

January 31, 2019

Mandatory paid sick leave bill awaits public hearing

Proposal will impact nearly all Maine businesses, large and small

A proposal to provide both full- and part-time employees with up to 40 hours of paid sick time will once again have its day in the Legislature. **LD 369**, *An Act to Support Healthy Workplaces and Healthy Families by Providing Earned Paid Sick Leave to Certain Employees*, sponsored by Sen. Rebecca Millett (D-Cumberland), awaits initial action by the Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing. It is expected the bill will be scheduled for a public hearing on Wed., February 13 at 11:00 a.m. in Room 202 of the Cross Building.

As drafted, LD 369 closely resembles legislation proposed in 2017 during the 128th Legislative session, as well as combining provisions of a citizen's initiated referendum proposal being circulated by the Maine People's Alliance (MPA). The bill would allow full- and part-time workers *at businesses that employ five or more workers* to accrue one hour of paid sick time for every 30 hours of work, up to a limit of 40 hours in a year. The employee would also be allowed to roll over up to 40 hours of unused leave into the next year, but again, the employer is allowed to cap leave used at 40 hours. The leave begins to accrue upon initiation of work, but the employee cannot use the leave until they have been employed at least 90 days. The employee at an impacted business would be eligible to use the leave to take care of themselves or a sick family member, or if

the employee or a member of the employee's family has been the victim of domestic abuse, sexual assault, or stalking.

It should be noted that the definition of "family member" is *extremely* broad, encompassing:

- 1 The employee's, and the employee's spouse's or domestic partner's, biological child, adopted child, foster child, stepchild or legal ward, a child to whom the employee or the employee's spouse or domestic partner stands in loco parentis, or an individual to whom the employee or the employee's spouse or domestic partner stood in loco parentis when the individual was a minor;
- 2 The employee's, and the employee's spouse's or domestic partner's, biological parent, foster parent, stepparent, adoptive parent or legal guardian, or a person who stood in loco parentis when the employee was a minor child;
- 3 A person to whom the employee is legally married under the laws of any state or a domestic partner of the employee;
- 4 The employee's, and the employee's spouse's or domestic partner's, biological grandparent, foster grandparent, adoptive grandparent or step-grandparent; and,
- 5 The employee's, and the employee's spouse's or domestic partner's, bio-

Continued on Page 2...

Legislation proposes increase to Maine's salary threshold

LD 402 would set new test at \$55k+ by 2023

A bill submitted last week by Rep. Ryan Tipping (D-Orono) would significantly increase the so-called "salary test" in Maine that helps determine which employees are "salaried," and which are "hourly" – and therefore eligible for overtime wages.

As drafted, **LD 402**, *An Act to Restore Overtime Protections for Maine Workers*, would annually raise the minimum salary that an employee who works in an executive, administrative, or professional capacity must earn in order for that employee to be exempt from the laws governing the minimum wage and overtime pay. The bill proposes to increase the salary level from the current \$33,000 to \$40,408 by 2020, and again to \$47,861 by 2021, and finally again to \$55,224 by 2022. In addition, after the 2022 increase, the amount would be adjusted each year by changes in the percentage annual increase in certain earnings as published by the United States Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Unlike many other states, the salary threshold that divides Maine's salaried

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MAINE STATE CHAMBER *of* COMMERCE

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About the Maine State Chamber of Commerce: Since 1889, the Maine State Chamber has been fighting to lower your cost of doing business. Through our Grassroots Action Network and OneVoice program, we work with a network of approximately 5,000 companies statewide who see the value in such a service and provide the financial support that keeps our access, advocacy, and assistance efforts going strong. As Maine's Chamber, we make sure that the business environment of the state continues to thrive. The Maine State Chamber of Commerce advocates on behalf of their interests before the legislature and regulatory agencies and through conferences, seminars, and affiliated programs.

Mandatory Paid Sick Leave...

(Continued from Page 1...)

logical sibling, foster sibling, adoptive sibling or stepsibling.

Furthermore, the bill includes in its definition of "family member" as "any other individual related by blood or affinity whose close association with the employee is the equivalent of a family relationship.

The same broadness of definition holds true for the use of the new leave. An employee may take paid sick time for the employee's or a family member's:

- 1 Mental or physical illness, injury or health condition;
- 2 Medical diagnosis, care or treatment of a mental or physical illness, injury or health condition; or,
- 3 Preventative medical care.

In addition to leave when a family member is a victim or domestic violence or sexual assault, the leave can be used in the smallest increments that the employer allows the use of other time. Notice to the employer when foreseeable is defined as a "good faith effort," and unforeseeable use of the leave is allowed. Documentation of the use of the leave is only required after three consecutive days absence, and a signed letter from the employee or a health care professional is considered documentation.

