissioner of Economic and Community Development to give priority to employee-owned businesses, either established or in the process of becoming employee-owned, when

Continued on Page 15...

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.

New Legislation... (Continued from Page 14...)

providing loans or grants from funds or programs maintained by the department.

- 5 It requires the Maine Public Employees Retirement System to conduct a study to determine how funds held by the system may be invested responsibly in employee-owned businesses in this State and to report its findings to the Joint Standing Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Business, which is authorized to report out a bill to the Second Regular Session of the 129th Legislature based on the study and recommendations of the system.

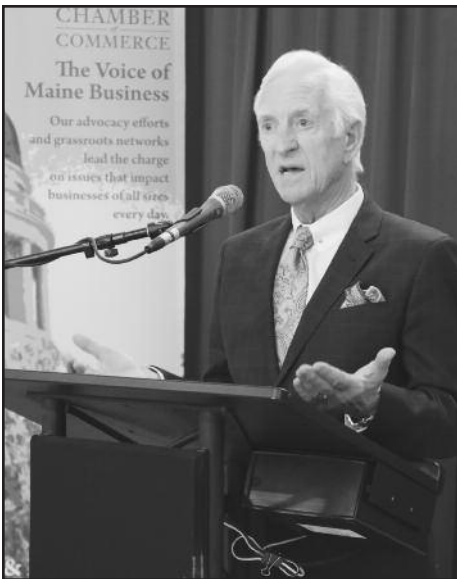
LD 1521, An Act To Expand Skill Development Opportunities for Maine Youth. (Sen. Keim, R-Oxford) *Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs.* This bill directs the Department of Education, in consultation with the Department of Labor, to develop an internship program for students who are 23 years of age or younger. The internship program developed by the department would authorize participants to receive compensation options, in combination with a variable hourly wage that is equal to or greater than the federal minimum wage, that may include academic credits, credentials of value and stackable credentials. The Department of Education is directed to submit a report outlining the internship program developed, together with any necessary implementing legislation, to the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs by December 4, 2019. In addition, to facilitate participation in the Maine Apprenticeship Program established under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 26, section 3202, this bill directs the Department of Labor to calculate the amount of funding and the number of positions it would require in order to establish an apprenticeship coordinator at each career and technical education center in the State and report this information to the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs by December 4, 2019. □

2019 BUSINESS DAY AT THE STATEHOUSE

Thank you to Our Sponsors!

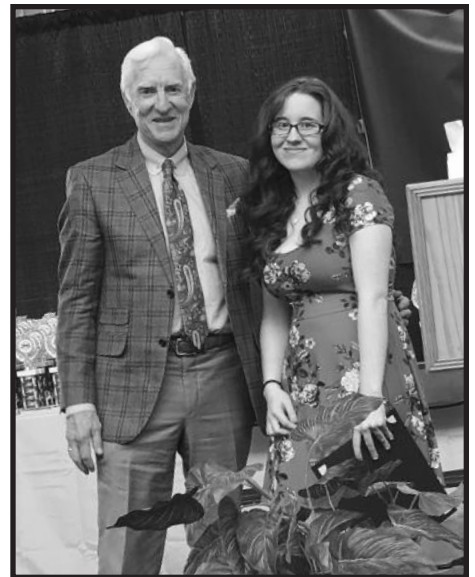
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2019 BUSINESS DAY AT THE STATEHOUSE





JMG's Kim Lipp honored at the Maine Women's Fund 30th Anniversary Leadership Luncheon



JMG's Executive Vice President, Kim Lipp, was honored at the Maine Women's Fund's 30th Anniversary Leadership Luncheon in Portland on Tuesday, April 2. She was recognized for her role as a leader at JMG, a role that has helped more than 50,000 students overcome their barriers and pursue their potential. Thanks to Lipp's commitment to advancing social change for greater equity for Maine's youth, JMG now serves more than 9,000 students in grades six through post-secondary completion and connection to careers. The Maine State Chamber would also like to congratulate two other awardees, Gilda Nardone of New Ventures Maine and Susan Roche of the Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project. □

Maine State Chamber invests in Maine students and Maine's future

For the sixteenth year in a row, the Maine State Chamber of Commerce showed its commitment to Maine students and to Maine's future by presenting college scholarships to high school seniors in the JMG program. JMG is the only statewide, private nonprofit providing a continuum of support to students who face barriers from grades six through college completion.

