



WEEKLY LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

April 6, 2026

ADVOCACY | ACCESS | AWARENESS

MEETING AGENDA

01

Update from
Chamber President &
CEO

02

Advocacy Team
Updates

03

Upcoming Events

WEEKLY UPDATE FROM THE CHAMBER PRESIDENT

PATRICK WOODCOCK
PRESIDENT & CEO
MAINE STATE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Supplemental Budget – A Major Step Backwards for Maine's Economy

- **Imposes a Surtax on Income Over \$1 million.** This replicates what is a failed experiment in Massachusetts, which has significantly lost population since this was imposed by referendum. This would increase our highest marginal income tax from 7.15 percent to 9.15 percent – the highest level in New England. This takes effect for this current tax year. Ironically, Maine has benefited from some of the exodus of high tax states as the Governor has stated in the past.
- **Raids the Budget Stabilization Fund.** The proposal to use \$324 million from Maine’s Budget Stabilization Fund is fiscally imprudent and prioritizes short-term relief over long-term economic growth. A significant portion of these funds would be distributed as \$300 “affordability” checks—an approach that provides only temporary benefit without addressing the underlying drivers of high costs.
- **Eliminates the Business Equipment Tax Reimbursement for Some Businesses.** The elimination of the BETR program for some businesses is contradictory to a promise made to businesses who made investments in equipment. Many states simply do not allow property taxes on equipment as this creates a disincentive to continue to modernize. This will cost individual businesses hundreds of thousands of dollars this year.
- **Fails to Enact Tax Conformity.** The bill fails to fully conform with the federal tax law changes. Most notably, the bill does not allow full expensing of Research & Development expenditures in the year that they were placed in service. Prior to 2022, Maine has been in alignment with the federal tax code on this provision since the inception of the Maine tax code in 1969.

ADVOCATE: LINDA CAPRARA



APPROPRIATIONS & FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

LOOKING AHEAD

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 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. Now the Appropriations Committee has also inserted a Millionaires Tax directly into the Supplemental Budget. The 2% tax would be levied on incomes over \$1,000,000. This would generate \$150 million. This tax increase would impact small businesses across the state.

Implications: Utilizing the Budget Stabilization Fund for non-emergency purposes and providing \$300 checks to Mainers leaves the State exposed in economic downturns and may result in tax increases to fund essential services down the road. This tax increase will impact Maine small businesses across the State. The budget also imposes a 2% surtax which will impact small businesses and Maine’s ability to attract top talent to the state. The budget also phases out BETR for retail facilities.

TAXATION

LOOKING AHEAD

On the House Calendar

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

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. On Senate Calendar for Enactment

On the Senate Calendar for Enactment

LD 191 – AN ACT TO SUPPORT MAINE BUSINESSES BY ESTABLISHING A PASS-THROUGH ENTITY TAX AND TAX CREDIT

Policy Committee: Tax

Advocate: Linda Caprara

Position: Support

The bill would establish a Pass-Through Entity Tax for pass-through entities in Maine.

Implications: The PTET would be on an elective basis and would reduce federal tax liability for pass-through businesses in Maine. The bill also generates revenue for the State and aligns Maine with 36 other states that have adopted a PTET.

ADVOCATE: AMANDA JOHNSON



HEALTH COVERAGE, INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES

LOOKING AHEAD

Upcoming Senate Vote, Monday 4/6: State House

LD 378 – AN ACT TO STRENGTHEN THE HEALTH CARE SYSTEM IN MAINE

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: HCIFS

Advocate : Amanda Johnson

Position: Monitor

This bill allows employers and health plan sponsors to audit medical and pharmacy claims when insurers act as third-party administrators, requiring access to necessary claims and financial data.

Implications: LD 378 may increase transparency and help control healthcare costs by ensuring contract compliance, but it could also add administrative burden, raise privacy concerns, and slow some payments.

HEALTH COVERAGE, INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES

LOOKING AHEAD

Upcoming Senate Vote, Monday 4/6: State House

LD 1969 – AN ACT TO AMEND THE MAINE REVISED UNCLAIMED PROPERTY ACT AND CLARIFY THE DEFINITION OF “VIRTUAL CURRENCY”

Policy Committee: HCIFS

Advocate : Amanda Johnson

Position: Monitor

Summary of Original Bill: This bill updates Maine’s Unclaimed Property Act by adding virtual currency, revising when accounts are considered abandoned, and updating audit and reporting rules.

Summary of Amended Bill: This bill updates Maine’s Unclaimed Property Act by clarifying virtual currency, revising when accounts are considered abandoned, and updating reporting and audit rules, while creating a framework for handling and potentially liquidating virtual currency.

Implications: LD 1969 modernizes the law by clarifying virtual currency and standardizing abandonment rules. While it adds some compliance requirements, it provides greater clarity and consistency for businesses.

HEALTH COVERAGE, INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES

LOOKING AHEAD

Upcoming House Vote, Monday 4/6: 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 percent 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%.

LABOR

LOOKING AHEAD

Upcoming Senate Vote, Monday 4/6: State House

LD 2018 – AN ACT TO AMEND THE REQUIREMENTS GOVERNING SELF-INSURANCE PLANS IN THE PAID FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE BENEFITS PROGRAM

Policy Committee Assignments: Chamber; LHHI

Advocate: Amanda Johnson

Position: Oppose

Summary of Original Bill: This bill clarifies that private self-insured plans under the paid family and medical leave program may not pool risk, financial resources, or administration among multiple employers.

