Maine transportation department unveils $2.6 billion, 3-year work plan

The Maine Department of Transportation released a three-year work plan that includes more than 2,000 projects worth nearly $2.6 billion. It also contains something else: a plea to state lawmakers to help the department fill a project backlog spurred by higher construction costs, workforce shortages and chronic underfunding.

The cry for more money is nothing new, but it’s increasingly desperate as MDOT officials issue dire warnings of a slow march toward a system failure.

The driveway and parking at Maine DOT’s north Augusta facility is pocked with potholes, some temporarily patched up but deteriorating, and at least one large enough to bottom-out a small car. It was a fitting venue for Tuesday’s press conference, in which Maine DOT Commissioner Bruce Van Note repeatedly emphasized a message that’s woven throughout the agency’s new, 280-page work plan.

“I’m not one for hyperbole and I’m not one to use the word ‘crisis.’ It’s just not how I’m wired. We’re engineers by nature. We just address what we have, but this level of funding is not sustainable,” he says.

Sustainable funding for Maine’s sprawling network of state highways, bridges, railways and ports has been an issue for years. It’s been exacerbated by a combination of State House politics and challenges brought by newer, fuel efficient and electric cars that have diminished the gas tax revenues that help fund Maine’s transportation system.

The MDOT has pressed for more federal one-time grants, and Maine voters have approved hundreds of millions of dollars in transportation bonds.

Van Note says it’s still not enough.

“Maine DOT is essentially a great machine that knows how to produce good work at a good price, but we are running low on fuel,” he says.

The department’s three-year work plan spends $150 million more than its predecessor, but on 142 fewer projects. And some of those projects are like the pothole patches in its own north Augusta parking lot — temporary solutions that are labeled as such in the work plan.

“Here are the titles: Light capital paving. Ultra-thin wearing surface. What are we doing? We’re taking that peanut butter pavement and spreading it as thin

Continued on Page 2...
**Inside Impact...**

2020 Business Day ........ p. 6
2020 DC Fly-In ........... p. 8
Future Economic Success .. p. 5
Heat Pumps ............... p. 3
Held Bills ................ p. 3
Immigration Panel ....... p. 7
LD 602 R&D .............. p. 1
Legislative Social ....... p. 10
Maine DOT Work Plan .. p. 1
New Legislation .......... p. 9
Older Workers .......... p. 7
Property Valuation ...... p. 5
Public Hearings .......... p. 7

---

**LD 602...**

(Continued from Page 1...)

that help Maine businesses prosper and our economy to flourish to make Maine as competitive as possible. Research and development (R&D) will play a vital role in Maine’s economic future.

Maine remains reliant on industries that are expected to be stagnant or lose jobs over the next decade. R&D is important to existing companies in Maine and especially important to new Maine companies. R&D is important across many business sectors; manufacturing, biotechnology, software development, engineering, pharmaceutical and many more.

Today, Maine businesses compete globally. R&D is crucial to any company developing their own product(s) and critical to innovation to help companies bring forth new products and services. It’s necessary for companies to stay ahead of the competition, at all times, and continued R&D investments ensure this is possible. Investments in R&D creates business opportunities, high-wage jobs, and tax revenues through development of new products and improvements in the current technology of existing businesses.

According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, “Innovation has long been recognized as an important driver of economic growth. New ideas can spark wave upon wave of new goods and services that literally transforms an economy, making it robust and vibrant.”

The Chamber urges the committee to support LD 602 and make a long-term commitment to support research and development in Maine. Maine is far behind where we need to be in funding for research and development, and it will take a significant investment to achieve long-term success.

Thank you. □

---

**DOT Work Plan...**

(Continued from Page 1...)

as we can to get as many miles going to hold it together,” Van Note says.

He describes the work plan as managing a slow decline in Maine’s transportation system.

It contains 148 bridge projects and 171 miles of highway construction and rehabilitation as well as funding for other projects.

But it also relies on an uncertainty: $300 million in bonding over the next three years that must first be approved by the Legislature and, then, Maine voters.

