# ROLL CALL 

An Economic Perspective on the 130th Maine Legislature



## From our Board Chair

Thank you for reading the latest publication of the Maine Economic Research Institute's (MERI) Roll Call. MERI's mission seeks to improve Maine's business environment by providing objective information to enhance economic policy making. MERI is Maine's only research-based business organization tasked with the specific purpose of holding legislators accountable for how they vote on economic issues. In Roll Call, we share legislator's scores and rankings based on those votes.

In this edition of Roll Call, which covers both sessions of the 130th Legislature, MERI has made changes to how it rates legislators and the way it chooses legislation. The change includes a shift from picking legislation that highlights specific business issues to selecting legislation that impacts the economy more broadly. This change also leads to more opportunity for successful ratings regardless of political affiliation. With a transition to focusing on broad economic issues, any legislator who values growing Maine's economy and demonstrates that value through legislation they sponsor and vote for will receive a favorable rating on MERI's scale.

The approach to this change is rooted in economic concerns highlighted in Maine Development Foundation's Measures of Growth, the collaborative effort of Making Maine Work, and policy areas of the Maine State Chamber of Commerce. This is the collective effort of a variety of stakeholders from different sectors and political ideology. Attaching legislative ratings to issues highlighted in these documents is an effort to center the legislative conversation around the health of Maine's economy. Throughout the session we looked for legislation that directly impacts top areas of concern.

More information on how this is done appears in the pages that follow. We hope that you find this latest edition a useful and valuable tool, and we appreciate your support along the way.


Clif Greim, Frosty Hill Consulting
Board Chair, Maine Economic Research Institute and Maine State Chamber of Commerce

## Executive Summary



It has been my pleasure to serve the Maine Economic Research Institute during this past legislative session. We have increased our number of supporters and expanded our Advisory Committee to track an even greater number of bills. The past two years have given all of us unique experiences while forcing many of us into similar situations. With an unprecedented and unpredictable start, the last two years have seemingly come full circle. Now is our window to reflect on our goals for future economic growth and be mindful of who is helping us overcome challenges and seize opportunities.

Roll Call is the culmination of the work performed by the Maine Economic Research Institute during the legislative session. This publication lists the bills from our Watch List that made it through the legislative process and resulted in the following ratings of Maine's legislators. This edition is different from previous editions. There have been changes based on a transition to follow broader economic policy and hold legislators accountable to a variety of economic and business concerns. Aside from changes to what bills are tracked, new sections have been added for cleaner data interpretation.

Economic Indicators: MERI is tracking bills using policy focus areas monitored by the Maine State Chamber of Commerce, economic indicators tracked by Maine Development Foundation's Measures of Growth, and business concerns highlighted in the collaborative effort of Making Maine Work. Individual legislators are rated on the impact their votes had on the common needs and concerns of these organizations and their reports.

Scoring Brackets: To review top economic policy legislators more efficiently, we have added sections to highlight these legislators: Most Valuable Policy Makers ( $95 \%$ to 100\%), High Honors ( $90 \%$ to $94 \%$ ), Honorable Mention ( $85 \%$ to $89 \%$ ).

Policy Champions and Policy Flops: This section highlights legislators based on the frequency in which they sponsored legislation that appeared on our Watch List. Top sponsors of pro-MERI bills are our Champions, and top sponsors of anti-MERI bills are our Flops.

I hope that Roll Call serves as a useful tool in helping you to understand the performance of the state legislature as a body and as individual legislators. No other Maine organization rates our legislators on their economic policy voting records. It has been my pleasure to bring you the most accurate and objective information possible to help you impact the future of Maine's economy.

Simon West, President
Maine Economic Research Institute

## The Economic Indicators

Additional indicators and data sourcing can be found online at www.mainechamber.org/maine-economic-research-institute-meri

## BROADBAND CONNECTIVITY

High-speed internet is vital to participation in the global economy and modern society, and is critical for communities seeking to attract and retain businesses and residents. COVID reinforced this in stark terms. Having reliable, fast internet became essential for professionals and students working and learning from home, often at the same time. According to the most recent data, just $18 \%$ of Maine locations have access to 100/100.