Summary of Amended Bill: For private plans in the form of self-insurance, employers are allowed to share legal, accounting and 3rd party administrator costs if the arrangements do not result in pooling of risk.

Implications: The amended bill still prohibits risk pooling in self-insured PFML plans, including retroactively, but allows employers to share certain administrative costs. While this provides some flexibility, it continues to limit a key cost-management tool.

LABOR

LOOKING AHEAD

Upcoming Senate Vote, Monday 4/6: State House

LD 2110 – AN ACT TO UPDATE EMPLOYER SUBSTANCE USE TESTING POLICY REQUIREMENTS

Policy Committee: LHHI

Advocate: Amanda Johnson

Position: Monitor

This bill updates employer substance use testing requirements, including employee rights to contest non-negative results, medical review officer reporting, changes to rehabilitation timelines and costs, laboratory standards, and other technical updates.

Implications: It may improve fairness and consistency in workplace testing, but could create challenges by shifting rehabilitation costs to employees, shortening timelines, and raising concerns about testing accuracy, impartiality, and potential employer liability.

ADVOCATE: ASHLEY LUSZCZKI



ENERGY, UTILITIES, AND TECHNOLOGY

LOOKING FORWARD

LD 1966, AN ACT TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO COMMUNITY SOLAR PROGRAMS IN THE STATE

Status: On the Senate Calendar, Item 5-5

Previous Legislative Action: Majority Ought to Pass as Amended report engrossed in the House.

Advocate: Ashley Luszczki

Position: Oppose

It requires a transmission and distribution utility with over 50,000 customers to disclose any administrative charges included in a customer bill for work funded directly by that customer. It directs the commission to adopt rules to establish billing and disclosure standards for distributed generation resources with customers who participate in a net energy billing arrangement based upon shared financial interest. It requires the commission, by September 1, 2026, to initiate a competitive solicitation to procure up to 4 megawatts of energy from one or more distributed generation resources.

Implications: Would provide greater transparency in billing while also adding \$20M in stranded costs.

ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

LOOKING FORWARD

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

Advocate: Ashley Luszczki

Status: On the Senate Calendar. Item 1-3

Previous Legislative Actions: House Insisted on the Minority Ought Not to Pass

Position: Oppose

The bill requires petroleum storage facilities to require the licensed facilities that include an aboveground petroleum storage tank with a storage capacity greater than 39,000 gallons to install and maintain warning signs.

Implications: It would add compliance costs for businesses.

ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

LOOKING FORWARD

LD 1870, RESOLVE, TO ASSESS THE TOTAL COST TO THE STATE OF GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS (NEW TITLE)

Advocate: Ashley Luszczki

Status: Item 7-41

Previous Legislative Action: Engrossed by House

Position: Oppose

The bill would require 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. On or before January 1, 2028, the department is required to submit a report containing the results of that assessment to the joint standing committees of the Legislature having jurisdiction over environment and natural resources matters, labor matters, judiciary matters, and energy, utilities, and technology matters. The environment and natural resources committee may report out a bill.

Implications: Could lead to a climate superfund that would increase costs for businesses. Furthermore, climate superfunds that have been passed in other states are currently being litigated.

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

Status: Item 5-6

Position: Support

Previous Legislative Action: House accepted Majority Ought Not to Pass

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.

ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

LOOKING FORWARD

LD 2070, AN ACT TO IMPROVE THE MANAGEMENT OF LANDFILL LEACHATE AND WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT SLUDGE AT SOLID WASTE LANDFILLS

Status: Item 7-2 for enactment

Previous Legislative Action: Enacted by House

Advocate: Ashley Luszczki

Position: Oppose

It requires facilities that incinerate or process sludge to use the best technology to limit emissions of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, mandates leak detection and groundwater monitoring at new or expanded landfills, and sets strict testing and handling requirements for sludge. It also bars the development of a state-owned landfill at the Carpenter Ridge site, directs state agencies to gather and report technical waste management information, and tasks the Department of Environmental Protection with evaluating rules governing solid waste facilities.

Implications: It would add new compliance obligations for waste facilities. It strengthens monitoring and leak-detection standards for landfills and removes Carpenter Ridge as a future state landfill option, which may affect long-term capacity planning. It also sets the stage for additional regulatory updates as state agencies gather data and review existing solid waste rules.

ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

LOOKING FORWARD

LD 2141, AN ACT TO DIRECT A PORTION OF UNCLAIMED BEVERAGE CONTAINER DEPOSITS TO THE LAKE WATER QUALITY RESTORATION AND PROTECTION FUND, THE MAINE WORKING FARMLAND ACCESS AND PROTECTION PROGRAM AND PUBLIC DEFENDER OFFICE STAFFING

Status: Item 5-21

Advocate: Ashley Luszczki

Position: Oppose

It changes how unclaimed beverage container deposits are used under Maine's redemption law. It directs a set portion of those funds to support lake water quality restoration and farmland access programs, clarifies how unclaimed deposits held by the state liquor bureau are treated, and strengthens reporting requirements for beverage container initiators by making non-reporting a violation with penalties. It also adjusts spending obligations if available unclaimed deposits aren't sufficient to meet all required uses

Implications: It shifts \$4M in unclaimed beverage deposits away from being reinvested into bottle redemption and provides that funding to Lake Water Quality and Working Farmland funds.

JUDICIARY

LOOKING FORWARD

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

Advocate: Ashley Luszczki

Position: Oppose

Status: In non-con. Item 7-39 for enactment

Previous Legislative Action: Enactment failed in House (68-80).

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.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Next Weekly Legislative Update:
Monday, April 13, 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

S T A T E

CHAMBER
of

COMMERCE