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# WEEKLY LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

**March 16, 2026**

**ADVOCACY | ACCESS | AWARENESS**

# MEETING AGENDA

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# WEEKLY UPDATE FROM THE CHAMBER PRESIDENT

**PATRICK WOODCOCK**  
PRESIDENT & CEO  
MAINE STATE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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# LEGISLATIVE ACTION

## ACTION ALERT

### **LD 1822: AN ACT TO ENACT THE MAINE CONSUMER DATA PRIVACY ACT**

#### **Position: Oppose**

Current Legislative Action: Tabled in House

Previous Legislative Action: Passed to Be Engrossed in House 71-68, Amended and Passed Senate in Non-concurrence 18-16

The bill would create new data processing rules for data collected by companies online. It would strictly limit the processing and sale of sensitive data, and limit data collection to “reasonably necessary and proportionate to provide or maintain a specific product or service...”

**Implications: The bill would make Maine an outlier in the utilization of data by businesses to pursue targeted marketing online.**



ADVOCATE: LINDA CAPRARA



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# APPROPRIATIONS & FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

LOOKING AHEAD

## **THE GOVERNOR'S CHANGE PACKAGE – NO L.D. ASSIGNED YET**

Policy Committee: A&FA

Advocate: Linda Caprara

**Position: Not yet determined**

The Governor's Change Package proposes that the state adopt a Pass-through Entity Tax, keeps Reimbursement Program (BETR) for non-retail property, however phases out retail property under the BETR program for taxes paid during calendar year 2027.

Implications: While the bill proposes to keep BETR for non-retail property, which we support, the bill proposes to eliminate BETR for retail property, which will result in a large tax increase for those facilities, which we do not support. MSCC's position is to leave BETR alone and available for all property currently in the program.

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# TAXATION

IN THE HOUSE

## **L.D. 1089: AN ACT TO PERMANENTLY FUND 55% OF THE STATE'S SHARE OF EDUCATION BY ESTABLISHING A TAX ON INCOMES OF MORE THAN \$1,000,000**

### **Position: Oppose**

Previous Legislative Action: Voted Out of Committee with Majority Ought to Pass as Amended, Minority Ought Not to Pass, Party Lines D's vote for Majority Report and R's vote for Minority Report

The bill would do as the title suggests, apply an income tax surcharge on incomes over \$1,000,000 to fund education (EPS).

**Implications: The bill would increase income taxes on high earners.**

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# TAXATION

LOOKING AHEAD

## **LD 229 – AN ACT TO BRING FAIRNESS IN INCOME TAXES TO MAINE FAMILIES BY ADJUSTING THE TAX BRACKETS AND TAX RATES**

Policy Committee: Tax

Advocate: Linda Caprara

**Position: Oppose**

The bill adds two income tax brackets in each category (for a total of 5), single, head of household and married filing jointly and increases the top income tax rates in the top two brackets in each category, from 7.15% to 7.75% and to 8.95%.

**Implications: The bill if passed would increase income taxes on high earners. For single the rates would increase from 7.15% to 7.75% for income over \$144,500 and to 8.95% for income over \$1,000,000. For heads of household the rates would increase from 7.15% to 7.75% for income over \$216,750 and to 8.95% for income over \$750,000. For married filing jointly, the rates would increase from 7.15% to 7.75% for income over \$289,000 and to 8.95% for income over \$1,000,000.**

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# TAXATION

LOOKING AHEAD

## **LD 926 – AN ACT TO PROMOTE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE STATE BY AMENDING THE RESEARCH EXPENSE TAX CREDIT**

Policy Committee: Tax

Advocate: Linda Caprara

**Position: Support Original Bill/Oppose Proposed Amendment**

**Status: Ought Not to Pass**

The bill as originally drafted would increase the research expense tax credit by increasing the amount of expenditures eligible for the credit, doubling the rate by which the credit is calculated and doubling the amount of the credit that may be claimed and halving the base amount used to determine the credit. The sponsor has proposed an amendment which would limit the amount of the credit which runs counter to what the original bill proposed to do.

