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# WEEKLY LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

March 30, 2026

ADVOCACY | ACCESS | AWARENESS

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# WEEKLY UPDATE FROM THE CHAMBER PRESIDENT

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

ADVOCATE: LINDA CAPRARA



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# BONDS

LOOKING AHEAD

## **L.D. 2094, AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE A GENERAL FUND BOND ISSUE TO SUPPORT MAINE'S AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY SECTORS**

The Appropriations Committee last Thursday voted 8-5 (Party Lines D's Voted In Favor, R's Voted in Opposition) to use L.D. 2094 as a vehicle to lump together several bond issues into one bill. Included in this bill is \$45 million of the original \$40 bond proposal for ag and forestry. Also included in this bill is \$65 million for transportation and \$4 million for the courthouses. The following bond proposals were included in L.D. 2094:

- **L.D. 690, An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Provide Funding for Affordable and Low-Income Housing Programs** (original bond proposal: \$100 million – Proposal in L.D. 2094- \$20 million)
- **L.D. 1014, An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Develop Maine Talent and Innovation by Improving the Infrastructure of the University of Maine** (original bond proposal: \$100 million – Proposal in L.D. 2094- \$18.5 million)
- **L.D. 25, An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Fund Wastewater Treatment Facility Planning and Construction of Infrastructure Projects** (original bond proposal: \$50 million – Proposal in L.D. 2094- \$20 million)
- **L.D. 483, An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Secure Prosperity for Maine Families and Businesses** (original bond proposal: \$300 million – Proposal in L.D. 2094- \$20 million)
- **L.D. 836, An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Upgrade Municipal Culverts at Stream Crossings** (original bond proposal: \$50 million – Proposal in L.D. 2094- \$15 million)

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# APPROPRIATIONS & FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

LOOKING AHEAD

**Upcoming Work Session: Mon 3/30 2:00 PM at State House, Room 228**

**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**

Policy Committee: A&FA

Advocate: Linda Caprara

**Position: Oppose**

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 conform 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. Rumors abound that the D's will put in an income tax increase on the middle class directly in the supplemental budget.

**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



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# HEALTH COVERAGE, INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES

LOOKING AHEAD

## Upcoming House Vote: State House

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

Policy Committee: HCIFS

Advocate : Amanda Johnson

**Position: Support**

**Summary of Original Bill:** This bill clarifies Maine’s consumer credit law by reaffirming the requirement for substantially equal loan payments while allowing limited exceptions, including simple interest loans where payment differences do not exceed 50%.

**Summary of Amended Bill:** Changes alternative financing for new vehicle purchases only, payment variations of up to 36% and reduced payments during the first 36 months of the loan.

**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%.

ADVOCATE: ASHLEY LUSZCZKI



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# JUDICIARY

LOOKING FORWARD

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

Advocate: Ashley Luszczki

**Position: Oppose**

Status: Senate Calendar Item 1-1 (In Non-Concurrence)

Previous Legislative Actions: Passed to Be Engrossed in House 71-68; Amended and Passed to Be Engrossed in Senate (in non-concurrence) 18-16; Passed to Be Engrossed in House By Committee Amendment "A" as Amended By House Amendment "B"

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.

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# ENERGY, UTILITIES, AND TECHNOLOGY

LOOKING FORWARD

## **LD 307, AN ACT REGARDING ENERGY, UTILITIES AND TECHNOLOGY**

Advocate: Ashley Luszczki

**Position: Oppose**

Status: House Calendar Unfinished Business Item 11

Previous Actions: House Adopted Committee Amendment "A" (80-62), Tabled

Policy Advocate: Ashley

As amended, the bill establishes a council to review the impacts of all data centers and includes a moratorium on data centers 20mw or larger until September 2027.

**Implications: Without greater representation from the business community, it risks missing important real-world information in its review and recommendations. The moratorium would also send a signal to the business community that Maine is not welcoming data center development, despite having not yet had a thorough understanding of the energy, environmental, and economic impacts of data centers.**

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# ENERGY, UTILITIES, AND TECHNOLOGY

LOOKING FORWARD

## **LD 838, RESOLVE, TO ESTABLISH THE COMMISSION TO STUDY OPTIONS FOR PUBLIC FINANCING OF TRANSMISSION AND DISTRIBUTION INFRASTRUCTURE, GENERATION PROJECTS AND ENERGY STORAGE PROJECTS**

Advocate: Ashley Luszczki

**Position: Oppose**

Status: Senate Calendar Item 7-21

Previous Legislative Action: Maj. Report Accepted (21-14) and Senate Passed To Be Engrossed As Amended By Committee Amendment "A", House Accepted Maj. Report (73-67) and Passed To Be Engrossed As Amended By Committee Amendment "A" in Concurrence

As amended, the bill would set up a council to study public financing of electric transmission and distribution infrastructure.