And even if that bonding occurs the work plan has a $230 million project shortfall.

A special transportation task force has proposed adding taxes and fees, which are unpopular with some lawmakers.

Paul Koziell, president of CPM Construction in Freeport, served on the task force and says he doesn’t understand that position.

“Many of these same folks fail to appreciate the urgency and immediacy of this problem and do not have the political courage to take the necessary steps to resolve this funding shortfall,” he says.

Maine isn’t the only state confronting the transportation funding problem, but other states have moved faster to address it.

Since 2013, 27 states have increased gas taxes or added long-term funding sources, according to a database published by the National Conference of State Legislatures.

Maine’s last gas tax increase was in 2011, the same year the Republican-controlled Legislature eliminated the indexing that hikes the tax with inflation.

The prospect of an increase during an election year appears unlikely, leaving Van Note calling for what he describes as a “nonpartisan solution.” □
Governor Mills announces decisions on remaining held bills

On Friday, January 10, Governor Janet Mills announced that she is allowing 24 of the remaining 27 bills she held for further review last session to become law and that she has vetoed three.

Governor Mills vetoed the following bills: LD 553, An Act To Ensure Proper Oversight of Sports Betting in the State; LD 517, An Act To Facilitate Fair Ballot Representation for All Candidates; and LD 268, An Act To Create a Credit under the Commercial Forestry Excise Tax for Landowners Using Businesses Based in the United States.

With respect to LD 553, Governor Mills wrote in her veto message that she respected the many hours of work members of the Legislature put into the bill but continued, “respectfully, I remain unconvinced at this time that the majority of Maine people are ready to legalize, support, endorse and promote betting on competitive athletic event.”

“Before Maine joins the frenzy of states hungry to attract this market, I believe we need to examine the issue more clearly; better understand the evolving experiences of other states; and thoughtfully determine the best approach for Maine,” Governor Mills wrote. “That approach needs to balance the desire to suppress gambling activities now being conducted illegally and the need to protect youthful gamblers and those least able to absorb losses under a closely regulated scheme.”

Additionally, Governor Mills allowed the following bills to become law without her signature. In doing so, she also sent letters to lawmakers conveying concerns regarding LD 54, LD 793, and LD 1104. They are:

- LD 54, An Act To Limit the Influence of Lobbyists by Expanding the Prohibition on Accepting Political Contributions;
- LD 545, An Act To Ban Child Marriage;
- LD 793, An Act To Improve Accountability of Opioid Manufacturers;
- LD 833, An Act To Provide the Same Retirement Benefits for State Employees Working in Law Enforcement as Are Provided to Law Enforcement Officers;
- LD 866, An Act To Support College Completion by Homeless Youth in Maine;
- LD 1036, Resolve, Establishing a Task Force To Study the Creation of a Comprehensive Career and Technical Education System To Support Workforce Development;
- LD 1104, An Act To Clarify the State’s Commitments Concerning Certain Public Service Retirement Benefits;
- LD 1207, An Act To Expand the 1998 Special Retirement Plan To Include Detectives in the Office of Investigations within the Department of the Secretary of State, Bureau of Motor Vehicles;
- LD 1208, An Act To Expand the 1998 Special Retirement Plan To Include Detectives in the Office of the Attorney General;
- LD 1249, An Act To Prohibit the Abuse and Isolation of Older and Dependent Adults;
- LD 1311, An Act Regarding the Sale of Dogs and Cats at Pet Shops;
- LD 1386, An Act Regarding the Determination of the Prevailing Wage Rate for Public Works Projects;
- LD 1399, An Act To Improve Oral Health and Access to Dental Care for Maine Children;
- LD 1442, An Act To Provide for Court-appointed Advocates for Justice in Animal Cruelty Cases;
- LD 1518, An Act To Establish a Fund for Portions of the Operations and Outreach for Maine people and businesses to install high-performance heat pumps

Next step in “100,000 heat pumps” initiative expected to help create jobs, reduce reliance on fossil fuels, and save Maine people money on heating bills

Joined by leaders from Efficiency Maine Trust, Hometown Heat Pumps, and the Maine Community College System at F.W. Webb Company in Augusta, Governor Janet Mills announced on January 14 that Maine was doubling its rebates to help Maine people purchase high-performance heat pumps.