**Implications: Current R&D credit would be reduced and limited to small businesses.**

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# TAXATION

LOOKING AHEAD

**Upcoming Work Session, Wed 3/19 1:30 PM at State House, Room 127**

**LD 713 – AN ACT TO AMEND THE TAX LAWS**

Sponsor: Former Representative Kristen Cloutier,

Policy Committee: Tax

Advocate: Linda Caprara

Position: Monitor/MSCC Committee has not discussed yet

The original bill was a concept draft. Sen. Nicole Grohoski has offered an amendment that would prohibit Data Service Centers from qualifying for the Business Equipment Tax Exemption (BETE) and from the Dirigo Business Incentive Programs.

**Implications: The bill, as amended, would prohibit Data Service Centers from qualifying for BETE and the Dirigo Business Incentive Program.**

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# JUDICIARY

LOOKING AHEAD

## **L.D. 127, AN ACT TO STRENGTHEN LEGISLATIVE OVERSIGHT OF GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND PROGRAMS BY REAFFIRMING THE LEGISLATURE'S ACCESS TO CONFIDENTIAL RECORDS**

Sponsor: Senator Craig Hickman, Kennebec

Policy Committee: Judiciary

Advocate : Linda Caprara

Position: Oppose

The bill would provide that the Legislature's Government Oversight Committee could receive confidential records available to the Office of Program Evaluation and Government Accountability.

**Implications: This would give the GOC access to confidential information such as tax returns, medical and mental health information, personnel records , etc. The bill was amended to try to eliminate legislative immunity if confidential information was leaked however, we are not convinced the language accomplishes that.**

ADVOCATE: AMANDA JOHNSON



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# HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

LOOKING FORWARD

**Upcoming Work Session: Tue 3/17 1:00 PM at Cross Building, Room 209**

**LD 2196 – AN ACT TO LOWER HEALTH INSURANCE COSTS, REDUCE BARRIERS TO HEALTH CARE AND ENSURE FAIR PRICES FOR HEALTH CARE**

Policy Committee: EET

Advocate: Amanda Johnson

**Position: Oppose**

The bill caps hospital prices at 200 percent of Medicare rates, keeps chronic condition prior authorizations valid for one year, protects coverage recently approved under prior plans, and requires insurers to report cost and utilization data.

**Implications: The bill could slow healthcare cost growth and improve coverage continuity for patients with chronic conditions. However, it will put financial pressure on hospitals, especially smaller ones, and create administrative challenges or potential limits on services.**

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# HEALTH COVERAGE, INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES

LOOKING AHEAD

**Upcoming Work Session: Wed 3/18 1:00 PM at Cross Building, Room 220**

## **LD 378 – NOW TITLED – AN ACT TO CLARIFY THAT HEALTH INSURERS MUST COMPLY WITH PLAN SPONSOR’S STATUTORY RIGHTS TO AUDIT CLAIMS AND RELATED DATA REQUESTS RELATED TO THOSE AUDITS**

Policy Committee; LHHI

Advocate : Amanda Johnson

**Position: Monitor**

This bill ensures employers and other health plan sponsors can audit medical and pharmacy claims when insurers act as third-party administrators. It requires administrators and PBMs to provide claims and financial data needed to verify contract compliance.

**Implications: LD 378 could improve transparency and accountability by allowing employers to audit health plan claims and verify that insurers, TPAs, and PBMs are following contract terms, which may help control healthcare costs. However, it could also increase administrative burdens, raise data privacy concerns, and potentially slow payment processes for high-cost claims.**

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# HEALTH COVERAGE, INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES

LOOKING AHEAD

## **Previous Week – Carry Over, Language Review**

### **LD 519 – AN ACT TO ADDRESS THE LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY OF THE MAINE GUARANTEED ACCESS REINSURANCE ASSOCIATION**

#### **FORMERLY TITLED: AN ACT TO REMOVE THE REQUIREMENT THAT INDIVIDUAL AND SMALL GROUP HEALTH PLANS BE OFFERED THROUGH A POOLED MARKET AND TO ELIMINATE THE PROVISION OF LAW ESTABLISHING A POOLED MARKET FOR THOSE PLANS**

Policy Committee: HCIFS

Advocate : Amanda Johnson

**Position: Opposed the original bill**

The original bill eliminates Maine's pooled market for individual and small group health insurance and removes the requirement for a special reinsurance program through MGARA.

The *amended* bill could increase employer health insurance costs from \$4–\$5 PMPM. It also proposes using \$40 million from the General Fund or Rainy-Day Fund to support the program.