On Tuesday, March 26, Maine State Chamber President Dana Connors presented three college scholarships at JMG's annual Career Development Conference, held at Thomas College in Waterville. More than 800 students, volunteers, and guests from Maine's business and education communities were in attendance for the presentation.

"I have to say, presenting these scholarships is one of the highlights of my job," said Connors. "I'm here representing hundreds of Maine businesses who believe in you and are willing to make an investment in your education. We understand that you are an important part of Maine's future, and of strengthening the workforce, our communities and the economy."

Connors presented the first scholarship to Roxanna Macgregor (pictured top left), a senior at Shead High School who plans to pursue a bachelor's degree in Marine Biology this fall. The second scholarship winner was a senior from Sanford High School, Michael Baker

(pictured top center), who is heading to Central Maine Community College to pursue his associate's degree. And, the final scholarship went to Morgan Robinson (pictured top right), a student from Narraguagus High School who is enrolling at the University of Maine Machias as an English major.

"The Maine State Chamber of Commerce has a history of investing in the education of JMG students," said JMG's President and CEO, Craig Larrabee. "And year after year, we hear from these young people that the money from these scholarships is critical, but so is seeing how committed the State Chamber is to supporting Maine students as they leave high school and navigate what can often be a very challenging path to postsecondary education and careers."

One of last year's scholarship winners, Victoria Thompson, described her first semester at the University of Maine at Presque Isle as being challenging compared to the workload in high school. She said, so far, her time at school has been filled with hard work and building friendships. "The scholarship I received from the Maine State Chamber was extremely important because it showed me that someone really believes in me," said Thompson. "And, the money that comes with that vote of confidence will help me reach my education goals." □

Campus Career Connect needs you! Career Mentoring for Students with Disabilities



Campus Career Connect (C3) is an online group mentoring program where college students with a disability can connect with professional mentors and get help reaching their career goals.

- ◆ Students spend time each week chatting online with career mentors
- ◆ Monthly webinars on various career-readiness topics
- ◆ Networking opportunities, resume feedback, and ongoing support
- ◆ Open to any student with a disability from Maine or studying in Maine



The Maine State Chamber of Commerce has partnered with Partners for Youth with Disabilities (PYD) in an online career mentoring program for students with disabilities. The program, Campus Career Connect (C3), is an online group mentoring program where college students with a disability can connect with professional mentors and get help reaching their career goals. Students spend time each week chatting online with career mentors. Students and mentors are able to participate in monthly webinars on various career-readiness topics and have access to networking opportunities, resume feedback, and ongoing support. This program is open to any student with a disability from Maine or studying in Maine. The Chamber is seeking for employer mentors to join the program and participate in the mentoring program. Sign up today at C3.PYD.org via phone, tablet, or computer. □

Want to be a mentor?

Please contact Megan Sanborn
by calling (207) 623-4568, ext. 108,
or by emailing msanborn@mainechamber.org.

For additional information, check out C3.PYD.org
or contact Deep by emailing dchinappa@pyd.org



MAINE
S T A T E
CHAMBER
of
COMMERCE

2019 FocusMaine Internship Experience connects interns with employers and Maine's quality of life

FocusMaine is partnering with Educate Maine again this year to launch the 2019 FocusMaine Internship Experience (FMIE). This program of career, professional and social events for summer interns working in Maine seeks to better connect interns with each other, with Maine employers, and to Maine's quality of life. The goal is to link more interns to opportunities in Maine and to help connect Maine businesses to great talent.