**Implications: Could lead to a shift in how projects are planned and financed.**

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# ENERGY, UTILITIES, AND TECHNOLOGY

LOOKING FORWARD

## **LD 2038, AN ACT TO REQUIRE MAINE TRANSMISSION AND DISTRIBUTION UTILITY PARTICIPATION IN A REGIONAL TRANSMISSION ORGANIZATION (EMERGENCY)**

Advocate: Ashley Luszczki

**Position: Oppose**

Status: House Calendar 1-2 (In Non-Con)

Past Legislative Action: Passed To Be Engrossed As Amended By Committee "A" As Amended By Senate Amendment "A"

As amended by the committee, it makes it mandatory for transmission and distribution utilities to participate in a regional transmission organization with the exception of consumer-owned utilities and those located in an area of the state in which the retail electricity market is administered by the independent system administrator for northern Maine. The Senate Amendment removes the emergency.

**Implications: It would mandate RTO participation potentially reducing utilities' flexibility, eliminating their eligibility for a federal return-on-equity incentive, and placing them at a competitive financial disadvantage relative to utilities in other states.**

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# ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

LOOKING FORWARD

## **LD 2036, AN ACT TO CLARIFY THE APPROVAL PROCESS FOR AND THE OPERATION OF THE COMMINGLING PROGRAM FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF BEVERAGE CONTAINERS**

Advocate: Ashley Luszczki

Position: Support

Status: House Calendar 6-3

The bill requires industry participants to form a cooperative and submit a detailed operating plan to the Department of Environmental Protection for review and approval, outlining how beverage containers will be managed, financed, collected, and reported. The legislation clarifies the Department's authority, sets out planning and reporting requirements, and creates a structured pathway to transition the redemption system toward material-based sorting rather than brand-based sorting.

**Implications: The bill shifts Maine's bottle redemption system toward a more modern, system-managed model by moving operational complexity away from redemption centers and into a coordinated, data-driven program overseen by the Department. If implemented successfully, it could improve efficiency for redemption centers and transporters, create more predictable cost allocation using verified sales data, and reduce administrative burdens tied to brand sorting.**

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# ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

LOOKING FORWARD

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

Advocate: Ashley Luszczki

Position: Oppose

Status: House Calendar Unfinished Business Item 5

Previous Legislative Actions: House Accepted the Min. Ought Not to Pass; Senate Passed To Be Engrossed the Maj. Ought To Pass As Amended and Sent to the House in Non-Concurrence

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. The warning signs are required to be installed on all publicly accessible property boundaries at intervals no greater than every 100 feet.

**Implications: It would require additional compliance and costs for businesses.**

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# ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

LOOKING FORWARD

## **LD 2187, AN ACT TO UPDATE CERTAIN WATER QUALITY STANDARDS AND TO RECLASSIFY CERTAIN WATERS OF THE STATE**

Advocate: Ashley Luszczki

**Position: Monitor**

Status: Senate Calendar Item 7-16

## **LD 2227, AN ACT TO UPDATE FINANCIAL ASSURANCE REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTAIN SOLID WASTE FACILITIES**

Advocate: Ashley Luszczki

**Position: Monitor**

Status: Senate Calendar Item 7-20

As amended, it upgrades water quality classification of that portion of the Androscoggin River from Gulf Island Pond Dam in Auburn to Worumbo Dam in Libson Falls from Class C to Class B. This upgrade is effective January 1, 2027.

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# ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

LOOKING FORWARD

## **LD 1870, AN ACT TO ESTABLISH A CLIMATE SUPERFUND COST RECOVERY PROGRAM TO IMPOSE PENALTIES ON CLIMATE POLLUTERS**

Advocate: Ashley Luszczki

**Position: Oppose**

Status: Senate Calendar Unfinished Business Item 2

Previous Legislative Action: Motion to Accept the Maj. Ought to Pass Report, Tabled

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 fuels 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:  
PATRICK WOODCOCK



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# HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

LOOKING AHEAD

## **LD 1908, AN ACT TO REQUIRE THE COOPERATION OF ORIGINAL MANUFACTURERS OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES TO FACILITATE THE REPAIR OF THOSE DEVICES BY DEVICE OWNERS AND INDEPENDENT REPAIR PROVIDERS**

Advocate: Patrick Woodcock

Position: Oppose

Status: Senate Calendar Unfinished Business Item 5

Previous Legislative Actions: Passed To Be Engrossed As Amended By Committee Amendment "A" (22-13); Acceptance of Committee Amendment "A" Failed in House (50-91) and Committee Amendment "B" Passed To Be Engrossed, Sent to Senate in Non-Concurrence  
Summary: The Chamber has concerns with both committee reports. [Committee Amendment "A" \(Majority Report\)](#); [Committee Amendment "B" \(Minority Report\)](#).

**Implications: The Majority Report has exemptions for certain products that could lead to a litigious environment, as it includes a PRA. The Minority Report is narrower but does not provide certain exemptions that Chamber members are seeking.**

# UPCOMING EVENTS **DONE**

Next Weekly Legislative Update:  
**Monday, April 6, 2026**



**Weekly**  
**Legislative Update**

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



**MAINE STATE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**



**WEBINAR:**  
**THE IRANIAN CONFLICT,  
ENERGY MARKETS, AND  
MAINE'S ENERGY STRATEGY  
AHEAD**

**A VIRTUAL EVENT  
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8, 2026  
9:00 AM - 10:00 AM**

MAINE  

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CHAMBER  
*of*  

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COMMERCE