**Implications: While MGARA's net loss assessment may help stabilize the market, it could increase costs for Maine businesses that do not directly benefit, potentially impacting business costs and consumers**

ADVOCATE: ASHLEY LUSZCZKI



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# ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

IN HOUSE

## **LD 1507 – AN ACT TO REQUIRE GENERAL PUBLIC NOTIFICATION OF OIL TERMINAL FACILITY TRANSFER ACTIVITIES**

**Current Legislative Action:** Tabled in House.

**Previous Legislative Actions:** Minority Ought Not to Pass Report accepted in House; Passed to be Engrossed in Senate 16-15 (in non-concurrence).

Policy Committee: EET

Advocate : Ashley Luszczki

**Position: Oppose**

[Chamber Testimony](#)

As amended, it amends the laws governing the licensing of petroleum storage facilities to require licensed facilities that include an aboveground petroleum storage tank with a storage capacity greater than 39,000 gallons to install and maintain warning signs on all publicly accessible property boundaries at intervals no greater than every 100 feet.

**Implications: Storage facilities would need to add new signage, potentially creating administrative burdens. Additionally, it could cause concern among the public based on the language it requires signage to include.**

ADVOCATE:  
PATRICK WOODCOCK



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# HOUSING

LOOKING BACK

## Last Week – Work Session

### LD 2224: AN ACT TO REDUCE CERTAIN COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION

Sponsor: Senator Curry

Advocate: Patrick Woodcock

**Position: Support**

[Chamber Testimony](#)

The bill implements the consensus recommendations of the working group that worked to make recommendations to lower the costs of housing production. These recommendations including eliminating a requirement for smoke curtains to be a part of elevator installation, video cameras in elevators, studies fire sprinkler requirements, include wireless technology for emergency communication.

**Implications: The bill would reduce some compliance costs for residential construction in the state. There were many other recommendations from the working group and housing advocates are pushing for additional changes in the legislation to build on the current draft of LD 2224. These recommendations include:**

- ✖—~~Allow up to 6 stories of single-stair residential construction~~
- ✖—~~Expand municipal subdivision review thresholds from 3 lots to up to 5 lots~~
- ✖—~~Increase the residential sprinkler threshold from 3 units to 5 units~~
- ✖—~~Prohibit municipal requirements for sprinklers in single-family housing~~
- Add a MUBEC board member with affordable housing experience to ensure cost impacts of code decisions are fully considered
- ✖—~~Allow smaller, readily available elevators in buildings up to 3 stories where elevators are not otherwise required~~

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# HOUSING

LOOKING AHEAD

**Upcoming Work Session: Tue 3/17 1:00PM at Cross Building, Room 206**

## **LD 2173 AN ACT TO UPDATE THE LAWS REGARDING HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS AND ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS**

Advocate: Patrick Woodcock

**Position: Support**

[Chamber Testimony](#)

The bill would make a number of technical modifications to LD 1829 that passed into law last year and placed restrictions on municipalities limiting some housing projects through minimum lot sizes, height expansions for affordable housing projects, and prohibiting sprinkler requirements in ADUs. The bill makes some technical changes including the extension of municipal adoption

**Implications: The bill would clarify some municipal housing restrictions and allow a grace period for municipalities to adopt the new definition of subdivision and allow more time for the compliance of the additional height for affordable housing development.**

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# HOUSING

LOOKING AHEAD

**Upcoming Work Session: Thu 3/19 1:00PM at Cross Building, Room 206**

## **LD 2229: AN ACT REGARDING MUNICIPAL INSPECTION OF THE ELECTRICAL AND PLUMBING COMPONENTS OF A MANUFACTURED HOME**

Advocate: Patrick Woodcock

**Position: Support**

[Chamber Testimony.](#)

The bill would allow plumbers and electricians who supervise the offsite construction of modular homes with 3+ units to certify the building permits and avoid local electrical and plumbing certifications.

**Implications: The bill attempts to make it easier to develop modular housing and avoid duplicative electrical and plumbing certifications.**

# UPCOMING EVENTS

Next Weekly Legislative Update:  
**Monday, March 23, 2026**



**Weekly**  
**Legislative Update**

Join us weekly during the legislative session from 8:30 - 9 a.m. on the first day of the week



**WEBINAR:**  
**MAINE SPORTS ECONOMY**

A VIRTUAL EVENT  
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25, 2026  
10:00 AM - 11:00 AM



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CHAMBER  
*of*  

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COMMERCE