



WEEKLY LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

March 23, 2026

ADVOCACY | ACCESS | AWARENESS

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CEO

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WEEKLY UPDATE FROM THE CHAMBER PRESIDENT

PATRICK WOODCOCK
PRESIDENT & CEO
MAINE STATE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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.



LEGISLATIVE ACTION

ACTION ALERT

LD 1870: RESOLVE, TO ASSESS THE TOTAL COST TO THE STATE OF GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Position: Oppose

Current Legislative Action: Reported out of committee, likely on 3/24 Senate calendar.

As amended, the resolve directs the Department of Environmental Protection to conduct an assessment of the costs to the State of the emission of greenhouse gases for the period that began on January 1, 1995 and ended on December 31, 2024. It requires the Department to submit a report containing the results of that assessment to the committees having jurisdiction over environment and natural resources matters, labor matters, judiciary matters and energy, utilities and technology matters. After reviewing the report, the committee on environment and natural resources matters may report out a bill relating to the report to the Second Regular Session of the 133rd Legislature.

Implications: This bill started out as a climate superfund bill that would have required companies involved in the extraction of fossil fuel and refining of crude oil to pay a fee if they were responsible for more than one billion metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions during that same time period. This assessment could revert right back to the original bill, which would increase costs for ratepayers.



ADVOCATE: LINDA CAPRARA



APPROPRIATIONS & FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

LOOKING AHEAD

Upcoming Work Sessions:

Appropriations is meeting everyday this week.

- Mon, 3/23, 11:00 AM @ SH, Room 228
- Tue, 3/24, 2:00 PM @ SH, Room 228
- Wed, 3/25, 2:00 PM @ SH, Room 228
- Thu, 3/26, 2:00 PM @ SH, Room 228
- Fri, 3/27, 11:00 AM @ SH, Room 228

APPROPRIATIONS & FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

LD 2212 - AN ACT MAKING SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS AND ALLOCATIONS FROM THE GENERAL FUND AND OTHER FUNDS FOR THE EXPENDITURES OF STATE GOVERNMENT AND CHANGING CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF THE LAW NECESSARY TO THE PROPER OPERATIONS OF STATE GOVERNMENT FOR THE FISCAL YEARS ENDING JUNE 30, 2026 AND JUNE 30, 2027

Position: Oppose

Current Legislative Action: Reported out of committee, likely on 3/24 Senate calendar.

This is the Governor's Supplemental Budget Bill for FY 26-27. MSCC testified in opposition to the bill for three reasons. As originally drafted, the bill would eliminate the Business Equipment Tax Reimbursement (BETR) Program, utilize the Budget Stabilization Fund for non-emergency purposes and only partially conforms to the federal R & D immediate expensing for larger businesses over (\$31 million in receipts). The bill proposes to conform fully for smaller businesses (under \$31 million). The Governor has put forth a change package that will amend the original bill. The amendment proposed is to keep the BETR program for non-retail businesses as is and to phase out retail businesses from the program starting in 2028.

Implications: Elimination of the BETR Program for retail businesses will increase taxes on those Maine businesses currently in the program. Utilizing the Budget Stabilization Fund for non-emergency purposes leaves the State exposed in economic downturns and may result in tax increases to fund essential services down the road. The State should conform to the federal R & D immediate expensing for all businesses regardless of size to allow businesses to compete for innovation.

ADVOCATE: AMANDA JOHNSON



HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

LOOKING FORWARD

Upcoming Language Review: Tue 3/24 1:00 PM @ Cross, 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.

Summary of Amended Bill: Removes Medicare-based price caps and instead limits price growth controls to the individual market, small group plans, and the state employee health plan, while eliminating prior authorization reforms.

Implications: While more limited in scope, the amended bill still raises the core policy question of whether the state should control pricing. It narrows the approach but maintains the precedent of government involvement in setting or constraining year-to-year price changes.

HEALTH COVERAGE, INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES

LOOKING AHEAD

Upcoming House Vote: Upcoming Vote in House: Tuesday 3/24 @ S/H

LD 2056 – AN ACT TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL FINANCING OPTIONS TO CONSUMERS IN THE STATE

Policy Committee Assignments: Chamber; HCIFS

Advocate : Amanda Johnson

Position: Support

Summary of Original Bill: Reaffirms equal loan payments with limited exceptions, allowing payment differences up to 50% and reduced payments during the first 36 months.

Summary of Amended Bill: Clarification that this only applies to new vehicle purchases and limits payment differences to 36%.

Implications: This bill provides greater flexibility in structuring simple-interest loan payments, allowing modest variation while still placing clear limits on how much payments can differ. It can support more practical repayment options for borrowers and lenders, while maintaining consumer protections by capping payment differences at 36% for new vehicle purchases only.

ADVOCATE:
PATRICK WOODCOCK



HOUSING

LOOKING AHEAD

Last week: 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](#)

Action: The Committee passed the bill unanimously. The Committee added an accommodation to affordable housing construction.

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. The Chamber has some concerns that scale of the extension will unnecessarily slow down some dense housing developments.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Next Weekly Legislative Update:
Monday, March 30, 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



MAINE

S T A T E

CHAMBER

of

COMMERCE