



RETURN ON YOUR MEMBERSHIP INVESTMENT

The Maine State Chamber of Commerce is opening doors for Maine employers through its efforts in **ADVOCACY, ACCESS, and AWARENESS.**

We work diligently to promote and protect Maine's economy, and while the pandemic may have changed how we do things, it has only magnified the need for our initiatives.

We proudly continue to be *The Voice of Maine Business*, especially in these uncertain times.

ACCESS

Our robust calendar of programs and events, coupled with our public policy committees and grassroots efforts, maximizes valuable interactions with business, legislative, and policy leaders for key discussions that encourage a deeper understanding of the issues facing Maine employers. We are thankful to have successfully offered our high-quality events through alternative formats last year and look forward to safely reconnecting in person.

- Our **Annual Dinner** convenes hundreds of Maine leaders for timely keynotes from nationally acclaimed speakers, televised gubernatorial or congressional debates, historic gatherings of dignitaries, and annual awards and recognitions.
- Each session, our **Business Day at the Statehouse** facilitates direct dialogue between legislators and employers, giving members the opportunity to emphasize the importance of preserving and retaining jobs, strengthening our economy, and keeping businesses competitive in this fragile economy.
- Annually, our **Leadership Summit** accelerates honest, open dialogue among Board members, legislative and committee leadership, and the Governor's Cabinet about top public policy issues.

- The **Legislative Social** is an ideal way for business, legislative, and government leaders to connect, interact, and network in a relaxed setting.
- Through our **Regional Business Breakfasts** and **Legislative Briefings**, we share the status of legislative bills as the session nears its end and learn more about the unique concerns of local employers.
- Since 1995, our annual scholarship golf tournament, **Scramble for Scholars**, has assisted 112 Maine students through our members' generous support, resulting in nearly \$162,000 in scholarships.
- The **Washington, D.C. Fly-In** responds to the need for local input on the increasing number of federal policies affecting Maine through visits with our congressional delegates.

AWARENESS

At the Maine State Chamber of Commerce, keeping our members well-informed and being a strong voice for Maine's business community are important parts of our mission, particularly during times of crisis.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, we ramped up our communications efforts to better serve our members.

In 2021, our new and ongoing communications include:

- **NEW!** In October 2020, we launched *OneVoice Maine*, a twice-yearly magazine that highlights the contributions of Maine's business community to making Maine a vibrant place to live and work. With a print run of 10,000, we mail 2,500 copies to our members, and each edition is available at rest areas and information stops statewide.
- **NEW!** In February 2021, we launched a livestream program, *The Maine Take with Dana Connors*, to share information and perspectives on top issues and policies that impact Maine's economy and business community. Each episode averages approximately 3,000 views.
- Since July 2020, we have **hosted 16 informational webinars and policy seminars** focusing on a variety of priority business issues, including many related to the

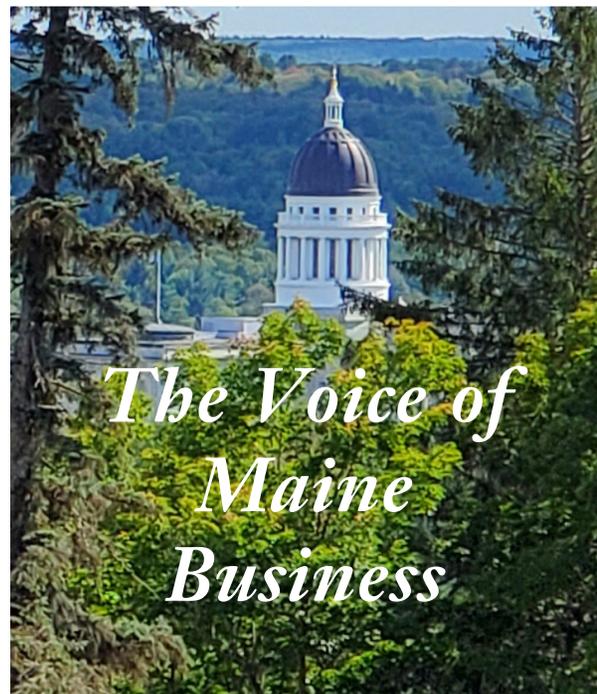
pandemic and Maine's economic recovery.

- Our digital and print newsletter dedicated to legislative and regulatory issues and more, *Impact*, published 24 editions this year, each reaching 1,200 print and 2,400 electronic subscribers, members, legislators, and policy leaders.
- *The Bottom Line* podcast featuring top business and policy issues celebrated its 50th episode in June 2021. With 39,000 impressions and 13,600 downloads by listeners annually, the podcast has featured discussions on pandemic recovery and reopening, the Climate Action Plan, workforce training, K-12 and higher education initiatives, and more.
- Our *Daily Business Headlines* delivers top business news articles by email to thousands of member subscribers every workday morning.