Last year, more than 400 interns from 29 Maine businesses participated in the program. Businesses that work within FocusMaine's signature industries (agriculture, aquaculture, and biopharmaceuticals) and related fields are especially encouraged to enroll their interns in the program this year.

Internships can be a very effective strategy for cultivating prospective employees, strengthening workplace diversity and attracting more young people to Maine. Assistance in developing a quality internship program is available by contacting the FocusMaine Internship Experience program staff at FocusMaineInterns@gmail.com. □

Maine Community Foundation launches Adult Learner Scholarship Fund

The Maine Community Foundation (MaineCF) has launched the Adult Learner Scholarship Fund to support non-traditional students who want to change their lives for the better through education and training.

“Pursuing higher education as an adult – whether for the first time or not – can be stressful and full of challenges,” says MaineCF’s Director of Educational Initiatives Cherie Galyean. “The Adult Learner Scholarship is intended to help relieve some of the financial burden students take on so they can focus on what is important: school.”

MaineCF offers two types of Adult Learner scholarships. A degree-seeking scholarship supports two- and four-year degree programs and certificate courses that fit into the regular calendar year. **The 2019 application deadlines for these scholarships are June 15 and December 15.**

The second scholarship supports credential and certificate programs that last less than a full semester. These short-term scholarships will have a **rolling deadline of the first of each month.**

Eligible applicants must be over the age of 25; work full-time; have dependents other than a spouse; and, be financially independent. Applicants also must not have received a standard high school diploma and delayed enrollment in college after high school for a reason other than a gap year activity. Complete guidelines and application forms are available at www.mainecef.org or www.mainecef.org/find-a-scholarship/available-scholarships-for-adult-learners. For more information, please contact Liz Fickett, scholarship funds manager, by calling (207) 412-2015. □

MAINE S T A T E CHAMBER *of* 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

Wednesday, June 26

Maine Highlands Regional Breakfast Meeting

Location TBD – Bangor Area

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

Maine Career Connect and Live + Work in Maine partner to attract top talent to Maine

On April 3, Maine Career Connect and Live and Work in Maine, a private-sector initiative designed to promote the Maine employment brand to the national talent market, announced their partnership to enhance efforts to help Maine employers attract top talent from around the country. Both dedicated to growing Maine's workforce, the two organizations hope to make more of an impact through their collaboration.

Live and Work in Maine, a private-sector initiative designed to promote the Maine employment brand to the national talent market, provides resources for job seekers and includes profiles and job listings from more than 400 employers in diverse industries across the state. Maine Career Connect (MCC), a non-profit program of the Maine State Chamber of Commerce, supports employers' efforts to grow and diversify Maine's workforce by providing services such as pre-hire consultation, community transition assistance and dual career guidance directly to candidates and new hires relocating to Maine for work. They currently bolster the recruitment and retention efforts of employers in the Bangor and Portland areas, with plans to add other service areas in the near future.

"There is great synergy between what Live and Work in Maine has been doing for the last three years and the services Maine Career Connect provides," said Nate Wildes (pictured top), executive director of Live and Work in Maine. "By working directly for employers, Maine Career Connect in uniquely posi-

tioned to compliment internal recruitment teams and can provide more personalized services to help new employees and their accompanying partners (and families) get to know potential communities and prepare to relocate to our beautiful state."

Ula Polsky (pictured at right) of Maine Career Connect said, "Our goal is to take the stress out of relocating to Maine, so new employees can focus on enjoying the wonderful lifestyle that has brought or kept so many of us here. We look forward to this new partnership with Live and Work in Maine and the opportunities it will present for job seekers and employers alike."

Live and Work in Maine's focus is on raising awareness about the opportunities for people looking to relocate to the state, while Maine Career Connect provides personalized services to new employees and their accompanying families to help ensure a successful relocation. Together, the two programs will increase the odds that new Mainers will start off on the right foot and choose to stay in the state for a lifetime.

