

For Immediate Release  
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**Maine State Chamber encouraged by state legislative candidates' broad support for and commitment to greater transparency in the legislative process**  
***95% of candidates who responded support greater transparency, consistency, and legislative rule changes to increase public participation in lawmaking***

AUGUSTA, Maine (Tuesday, October 8, 2024) - The [Maine State Chamber of Commerce](#) today announced [responses to a questionnaire](#) asking all candidates for the Maine House and Senate where they stand on transparency in the legislative process. The Maine State Chamber, a longtime advocate for greater transparency at the Maine State Legislature, is encouraged by state legislative candidates' broad support for and commitment to greater transparency and consistency in the legislative process, with 95% of respondents indicating they would support legislative rule changes to increase public participation in lawmaking.

In late July 2024, the Maine State Chamber sent a [questionnaire](#) to 347 candidates for the Maine State Legislature seeking to measure candidates' commitment to transparency and increasing the public's ability to participate in lawmaking. More than half (177) of the 347 recipients responded to the questionnaire.

"The Maine Legislature should be a transparent legislative body where the public can follow the process and understand the public policy implications of proposals prior to hearings, work sessions, and votes," said Patrick Woodcock, president and CEO of the Maine State Chamber of Commerce. "As we approach the start of the next legislative session, these questionnaire responses illustrate that the majority of those running for office believe it is time for a new model for the Legislature. As I have said before, the Maine State Legislature has developed a transparency problem that must be addressed prior to the convening of the next Legislature. The Maine State Chamber looks forward to partnering with lawmakers to take action."

Of the 177 candidates who responded to the Maine State Chamber's questionnaire:

- 95% responded they believe it is important that the legislative process is consistent and transparent to members of the public.
- 95% responded they would support a legislative rule change requiring that legislation and amendments be publicly available at least 24 hours prior to a public hearing and/or work session. (Please [click here](#) for a list of the candidates who responded they would support this rule change.)
- 92% responded they would support legislative rules requiring that the legislative committee process be consistent across all legislative committees.
- 54% of respondents are Republican, 40% are Democrats, and 6% are Unenrolled.
- 37 respondents (21%) are candidates for the Maine State Senate.
- 140 (79%) respondents are candidates for the Maine House of Representatives.

The Maine State Chamber has raised concerns over the last several years about the increasing erosion of transparency in the legislative process, particularly the increasing number of “concept drafts,” which are vague placeholder bill proposals absent of detailed language, and the lack of advance language on bill amendments as they go before legislative committees.

The Maine State Chamber recently [testified](#) on the need for greater transparency at the Maine State Legislature’s Joint Rules Committee hearing on July 18, 2024. During the 131<sup>st</sup> Legislature, in an April 3, 2024, [letter](#) to legislative leaders, the Maine State Chamber urged reforms to the legislative rules to make public policymaking more transparent to and inclusive of the public.

Please [click here](#) to read the Maine State Chamber’s July 31, 2024, press release announcing the transparency questionnaire for 2024 legislative candidates.

Please [click here](#) for links to the Maine State Chamber’s transparency questionnaire, candidate responses, and more.

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**About the Maine State Chamber of Commerce:**

Founded in 1889, the Maine State Chamber of Commerce is Maine’s largest business association, serving as “The Voice of Maine Business” on behalf of thousands of employers of all sizes and sectors across the state. The Maine State Chamber focuses on three pillars - Advocacy, Access, and Awareness - to advance a positive business climate and secure a strong state economy in which Maine businesses can compete and succeed. For more information, please visit [www.mainechamber.org](http://www.mainechamber.org).