2021 RETURN ON YOUR MEMBERSHIP INVESTMENT

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ADVOCACY

During the past decade, your membership investment dollars in the Maine State Chamber have generated a **1,300-to-1** return.

During the First Regular Session of the 130th Legislature, our team of respected advocacy professionals worked tirelessly on behalf of businesses of all sizes, and in every sector and region of our state.

This session's legislative outcomes were impacted by the pandemic restrictions and by partisan politics. Thankfully, from the halls of the Statehouse and beyond, our team of experienced professionals stand ready to tackle the session's many complex issues, mitigating their significant economic implications whenever possible, such as:

HUMAN RESOURCES LEGISLATION

The Maine State Chamber worked to defeat **LD 553, *An Act to End At-Will Employment***. This proposal would have put an end to an employer's ability to manage their workforce, in the best possible manner for their workplace, by requiring "for cause" termination or discipline on all employees – even employees who may have engaged in illegal activities in or out of the workplace. Every decision regarding continued employment or disciplinary action would be second guessed and litigated. The resulting savings for small businesses from the defeat of LD 553 is in the tens of thousands of dollars for each dispute!

LD 1711, *An Act to Enhance Enforcement of Employment Laws*, would have authorized the state to hire private, "vigilante" lawyers to represent the state in issues regarding alleged workplace violations. Furthermore, any claim, even an unsubstantiated allegation, could be brought by any individual, or "a group of individuals" on behalf of a worker. Such a bill would have been a lawyer's dream, encouraging volumes of litigation. The Maine State Chamber strongly opposed the bill, along with other business associations. The bill was eventually vetoed by Governor Mills at the urging of the State Chamber and others as it would have established a terrible precedent, which could have cost individual companies tens of thousands of dollars to defend against baseless allegations.

TAXATION LEGISLATION & INVESTMENT INCENTIVES

The Maine State Chamber fought to defeat many pieces of legislation that would have cost Maine businesses hundreds of millions of dollars in higher taxes, including:

- **LD 1524, *An Act to Amend the Maine Exclusion Amount in the Estate Tax***, would have lowered the threshold on Maine's estate tax, exposing Maine's small family businesses that pass assets along to keep their businesses operating to job-killing taxes.
- **LD 501, *An Act to Amend Maine's Corporate Income Tax by Increasing the top rate from 8.93% to 12.4%***, would have made Maine's corporate tax rate the highest in the nation.
- The Maine State Chamber helped defeat nine different pieces of legislation to increase individual **taxes on Maine businesses** (pass-through entities) and families, making Maine one of the top two highest taxed states in the nation.
- **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***, would have imposed a local option tax on prepared foods and increased the lodging tax from 9% to 10% either automatically or by

local referendum, costing the tourism and hospitality industries in those cities and towns - companies already devastated by the COVID-19 pandemic - millions of dollars in increased taxes.

- We fought to preserve two critical business investment programs in the state budget - the **Business Equipment Tax Reimbursement** and the **Business Equipment Tax Exemption** programs - keeping Maine's capital intensive industries competitive.
- We defeated **LD 1598, *An Act to Eliminate Taxpayer Subsidies for Discriminatory Employers***, which would have eliminated all tax incentives for a company with just one labor violation - costing tens of millions of dollars for some companies.
- We also defeated **LD 1514, *An Act to Provide for Fairness in Property Taxation by Assessing a One Time Tax on Financial Assets***, which would have imposed a 0.5% tax on the assessed value of all of an individual's assets, including but not limited to stocks, bonds, pension funds, and more.
- The Maine State Chamber also took a proactive approach to keeping important business incentive programs alive by initiating **LD 730, *An Act to Protect Economic Competitiveness in Maine by Extending the End Date for Pine Tree Zone Development Benefits***, which will extend the Pine Tree Development Zone program by eliminating the sunset date and extending it by two years, preserving one of Maine's only comprehensive tax programs.

ENERGY, ENVIRONMENT, & UTILITIES LEGISLATION

The Maine State Chamber of Commerce worked to help defeat **LD 920, *An Act to Promote Oversight of and Competitive Parity among Video Service Providers***, which would have levied a new tax on cable services for Maine restaurants and hospitality businesses – and potentially new costs for individuals. The defeat of LD 920 saved Maine businesses millions in new fees.

The Maine State Chamber of Commerce supported the Legislature's and the Governor's work to invest more than \$250 million in **broadband expansion** across Maine and increase Maine-based businesses' connectivity.

LD 1231, *An Act Concerning Climate and Community Investment Projects*, would have required a **project labor agreement** on all renewable energy development in Maine, thereby sending tens of millions of dollars in development to out-of-state contractors. The Maine State Chamber of Commerce worked with a coalition of Maine businesses to help mitigate the overall impact of this bill, ensuring a level playing field for Maine-based contractors and keeping those dollars here in Maine.