Source: ConnectMaine Authority


PERCENTAGE OF MAINE LOCATIONS WITH INTERNET ACCESS BY SPEED OF INTERNET
Internet Speed (Mbps upload speed / Mbps download speed)


## COST OF ENERGY

Electricity is a significant cost for many businesses, especially those in energyintensive industries such as manufacturing. The energy intensity of Maine's economy is about average for the U.S. (ranking 22nd of the 50 states in 2019) but the highest in New England.
Industrial electricity in Maine now costs $37 \%$ less than the New England average and about $34 \%$ more than the national average. Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration

## COST OF DOING BUSINESS

Maine's cost of doing business index value was 115 in 2008-2009 and has been stable at about 110 since 2014. In 2020, Maine's cost of doing business ranked 9th highest in the U.S., but second lowest of the New England states. In the U.S., the Northeast has higher business costs than other regions of the country, and Maine's cost of doing business has been consistently above the Northeast average for the past decade.

Source: Moody's Analytics


## The Watch List | 2021-2022

## BUSINESS REGULATIONS

LD 675, An Act to Protect Maine Consumers from Unsupported Price Increases on Prescription Medicines by Creating an Independent Review Process (Sen. Claxton, D-Androscoggin)
LD 1636, An Act to Reduce Prescription Drug Costs by Using International Pricing (Sen. Claxton, D-Androscoggin)
LD 1724, An Act to Create a Logging Dispute Resolution Board and to Require Proof of Ownership Docs Within 14 Days (Senate Pres. Jackson, D-Aroostook)
LD 1945, An Act To Regulate the Use of Biometric Identifiers (Rep. O'Neil, D-Saco)

## EDUCATION

LD 1188, An Act to Include Librarians and Career and Technical Education Teachers in the Minimum $\$ 40,000$ Salary Initiative Emergency (Rep. Millett, D-Cape Elizabeth)
LD 1252, An Act to Improve Family Day Care Providers by Increasing the Number of Cbildren Allowed to be Cared for Without Obtaining Certification (Rep. Sampson, R-Alfred)

## ENVIRONMENTAL

LD 489, RESOLUTION, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine to Establish a Right to a Healthy Environment (Sen. Maxmin, D-Lincoln)
LD 602, An Act to Prevent Pollution from Single-use Plastic Straws, Splash Sticks and Beverage Lid Plugs (Sen. Miramont, D-Knox)
LD 640, An Act to Ban Single-serving, Disposable Plastic Water Bottles (Rep. Gramlich, D-Old Orchard Beach)
LD 676, An Act to Reclassify Part of the Androscoggin River to Class B (Sen. Claxton, D-Androscoggin)
LD 1429, An Act To Acbieve Carbon Neutrality in Maine by the Year 2045 (Rep. Tucker, D-Brunswick)
LD 1532, An Act To Protect Maine's Air Quality by Strengthening Requirements for Air Emissions Licensing (Rep. Morales, D-South Portland)
LD 1541, An Act to Support and Improve Municipal Recycling Programs and Save Taxpayer Money (Rep. Grohoski, D-Ellsworth)

## HEALTH CARE

LD 922, An Act To Help Cancer Patients with Fertility Preservation (Rep. Craven, D-Lewiston)
LD 1045, An Act to Support Universal Health Care (Rep. Brooks, D-Lewiston)
LD 1266, An Act To Improve The Value Of Dental Insurance (Sen. Sanborn, D-Cumberland)
LD 1463, An Act To Make Health Care Coverage More Affordable For Working Families and Small Businesses (Rep. Tepler, D-Topsham)
LD 1539, An Act To Provide Access to Fertility Care (Rep. Madigan, D-Waterville)