The new, aggressive incentives are the next step in advancing the Governor’s 100,000 heat pump initiative, which the Governor proposed and signed into law last year, and which establishes the goal of installing 100,000 heat pumps in Maine homes and businesses by 2025. The initiative, which does not use state taxpayer funds, will maintain the state’s trajectory as a national leader in beneficial electrification – replacing high-carbon fossil fuels with cleaner electricity – while lowering heating bills and creating quality jobs.

“These new rebates will help make high-performance heat pumps more attainable for more Maine people, and the effects of this initiative will ripple across Maine’s economy,” said Governor Mills. “Not only will it help create good-paying jobs, boost small businesses, and promote

For the most current information, visit www.mainechamber.org

01/16/2020 III Impact III 3
**Action on Held Bills...**
*(Continued from Page 3...)*

Activities of the University of Maine Cooperative Extension Diagnostic and Research Laboratory and To Increase Statewide Enforcement of Pesticide Use;  
- **LD 1550. An Act To Create a Victims’ Compensation Fund for Victims of Property Crimes;**  
- **LD 1597. An Act To Provide a Sales Tax Exemption for Purchases Made by Nonprofit Seasonal Camps;**  
- **LD 1718. An Act To Exempt Purchases by Pet Food Pantries from Sales Tax;**  
- **LD 1808. An Act To Provide a Sales Tax Exemption for Certain Nonprofit Charitable Organizations;**  
- **LD 1700. Resolve, To Promote the Inclusion of African-American History and Culture in the Curricular Offerings of School Administrative Units;**  
- **LD 1756. An Act To Improve Public Safety through Coordinated Reentry of Prisoners into the Community;**  
- **LD 1809. Resolve, To Increase Funding for Evidence-based Therapies for Treating Emotional and Behavioral Problems in Children; and,**  
- **LD 1838. Resolve, Requiring the Department of Health and Human Services To Examine Options for Upper Payment Limit Adjustments for MaineCare Services.**

Earlier this week, Governor Mills announced that the Legislature recalled 13 bills from her desk for further consideration or drafting clarification. With this announcement, Governor Mills has taken action on all pending legislation on her desk. The Governor had until Saturday, January 11, 2020, which is three days after the opening of session, not including the first day, to either veto or to allow any held bills to become law without her signature.

---

**Heat Pumps...**
*(Continued from Page 3...)*

workforce training at our community colleges, but it will also help Maine people save money on their heating bills and reduce our reliance on fossil fuels, helping us protect our environment and fight climate change. I encourage Maine people to see what they are eligible for.”

The new suite of rebates, which took effect on January 1, 2020, is aimed at helping Maine people and businesses install high-performance heat pumps. The so-called Tier 2 rebate, which applies to the most advanced high-performance heat pump installations meeting new Efficiency Maine requirements, is doubling from $500 to $1,000 for the first indoor unit installed and from $250 to $500 for the second unit. Heat pumps meeting the so-called Tier 1 rebate standards will continue to be eligible for a $500 rebate for the first indoor unit and $250 for a second indoor or outdoor unit, as in prior years. Additionally, enhanced $2,000 rebates are also now available to homeowners who receive heating assistance through the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). “Seven years into our programs promoting this new generation of heat pumps, specially designed for cold winters, we continue to see growth in consumer demand which tells us these new models really work well, even when it’s freezing outside,” said Michael Stoddard, Efficiency Maine’s Executive Director. “With these new rebates, Maine now has the opportunity to accelerate demand for heat pumps, maintaining its trajectory as a national leader in displacing high-carbon fossil fuels with cleaner electricity while lowering heating bills at the same time.”

According to Efficiency Maine Trust, a high-performance heat pump can help an average Maine home reduce its oil consumption by 270-540 gallons per year; reduce its carbon emissions by an estimated 3,600-7,250 pounds per year per home per high-performance heat pump; and, when the initiative is fully realized, can save Maine people between a total of $30-$60 million annually, providing an important boost to the local economy.