Maine Career Connect originated in the Bangor area and expanded to southern Maine earlier this year. Live and Work in Maine supported that expansion through connections to their vast network in the Portland area. Both Wildes and Live and Work in Maine's founder, Ed McKersie, sit on the Advisory Council of Maine Career Connect - Portland. In turn, Maine Career Connect is helping Live and Work in Maine make inroads in the Bangor region, to further their efforts to



represent the state of Maine as a whole.

Aubrae Filipiak, Bangor Region Director for Maine Career Connect put it this way: "It's a symbiotic relationship. Together, Maine Career Connect and Live and Work are spreading the word that Maine is a great place to work, raise a family and play. We have the resources to help prospective employees and their families make it happen."

Learn more about Maine Career Connect at <https://mainecareerconnect.org>. More information about Live + Work in Maine is available online at www.liveandworkinmaine.com. □

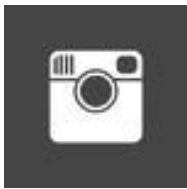
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Is your Maine company one of the Best Places to Work?

Registration now open until May 24 deadline



Best Places to Work in ME

On March 7, for the fourteenth year, Maine employers with superior work environments and the most engaged employees will be recognized as the “Best Places to Work in Maine.” The program, sponsored by the Maine State Council of the Society for Human Resources Management (SHRM), recognizes companies that have established and consistently fostered outstanding conditions in which their employees can thrive.

“Maine businesses that prioritize the success of their employees not only have a competitive advantage in our ever-changing economy - they are critical to encouraging young people to return to live and work in Maine,” said Governor Janet Mills. “I look forward to celebrating the 2019 Best Places to Work in Maine awardees and honoring employee-driven workplaces across our state.”

The program is managed by Best Companies Group and is endorsed by the Maine State Chamber of Commerce, the Department of Economic and Community Development, Maine HR Convention, and *Mainebiz*. *JobsinME.com* is the premier sponsor of the 2019 Best Places to Work in Maine program.

Any Maine company with at least 15 employees may be eligible and is encouraged to participate. Interested companies can apply online at www.bestplaces-toworkme.com. **The deadline to apply is Friday, May 24, 2019.**

In June and July, Best Companies Group will use scientifically validated surveys to gather information from all Maine companies that have registered online. Information collected from the assessment will include details on a company’s employee benefits and workplace policies as well as employee responses to a comprehensive engagement and satisfaction survey. This information is used to determine the Best Places to Work in Maine.

“Great workplaces are essential to a healthy economy,” said Barry Martin, state

director of the SHRM Maine State Council. “The Best Places to Work program honors businesses that exemplify what it means to be an employer of choice and gives companies tools that will help them continue to foster great work environments.”

The Best Companies Group’s Employee Feedback Report is presented to each participating company, even those that do not make the list of “Best Places to Work.” The report includes a summary of the company’s employee engagement and satisfaction data, the Maine benchmark report, and a transcript of written employee comments. Many employers use this report as a starting point for improving their workplace cultures.

Employers pay a fee that covers the cost to conduct the comprehensive surveys and create the Employee Feedback Report.

Last year’s Best Places to Work in Maine first place winners included Belfast-based Edward Jones, for the fifth consecutive year, in the large company category. Patriot Subaru, located in Saco, took the top honor in the medium company category for the fifth straight year. First place in the small company category went to Maine Information Network of Augusta for the second year in a row.

Companies selected as a “Best Place to Work in Maine” will be announced at a gala event at the Augusta Civic Center on October 2, 2019. A complete list of top companies will be featured in a statewide publication produced by *Mainebiz*.