## HOSPITALITY

LD 205, An Act to Extend the Ability of Restaurants and Bars to Serve Alcohol to go Emergency (Sen. Luchini, D-Hancock)
LD 1751, An Act To Make Permanent the Cbanges to the Liquor Laws Made by Public Law 2021, Cbapters 3 and 91 (Sen. Luchini, D-Hancock)

## The Economic Indicators

## COST OF HEALTH CARE

Maine people and businesses consistently identify the high cost of health care as a major concern. In 2020, health care spending in Maine stood at $17.3 \%$ of all personal expenditures, down from its peak of $18.7 \%$ in 2016. While health care expenditures in Maine are higher than the U.S. and New England rates, they are trending downward.


POST-SECONDARY DEGREES AND CREDENTIALS

Certificates and certifications offer valuable pathways to opportunity in today's economy. In all, an estimated $52.6 \%$ of Maine adults ages 25-64 held an associate, bachelor's, graduate, or professional degree, or a nondegree credential of value in 2019. This is up from 50.5\% in 2018.

## HOUSING

## AFFORDABILITY

Regions with affordable housing are better able to attract and retain workers. Housing is more affordable in Maine than elsewhere in the United States or the Northeast, but after improving from 2007 to 2015, housing affordability in Maine has declined. Preliminary data suggest it dipped further in 2020, likely due to rising rents and home prices.


## LABOR

LD 225, An Act Regarding the Treatment of Vacation Time upon the Cessation of Employment (Rep. Roeder, D-Bangor)
LD 553, An Act to End At-will Employment (Rep. Sylvester, D-Portland)
LD 607, An Act to Restore Overtime Protections for Maine Workers (Rep. Talbot Ross, D-Portland)
LD 616, An Act to Increase Accountability for Wage Violations (Rep. Collings, D-Portland)
LD 938, An Act to Ensure Maine Workers' Right to Request a Schedule Change at Their Places of Employment (Rep. Wood, D-Portland)
LD 965, An Act Concerning Nondisclosure Agreements in Employment (Rep. Harnett, D-Gardiner)
LD 1338, An Act to Protect Employees' Exercise of Workplace Rights (Rep. Millett, D-Cape Elizabeth)
LD 1711, An Act to Enhance Enforcement of Employment Laws (Sen. Jackson, D-Aroostook)
LD 1879, An Act To Support Law Enforcement Officers, Corrections Officers, E-9-1-1 Dispatchers, Firefighters and Emergency Medical Services Persons Diagnosed with Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (Rep. Sylvester, D-Portland)
LD 2003, An Act To Implement the Recommendations of the Commission To Increase Housing Opportunities in Maine by Studying Zoning and Land Use Restrictions (Spkr. Fecteau, D-Biddeford)

## MINIMUM WAGE

LD 1279, An Act to Increase the Minimum Wage (Rep. Collings, D-Portland)

## TAXATION

LD 229, An Act to Increase Investment Caps in the Maine Seed Capital Tax Credit Program (Sen. Farrin, R-Somerset)
LD 495, An Act to Improve Tax Progressivity by Establishing New Top Individual Income Tax Rates (Rep. Osher, D-Orono)
LD 498, An Act to Reauthorize a 3 Percent Tax on Income over \$200,000 to Lift all Maine Workers out of Poverty (Rep. Sylvester, D-Lewiston)
LD 501, An Act to Amend Maine's Corporate Income Tax by Increasing the Top Rate from 8.93\% to 12.4\%. (Rep. Brooks, D-Lewiston)
LD 532, An Act to Lower Income Taxes for Middle-income Families in Maine (Sen. Baldacci, D-Penobscot)
LD 570, An Act to Provide for Fairness in the Taxation of Extraordinary and Unearned Income by Establishing a 3\% Percent Surcharge on Net Capital Gains and Dividends Income over \$250,000 for Taxpayers Filing Single or Married Filing Separate Returns and over \$500,000 for Taxpayers Filing Joint Returns (Rep. Berry, D-Bowdoinham)
LD 730, An Act to Protect Economic Competitiveness in Maine by Extending the End Date for Pine Tree Development Zone Benefits (Sen. Daughtry, D-Brunswick)
LD 966, Resolve, Establishing the Commission to Study Fair, Equitable and Competitive Tax Policy for Maine's Working Families and Small Businesses Emergency (Rep. Tepler, D-Topsham)
LD 1129, An Act Relating to the Valuation of Retail Sales Facilities (Rep. Matlack, D-St. George) Taxation.