Hometown Heat Pumps – a family-owned business in Burnham – and one of its several suppliers, F.W. Webb, are two of the more than 400 businesses that form the supply chain serving heat pump customers in Maine. Across the state, these businesses have begun increasing capacity to serve their customers and meet the growing demand from the new rebates, which means more quality jobs and a growing demand for training programs like those offered by the Maine Community College System, supply houses, manufacturers, and trade associations such as the Maine Energy Marketers Association.

“Customer service has been our top priority along with helping our customers save substantially on heating and cooling costs,” said Christie Whitcomb, Owner of Hometown Heat Pumps. “This has allowed us to grow quickly and become a leader in the heat pump industry.”

“This sort of initiative is why we remain focused on providing critical, relevant workforce training at the community colleges,” said David Daigler, President of the Maine Community College System. “As industries and policies shift, we adjust our programs to make sure students and trainees are learning the latest techniques and technologies to keep up with industry needs.”

Governor Mills signed into law LD 1766, sponsored by Senator Mark Lawrence, last June.
“Five on the Future” panel: Collaboration, flexibility keys to Maine economic success

EDITORS NOTE: The following article was written by Maureen Milliken and published in Mainebiz on Wed., January 8, 2020. It can be read online at https://www.mainebiz.biz/article/five-on-the-future-panel-collaboration-flexibility-keys-to-maine-economic-success. We have reprinted it here for your review and consideration.

Whether it’s real estate, retail or construction, or economic development in general, industry insiders at the Mainebiz “Five on the Future” panel on Tuesday, January 7 agreed that the key to the state’s economic success is collaboration and flexibility.

Some 250 people attended the annual breakfast event, which was keynoted by Jeffrey C. Fuhrer, executive vice president and senior policy advisor at the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston.

Fuhrer also moderated a panel that included Heather Johnson, commissioner of the state Department of Economic and Community Development; Justin Lamontagne, partner with NAI The Dunham Group; Topher Mallory, CEO of Mexicali Blues; and Deirdre Wadsworth, president of Hardypond Construction.

The challenges presented by Maine’s aging workforce and the need to train and attract younger workers dominated the discussion. Panelists also discussed the effects of tariffs and trade policies on business, how to address the state’s housing issues, and other topics in the hour-long discussion.

Workforce collaborations, flexibility...

Lamontagne said that a focus on new technology in the state’s universities and business partnerships is having an impact.

An example, he said, is Navatek, a marine research and manufacturing company that is a real estate client of NAI The Dunham Group. The company, located in Portland, recently opened a second office in Bangor as it attracts young professionals graduating from the University of Maine’s marine engineering program.

He said it’s a public-private partnership success story that’s not only helping the company, but also keeping young workers in Maine. “It’s kind of hard to stay in Maine sometimes if you’re 23, 24 years old,” he said.

Wadsworth said a partnership with New Ventures, a nonprofit training program that introduces girls to jobs in the trades, will have long-term effects. She said young women learn there are well-paying jobs available that they may not have considered, and it also offers a non-traditional learning environment for those who want an alternative to the classroom.

Mallory said unconventional partnerships with other food producers have helped as he launched two new businesses, Split Rock Distilling and Royal Rose Syrups. More than that, collaboration among businesses has helped create a vibrant town center in Newcastle.

Connecting with the workforce...

The panel, responding to questions that also touched on job training and the workforce, said the same collaborative, flexible approach applies.

Johnson said the state has learned a lot from the private sector. “They saw it coming,” she said, of the workforce crisis. Talking to students before they graduate about job opportunities and paying for training are big lessons learned from the private sector. She said another was forging connections with the community college and university systems, which are playing a big role in moving students into jobs.

Johnson noted the state’s goal to bring 75,000 new workers into the state, but said the focus also has to be on what older workers can offer and how to help the state’s 100,000 unemployed residents find a place in the workforce.