If your company is interested in being involved, please reach out for more information to Jodie Griffith at Northern Light Mercy (jgriffith@northernlight.org; (207) 822-2541) or Kate Wilber at Tyler Technologies (Kate.Wilber@tylertech.com; (800) 772-2260, ext. 4284). For more information, please contact Jackie Miller at the Best Companies Group by calling 1-877-455-2159, ext. 3271, or emailing jmiller@best-companiesgroup.com. □



A program managed by the
Maine State Chamber
Purchasing Alliance, Inc.

WORKPLACE WELLNESS

HEALTHY EMPLOYEES MAKE CENTS!

Five Methods for Staying Active in the Workplace

It's no secret that obesity and weight gain is a common problem in this country. Many people would like to eat healthy and exercise on a regular basis; however, they may feel like they just don't have the time. They have to run their errands, take care of the kids, and find time to exercise and eat right on top of working a full-time job. Even if people sit behind a desk all day, there are ways that people can stay active while at work.

Park Farther Away...

This may seem to go against all intuition as most people try to park as close as possible to the front door; however, this is also one of the easiest ways for someone to increase their activity while at work. Parking farther away means having to walk farther between points A and B. This translates to more calories burned. If someone has to get something from their car in the middle of the day, this is just a few extra calories that come off.

Take the Stairs...

Nobody likes to take the stairs and most people will only do so if the elevator is taking an obnoxious amount of time. Taking the stairs also combines distance with a change in elevation, meaning that extra calories are burned in the process. Those who take the stairs multiple times per day will enjoy an added boost in their weight loss journey. Some companies will even post motivational messages in the stairwell for some entertainment while exercising.

Try a Walking Desk...

For many people, the challenge is finding ways to exercise and burn calories while sitting behind a desk all day. This challenge hasn't been lost on people, and there is now a walking desk that people can try. There are small treadmills that people can place under their desk that will allow them to walk while working. There are also desks that will change in height and come with a treadmill that motivated people can take advantage of. With this little piece of creativity, the pounds will start to come off.

Walk the Halls...

For people who have jobs that have some down time, it can be tempting to surf the internet and try to find some entertainment during those free periods. Instead of this, try power walking around the building or campus. In 15 minutes, people could walk a mile. Those steps add up quickly.

Take Advantage of Lunch...

Those who eat lunch every day have a golden opportunity. This is an opportunity to travel to the gym, work out, shower, and return for the afternoon. Even if a gym isn't nearby, get outside and go for a run. It just takes some ingenuity to make this happen.

Ultimately, these are only a couple of the numerous ways that people might be able to stay active while at work. Switching to a healthy lifestyle is possible for almost everyone, it only takes a little bit of creativity and motivation.

When employees feel good, they tend to perform better. That's why most Chamber BlueOptions' plans come with employee discounts on health products and services, as well as an online come with employee discounts on health products and services, as well as an online health and fitness program. Just contact your Anthem-appointed insurance producer for more information or visit the Chamber's BlueOptions web page (www.mainechamber.org/blueoptions.php) to find a producer. For more information on the Chamber BlueOptions health plan, please contact Mark Ellis by calling (207) 623-4568, ext. 107, or by emailing mellis@mainechamber.org. □

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Energy Summit

Friday, April 26, 2019 | 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Maple Hill Farm Inn & Conference Center (11 Inn Rd., Hallowell)

With a new legislature and administration in place, Maine energy policy is definitely a priority in Augusta this year. With so many proposals and decisions to be made, the Maine State Chamber of Commerce will convene all the key players in one location for a full-day of discussion, presentations, and information, included a keynote address by **Gordon van Welie, president and chief executive officer of ISO New England Inc.** You won't want to miss being a part of this timely event!

To register for this event, please visit www.mainechamber.org. If you need help with registration, please contact Melody Rousseau by calling (207) 623-4568, ext. 102, or by emailing melodyr@mainechamber.org. If you have questions about the program's content, please contact Ben Gilman at ext. 111 or by emailing bgilman@mainechamber.org. □

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