## The Economic Indicators

## LABOR FORCE

A skilled and educated labor force is essential for a healthy economy. As baby boomers retire, the ranks of working-age Mainers are smaller. To continue growing Maine's workforce, and counter these trends, Maine must attract more working-age people from other states and countries, retain more of the young people born here, and help more Mainers participate in the workforce.


TOTAL PERCENT OF GDP TOWARD R\&D BY MAJOR PERFORMANCE SECTOR, 2018


RESEARCH \& DEVELOPMENT

An indicator of innovation levels, R\&D spending in Maine represents $0.8 \%$ of total gross domestic product (GDP), compared to $2.8 \%$ nationwide. This ranks us 43rd of the 50 states and is about one-half of the estimated $1.7 \%$ average among EPSCoR states. Maine lags other states in private sector and university R\&D investments relative to GDP, while our non-profit sector contributes a rel atively higher proportion of spending.

## TRANSPORTATION

Maine's integrated transportation system promotes economic activity by getting goods and people to their destinations efficiently and affordably. In 2020, 819 miles ( $59 \%$ ) of Priority 1 highways were graded $\mathrm{A}, \mathrm{B}$ or C , and 579 miles ( $41 \%$ ) received grades of D or F. This shows slight ( $1 \%$ ) improvement from 2019, but the proportion of Maine highways receiving top grades is still far below 2012 levels.

HIGHWAY MILES RATED EXCELLENT, GOOD, OR FAIR


LD 1337, An Act To Increase Affordable Housing and Reduce Property Taxes through an Impact Fee on Vacant Residences (Rep. Kessler, D-South Portland) Taxation.
LD 1342, An Act to Authorize a Local Option Sales Tax on Lodging and Other Goods and Provide Funding for Tax Abatement and Rental Relief (Rep. Sylvester, D-Lewiston)
LD 1403, An Act to Protect Maine Businesses, Nonprofits, Educational Institutions and Municipalities during the COVID-19 Pandemic (Rep. Dillingham, R-Oxford) Judiciary.
LD 1524, An Act to Amend the Maine Exclusion Amount in the Estate Tax (Rep. Collings, D-Portland)
LD 1713, An Act to Increase Workforce Skills for the Revitalization of Maine's Paper Industry through the Establishment of an Income Tax Credit for Paper Manufacturing Workforce Training (Pres. Jackson, D-Aroostook)
LD 1917, An Act to Amend the Tax Laws of the Sate (Rep. Terry, D-Gorham)
LD 1919, An Act to Encourage Job Growth in the Forest Products Sector Through Tax Incentives (Rep. Evans, D-Dover-Foxcroft)

## UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

LD 1564, An Act to Amend the Laws Governing Unemployment Compensation (Sen. Vitelli, D-Sagadahoc, for the Maine Department of Labor)