Tariffs, trade policies...

Rising costs from federal tariffs and trade policies have had an impact on businesses, from pushing up costs to slowdowns caused by uncertainty on both the production and consumer ends, the panel said.

Continued on Page 6...

For the most current information, visit www.mainechamber.org

Maine State Chamber testifies in support of bill to require Maine Revenue Services to value certain property related to energy projects

On Tuesday, January 21, the Maine State Chamber of Commerce will be testifying in strong support of LD 1898, An Act Regarding Property Taxes on Certain Energy Generation Projects. Sponsored by Sen. Heather Sanborn (D-Cumberland), the bill would require Maine Revenue Services (MRS) to value property of an energy generation project that is located partially in the unorganized territory and partially in organized territory, and to allocate the value to the organized territory appropriately.

The concept of requiring MRS to value large industrial property is something the Maine State Chamber has always supported. Valuing large industrial property such as that associated with energy projects is very complicated. MRS has the expertise to value these properties appropriately and fairly across the board, avoiding wide variations or discrepancies of value for the same property from municipality to municipality.

Rep. Steve Stanley (D-Medway) had a similar bill in last session, which the Maine State Chamber supported. His bill would have required, among other things, that MRS determine the value of large industrial property over $10 million. In addition, this bill also allowed a municipality to pursue the same fair course of action afforded a taxpayer when appealing a value, that is to take their case before the State Board of Appeals.

If you have any questions, please contact Linda Caprara by calling (207) 623-4568, ext. 105, or by emailing lcaprara@mainechamber.org.
Mallory said he’s surprised at the disconnect he sees in consumers. “There’s a lack of understanding [that tariffs and trade policies] are going to affect them,” he said.

He said, too, the fact there’s little lead time on wholesale product costs adds to the difficulty. “One container [with the same item] could be five minutes behind the other one, and prices can be 25% different,” he said.

Lamontagne said high construction prices caused in part by tariffs have slowed construction of new buildings, increasing inventory issues. Those looking for industrial or commercial space are sitting back and hoping something will open up, because they don’t trust the uncertainty of new construction.

Wadsworth, too, stressed the uncertainty trade issues are causing, with “crazy” and rapid price hikes. It takes several months to design and get permits for a construction project, and materials prices can change drastically in that time. “We don’t know what’s going to happen,” she said. “It’s really challenging.”

Housing...
Those same challenges have had an impact on the already tight housing market in the state.

Wadsworth said that, with high construction costs, it’s hard to make the cost of each unit work with rent restrictions required for affordable housing. Beyond that, “It’s hard to make market-rate work,” she said.

Johnson said, too, that when the state’s bigger population centers are taken out of the mix, there’s property available but it’s often aging or remote, and “doesn’t meet the needs of the workforce.”

She said that housing is still a valuable investment, but the concept of what it is has to evolve.

One thing to make a difference...

During the audience question segment, Paula Mahoney, owner of Words at Work, asked the panel what one those in the audience thing could do to make a difference this year.

“Think about the unconscious narrative” about people you don’t know and who may be different, Fuhrer said. Get to know someone who’s different, and “the narrative will change.”

Lamontagne suggested attending events, talking with other attendees and “getting to know people, meeting and talking to people with an open mind.”

Mallory said that community events, like the now-defunct Old Port Festival, bring people together to enjoy each other’s company and have fun, and are an important part of downtown vitality. He said that type of event is being lost with the current focus on “retail-tainment.”

Wadsworth said that people should “ask the hard questions of each other.” For instance, she said, why isn’t there more gender diversity in the construction business? “By talking to each other, maybe something can come out of it.”

Johnson encouraged those in the room to bring someone into their business to see how it works and help open career options that they may not have considered.

“My parents were public school teachers. I knew I didn’t want to be a school teacher, but I didn’t know what was out there,” she said. Letting students know what’s out there will “keep them from taking the path of least resistance.”

---

2020 Business Day at the Statehouse

**Thursday, March 12, 2020**
8:00 am to Noon

**Hall of Flags, Second Floor, Maine Statehouse, Augusta**

**Employers and employees welcome ... PLEASE JOIN US!**

You are invited to the Maine State Chamber of Commerce’s annual Business Day at the Statehouse on Thursday, March 12, 2020, from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. in the Hall of Flags (Statehouse, Second Floor).

Business Day at the Statehouse provides a prime opportunity for our members, and their employees, to discuss business issues and priorities with legislators and state government officials, as we work together to strengthen Maine’s economy and keep Maine competitive. Participants have the unique opportunity to connect face-to-face with legislators. Employers often use this time to emphasize the importance of preserving and retaining existing jobs, strengthening Maine’s economy through the creation of new opportunities, and keeping Maine businesses competitive in today’s economy.

With your participation, the “Voice of Maine Business” will resonate throughout Augusta! We anticipate another great turnout this year! If you have additional questions, please email lcaprara@mainechamber.org.
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/committees or contact the committee clerk.

Tuesday, January 21, 2020

Energy, Utilities and Technology
1:00 p.m.; Cross Building, Room 211
LD 1563, An Act To Encourage the Development of Broadband Coverage in Rural Maine (Sen. Bellows of Kennebec)

Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Business
1:00 p.m.; Cross Building, Room 202

Taxation
1:00 p.m.; State House, Room 127
LD 1898, An Act Regarding Property Taxes on Certain Energy Generation Projects (Sen. Sanborn of Cumberland)

Wednesday, January 22, 2020

Education and Cultural Affairs
10:00 a.m.; Cross Building, Room 208
LD 1916, An Act To Increase High School Graduation Rates for Students Experiencing Homelessness or in Foster Care (Sen. Libby of Androscoggin)

Labor and Housing
9:30 a.m.; Cross Building, Room 202
LD 1911, An Act To Amend the Unemployment Compensation Laws (Sen. Bellows of Kennebec)
LD 1986, An Act To Clarify the Law Protecting Job Applicants from Identity Theft (Sen. Bellows of Kennebec)

Thursday, January 23, 2020

Energy, Utilities and Technology
1:00 p.m.; Cross Building, Room 211
LD 1748, An Act To Allow for the Establishment of Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy Programs (Sen. Sanborn of Cumberland)

Tuesday, January 28, 2020

Energy, Utilities and Technology
1:00 p.m.; Cross Building, Room 211
LD 2021, An Act To Provide Funding for Broadband Internet Infrastructure in Unserved and Underserved Areas (Sen. Herbig of Waldo)

Taxation
1:00 p.m.; State House, Room 127
LD 2010, An Act To Update References

Friday, January 24, 2020

Environment and Natural Resources
12:00 p.m.; Cross Building, Room 216
LD 1915, Resolve, Directing the Department of Environmental Protection To Evaluate Emissions from Heated Aboveground Petroleum Storage Tanks (Sen. Millett of Cumberland)
LD 1923, An Act To Define as a Hazardous Substance under Maine Law Any Substance Defined under Federal Law as a Hazardous Substance, Pollutant or Contaminant (Rep. Fay of Raymond)

Portland Ovations Panel Discussion:
“The History and Impact of Immigration in Maine”
Saturday, January 18, 2020
1:00 to 2:30 p.m.
Maine Historical Society
489 Congress St., Portland

This free panel discussion will focus on these important questions: What has been the impact of immigration on Maine’s land and people from the first French explorers in 1604 to the present? What are the drivers of recent immigration movements, and how does each new wave shift Maine’s economy and culture? What specific challenges do Maine’s environment and population pose for new arrivals; and how do we support Maine’s first peoples?

To learn more or to register online, please visit https://portlandovations.org/event/panel-discussion-history-of-immigration-maine/

Maine can meet workforce need by embracing older workers

Maine by the numbers:
Share of people 65 and over with jobs in 2018 ... 17%
Share in 2013. ......... 19%

A recent study by the The Pew Trust found that in 36 states, the share of people 65 or over with jobs has increased in the past five years, following a national trend that economists say will continue over the next decade. More information can be found online at www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/blogs/stateline/2019/09/20/for-passion-or-for-money-more-seniors-keep-working.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Stateline analysis

For the most current information, visit www.mainechamber.org
"As a first-time attendee at the D.C. Fly-In, I was extremely impressed with the amount of access we were able to get with our Maine delegation and their staff. The policy briefings from the experts at U.S. Chamber were also incredibly informative and pertinent, and I truly appreciate the work that the Maine State Chamber staff put into making this a well-coordinated and worthwhile event."