## UTILITIES AND ENERGY

LD 920, An Act to Promote Oversight of and Competitive Parity among Video Service Providers (Rep. Kessler, D-South Portland)
LD 1202, An Act To Establish a Wood-fired Combined Heat and Power Program (Rep. Wadsworth, R-Hiram)
LD 1332, An Act Regarding Net Energy Limits (Rep. Berry, D-Bowdoinham)
LD 1634, An Act to Create the Maine Generation Authority (Rep. Grohoski, D-Ellsworth)
LD 1708, An Act to Create the Pine Tree Power Company, a Nonprofit Utility, to Deliver Lowver Rates, Reliability and Local Control for Maine Energy Independence (Rep. Berry, D-Bowdoinham)
LD 1894, An Act to Support Municipal Broadband Infrastructure tbrough Incentives and Competition (Sen. Vitelli, D-Sagadahoc)
LD 1969, An Act Concerning Equity in Renewable Energy Projects and Workforce Development (Rep. Cuddy, D-Winterport)

## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

LD 149, An Act to Facilitate Licensure for Credentialed Individuals from Other Jurisdictions (Rep. Cloutier, D-Lewiston)
LD 612, An Act to Recognize Occupational Licenses and Certifications from Other States to Attract New Residents and Businesses to Maine Emergency (Rep. Andrews, R-Paris)
LD 1131, An Act to Allow Reciprocity for Licensed Workers from Out of State Emergency (Rep. Hutchings, R-Penobscot)
LD 1304, An Act to Create the Career and TechnicalEducation W orkforce Fund (Rep. Fecteau, D-Biddeford)
LD 1923, An Act To Establish the Maine Space Corporation (Sen. Daughtry, D-Cumberland)
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＊Special Note：There are a few exceptions to these MERI ratings that prompted us to remove legislators from this session＇s process．Rep．Rena Newell serves as the non－voting tribal representative for the Passamaquoddy Tribe．Sen．Louis Luchini Jr．left office in January 2022 to fill a role at the U．S．Small Business Administration．Rep．Justin Fecteau and Rep．Chris Johansen resigned before the end of their terms．Deceased legislators have also


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| $1129$ | 1 | ＋ | ＋ | 1 | ＋ | । |  | I | ＋ | I | ＋ | ＋ | ＜ | 1 | ＋ | $<$ | 1 | 1 | 1 |
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| Cardone, Barbara | 127 | D | - |  | + |  | - | - | - |
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| Carlow, Nathan | 16 | R | - |  | + |  | + | + | + |
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| Carmichael, Meldon | 137 | R | + |  | A |  | + | + | + |
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| Cebra, Richard | 68 | R | A |  | A |  | A | A | + |
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| Cloutier, Kristen | 60 | D | - |  | + |  | - | - | - |


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[^0]| Foster, Steven | 104 | R |  |
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| Geiger, Valli | 93 | D |  |
| Gere, Traci | 9 | D |  |
| Gifford, Jeffery | 142 | R |  |
| Gramlich, Lori | 13 | D |  |
| Greenwood, Randall | 82 | R |  |
| Griffin, Abigail | 102 | R |  |
| Grignon, Chad | 118 | R | A |
| Grohoski, Nicole | 132 | D |  |
| Haggan, David | 101 | R |  |
| Hall, Randall | 114 | R |  |
| Hanley, Jeffery | 87 | R |  |
| Harnett, Thomas | 83 | D |  |
| Harrington, Matthew | 19 | R |  |
| Hasenfus, Tavis | 81 | D | A |
| Head, Frances | 117 | R |  |
| Hepler, Allison | 53 | D | A |
| Hutchins, Sherman | 131 | R |  |
| Hymanson, Patricia | 4 | D |  |
| Javner, Kathy | 141 | R |  |
| Kessler, Christopher | 32 | D |  |
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| Kinney，Maryanne |  |  | Lemelin, Michael | Libby, Laurel | Lookner, Grayson |  | Lyman, Sheila | 苞 |  | Martin, Roland | Martin Jr．，Thomas |  |  |  | McCrea, David |  | McDonald，Genevieve |  | Meyer, Michele | 会 | Millett，Rebecca |  | Moriarty, Stephen | Morris, Joshua | Nadeau, Catherine |  | U!̣əə\ ‘IIəuuoว،O | O'Connor, Beth |

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## Meet the 130th Legislature's MVPs

## Most Valuable Policymakers (MVP)



95.0

Rep.
Joshua Morris
(R-District 75)


## Policy Champ

Sen. Louis Luchini Jr.
(D-District 7) sponsored two pieces of legislation that would have positively impacted Maine's business community - LD 205 and LD 1751.