Judith Borelli, Director of Public Affairs, Texas Instruments, South Portland

"It is always reaffirming to meet our congressional delegation and to see first-hand their thoughtful approach to the issues impacting Maine. The ability to speak with and listen to our delegation in such a small group setting is immensely beneficial, and I really appreciated the work that went into planning the trip and the time that our legislators spent with us."

Geoff Baur, Vice President, Finance, IDEXX

Register today to attend the Maine State Chamber’s eighth annual Washington, D.C., Fly-In

Tuesday, April 28 through Thursday, April 30, 2020

The Maine State Chamber of Commerce takes pride in putting together this unique opportunity for our members. As we continue to find ourselves in the middle of important issues in Washington that have a significant impact on our members, such as health care, energy, taxes, regulations, etc., the Washington, D.C., Fly-In has proven to be extremely beneficial to our member attendees as well as to our Congressional Delegates.

In order to touch on several critical federal issues that impact our member businesses, this year’s trip will include a presentation by The National Association of Manufacturers and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce to provide a Joint Policy Briefing in advance of the Capitol Hill visits. Appointments have been confirmed with each of our U.S. Congressional Delegates and their key staffers to provide you with an opportunity to share your business concerns, as well as discuss challenges and solutions.

The itinerary illustrates the value – the partnership with the National Association of Manufacturers and the U.S. Chamber, with individual meetings with our delegates and their staffs, access to a Joint Policy Briefing, dinner with our U.S. Congressional Delegates, and finally, an opportunity to schedule one-on-one visits to discuss policy issues specific to your industry.

Each year, we leave these meetings knowing we’ve been heard. And, knowing that Maine is fortunate to have congressional leaders who are caring, competent and accessible, we are certain that we have delivered an invaluable experience for our attendees. We do hope that you will join us!

Registration for this event is required, and all information for that can be found at this link: https://bit.ly/2uXtN5J.

Important Member Registration Information...

- Event Registration: $750 per attendee. Attendees are responsible for all travel arrangements. (If you are an employer with 10 employees or less, please contact Megan Diver by emailing mdiver@mainechamber.org for the small/individual business rate.)

- Please register by Friday, April 10, by emailing mdiver@mainechamber.org.

- Hotel reservations must be made directly to the Willard Intercontinental Hotel by Monday, April 10, by calling 1-202-628-9100. To receive the group rate, please indicate you are a member of the Maine State Chamber of Commerce’s group, or via this link: https://bit.ly/35Whxz3. The room rate is $479 per night plus applicable taxes; room cancellations are the responsibility of the attendee and must be made directly with the hotel.

- Cancellations for the event must be made by contacting Megan Diver at the Maine State Chamber by phone at (207) 623-4568, ext. 108.

For the most current information, visit www.mainechamber.org
The Washington, D.C., Fly-In 2020 Agenda:

Tuesday, April 28, 2020:
- Early Check-in Requested, The Willard Intercontinental, 1401 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, DC, 20004
- Late afternoon (3:30 p.m.) Joint Policy Briefing with the National Association of Manufacturers and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, hosted at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, 1615 H St NW, Washington, DC 20062
- Reception / Dinner with Maine’s Congressional Delegates, Sazerac

Thursday, April 30, 2020
- Additional Hill visits: Our staff will assist with requests for individual meetings. Please email mdiver@mainechamber.org with your request, issue areas of interest, and with which of our U.S. congressional delegations’ staffs or offices you would like to meet.

Any agenda revisions will be provided in advance of travel time. If you have additional questions, please contact Megan Diver by calling (207) 623-4568, ext. 108, or emailing mdiver@mainechamber.org.