## Policy Flop

Rep. Michael Sylvester (D-District 39) sponsored four bills that would have adversely impacted

Maine's business community -
LD 498, LD 553, LD 1342, and LD 1879.

## Honorable Mentions

| $805$ | Sen. Kimberley Rosen (R-District 8) | 88.5 | Sen. David Woodsome <br> (R-District 33) | 86.0 | Sen. Marianne Moore <br> (R-District 6) |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| $89.5$ | Rep. Thomas Skolfield <br> (R-District 112) | $0 \vdash \sqrt{\circ}$ | Sen. Russell Black (R-District 17) | 86.0 | Rep. Catherine Nadeau <br> (R-District 78) |
| $89.0$ | Rep. Bruce Bickford <br> (R-District 63) |  | Rep. Matthew <br> Harrington (R-Dist. 19) | 85.5 | Sen. Stacey Guerin (R-District 10) |
| $89.0$ | Rep. Beth O'Connor <br> (R-District 5) | $8 \mp 5$ | Rep. Nathan <br> Wadsworth (R-Dist. 70) | 85.5 | Sen. Lisa Keim <br> (R-District 18) |
| $89.0$ | Rep. Wayne Parry <br> (R-District 10) | $\theta \vDash .0$ | Rep. Sherman <br> Hutchins (R-Dist. 131) | $85.0$ | Sen. Paul Davis Sr. (R-District 4) |
| $80 \cdot 0$ | Rep. Richard Pickett <br> (R-District 116) |  | Rep. James Thorne <br> (R-District 103) | 85.0 | Rep. Kathleen <br> Dillingham <br> (R-District 72) |
| $89.0$ | Rep. William Tuell (R-District 139) | 865 | Rep. Joel Stetkis <br> (R-District 105) | $85.0$ | Rep. Peggy Jo Stanley <br> (R-District 143) |

## Meet the 130th Legislature's MVPs

High Honors


## 92.5

Rep. Randall Hall (R-District 114)


## 90.5

Rep. Jonathan
Connor
(R-District 58)

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90.5
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Sen. Trey Stewart (R-District 2)

91.5

Rep. Paul Stearns (R-District 119)

## 91.0

Rep. Maryanne
Kinney
(R-District 99)


Rep. Susan Austin
(R-District 67)

## 90.5

Sen. Matthew Pouliot
(R-District 15)

## 92.5

Sen. Jeffrey Timberlake
(R-District 22)
91.0

Sen. Bradlee Farrin
(R-District 3)

90.5

## 90.0

Rep. Mark Blier
(R-District 22)


MAINE S T A T E CHAMBER COMMERCE

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(207) 623-4568, ext. 117 | swest@mainechamber.org
www.mainechamber.org/maine-economic-research-institute-meri

The Maine Economic Research Institute's (MERI) mission is to improve Maine's business environment by providing objective information to enhance economic policy making. MERI is an independent, private, not-for-profit corporation governed by a board of directors who are business owners, CEOs, and senior staff representing a diverse group of Maine companies.

MERI's Board and staff are focused on creating a healthy Maine economy, strong businesses, and quality jobs.

MERI is Maine's only research-based business organization tasked with the specific purpose of holding legislators accountable for how they vote on economic issues. In Roll Call, we share legislator's scores and rankings based on those votes.

The MERI Watch List is the first step in letting legislators know that employers are paying attention.

Voting records and MERI's ratings are published in the MERI Roll Call and are the only objective rating system based on how policy in Augusta impacts our economy.


[^0]:    Party District \#