Public Hearings...
(Continued from Page 7...)


Wednesday, January 29, 2020

Education and Cultural Affairs
1:00 p.m.; Cross Building, Room 208
LD 1947, An Act To Fund Capital Improvements to Career and Technical Education Centers (Rep. Fecteau of Biddeford)
LD 2015, An Act To Provide for Leave from Work for Victims of Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault or Stalking (Rep. Daughtry of Brunswick)

Friday, January 31, 2020

Environment and Natural Resources
10:00 a.m.; Cross Building, Room 216
LD 2033, An Act To Ensure Proper Closure of Oil Terminal Facilities (Rep. Carney of Cape Elizabeth)

For the most current information, visit www.mainechamber.org
New Legislation...
(Continued from Page 9...)

3. It provides that a secondary school must award a diploma to a student who has experienced homelessness or foster care placement if the student meets specified criteria.

4. It provides that the responsible school for a student whose education disruption is due to multiple transfers or homelessness or foster care placement must compile for the student partial and full credits received by the student to date, provide priority enrollment in classes in which the student has received partial credit and immediately enroll the student in classes or programs to close gaps between the compilation of credits by the student and the credits typically earned by the student’s peers.

5. It requires the responsible school to provide an adult mentor to students who experience education disruption due to homelessness or foster care placement to facilitate transition into the school.

6. It requires that if the responsible school determines that a student who experiences education disruption will not be able to graduate by the end of the student’s 4th year of secondary school, the responsible school must provide the student information regarding a Department of Education diploma and apply on behalf of the student or assist the student in making the application.

LD 2022, An Act To Provide Funding for Capital Improvements and Equipment for Career and Technical Education Centers and Regions. (Sen. Herbig, D-Waldo) Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs. This bill authorizes the Commissioner of Education to expend and disburse funds to career and technical education centers and career and technical education regions to make capital improvements and to purchase equipment that has a useful life of at least 5 years and provides a one-time General Fund appropriation of $4,000,000 in fiscal year 2020-21 for that purpose.

HEALTH CARE

LD 1975, An Act To Facilitate Dental Treatment for Children. (Sen. Sanborn, D-Cumberland) Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services. This

Continued on Page 11...

LEGISLATIVE
STRICTLY
SOCIAL

Tuesday, March 31
5:00 to 7:00 p.m.
Senator Inn & Spa, Augusta

• Light hors d’oeuvres and cash bar •
Please RSVP to aarno@mainechamber.org

Impact2020_021January16_Impact_Template.qxd  1/17/2020  1:10 PM  Page 10
New Legislation...
(Continued from Page 10...)

bill prohibits a health insurance carrier from imposing a waiting period for any dental or oral health service or treatment, except for orthodontic treatment, for an enrollee under 19 years of age.

LD 2007, An Act To Enact the Made for Maine Health Coverage Act and Improve Health Choices in Maine. (Speaker Gideon, D-Freeport) Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services. This bill:
1. Establishes the Made for Maine Health Coverage Act;
2. Establishes the Maine Health Insurance Marketplace Trust Fund;
3. Authorizes the State to enter into state-federal health coverage partnerships that support the availability of affordable health coverage;
4. Establishes a pooled market for individual health plans and small group health plans and changes reinsurance to be retrospective and applied to the pooled market; and,
5. Creates clear choice design for cost sharing and requires coverage of certain primary care and behavioral health visits without the application of any deductible.

LABOR

LD 1965, An Act To Set a Minimum Wage for School Support Staff. (Rep. Collings, D-Portland) Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing. This bill establishes a minimum wage of $16.00 per hour for school support staff.

LD 2015, An Act To Provide for Leave from Work for Victims of Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault or Stalking. (Rep. Daughtry, D-Brunswick) Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing. This bill allows an employee to take reasonable leave from work, with or without pay, including by reducing the employee’s usual number of hours per work day or workweek:
1. To seek legal or law enforcement assistance or remedies to ensure the health and safety of the employee or employee’s family members includ-