The bill places considerable record-keeping requirements on employers, as well as a variety of penalties for failure to grant the leave or "retaliation" for the use of the leave. These include a civil fine of \$1,000 and a private right of action that would authorize liquidated damages, attorney's fees, back wages, and reinstatement. Any employee would have up to three years to bring such an action against an employer alleged to have committed a violation of the statute.

Finally, employers with five or fewer employees are mandated to provide up to 40 hours of unpaid sick time for their full and part time workers.

The issue of providing mandatory paid sick leave to employees who currently do not get such a benefit has been discussed and debated by previous Maine

legislatures. The first time the bill saw serious consideration was in 2010. The legislature also considered proposals on this issue in 2004, 2007 and 2017. In each case, the Maine State Chamber led a coalition of business associations, opposing such a law as adding considerably to the cost of doing business here.

Many Maine employers do provide some form of paid leave, in the form of vacation, holiday or sick time. However, many businesses do not extend those benefits to part-time, temporary and seasonal workers. Requiring employers to provide these workers with paid leave is a significant departure from current practice and will add to the cost of doing business here in Maine.

Adding mandatory paid sick leave mandates will not only increase the bottom line of many businesses due to increased paid time off, but it will also increase costs due to the very cumbersome tracking requirements that will be needed to calculate leave amounts for full- and part-time employees, as well as tracking its utilization. The tracking of this leave time, particularly for seasonal and temporary workers, will be difficult and expensive. Currently, only 10 states and the District of Columbia mandate such leave, making multi-state employers with operations here in Maine responsible for establishing a separate tracking system just for their Maine operations. *Once again, we will be making it more expensive to do business here than in our competitor states.*

There is considerable energy behind this proposal, and should the legislature not act on the bill, it is expected that the MPA will submit signatures to the Secretary of State in an effort to get the proposal in the ballot at some point.

The Maine State Chamber will be following events concerning this bill carefully and will keep members apprised as the bill moves through the legislative process. For additional information or questions, please contact Peter Gore by calling (207) 623-4568, ext. 107, or by emailing pgore@mainechamber.org. □

Call centers in Maine once again in the bull's eye

Confirming the old adage “everything old is new again,” one of the more onerous pieces of legislation in the past 15 years has become one of the first of the new bills printed in the 129th Legislature. **LD 201, *An Act to Protect Jobs in the State by Requiring Advance Notice of Closure of Call Centers***, sponsored by Rep. Michelle Dunphy (D-Old Town), is a virtual carbon copy of legislation that was eventually rejected by the 121st, 126th and 127th Legislatures.

LD 201...

As drafted this session, the bill retains the concepts from previous sessions, only this time, it is *worse* in some ways. LD 201 would require the commissioner of the Department of Labor (DOL) to compile a list of both stand-alone call centers and employers who have at least 30% of their call center operations located here and have relocated from Maine to a foreign country. It does not state how far back the DOL will look, so it could potentially be retroactive for many years. If a company appears on the list then it is banned from accessing state tax incentives, grants, or loans for a period of five years. There is also a claw-back provision requiring affected call center employers to repay an amortized amount of any such received assistance to the state. It mandates that any state agency's call center services be provided in-state. Lastly, it requires a

WARN-like notification provision, which insists that any currently operating call center provides the state with at least 120 days' notice before relocation or it could face a \$10,000 per day fine.

LD 201 purports to “retain” call centers in our state. In fact, it is our opinion that, if LD 201 becomes law, the exact opposite would be true – before the law could actually go into effect, it is likely that a number of call centers, either standalone operations or those affiliated with existing businesses as back office operations, would leave Maine, taking their jobs with them. Additionally it is more than likely that we would not see another new call center located here in the foreseeable future.

A Bit of History...

In discussions before the legislature each year, this bill has been proposed the Maine State Chamber has expressed strong opposition to its enactment. The bill justifiably would indicate that Maine was unfriendly to business. It would impair our state's ability to attract future call center endeavors and will damage its overall business attractiveness. After all, if the state would penalize one class of businesses in this manner now, which group is next? In addition, the legislature has been warned during previous discussions, that in all likelihood the proposal would have serious constitutional problems, including conflicts with the supremacy clause of the

Chamber testifies in support of employer tax credit for apprenticeships

On Wednesday, January 30, the Joint Standing Committee on Taxation held a public hearing on **LD 70, *An Act to Support the Trades through a Tax Credit for Apprenticeship Programs***, sponsored by Sen. Erin Herbig (D-Waldo). Linda Caprara represented the Chamber and testified in support of the legislation. The bill would allow a tax credit of up to \$2,500 for an employer who employs an apprentice participating in a Department of Labor's approved apprenticeship program for at least 2,000 hours during a calendar year. The tax credit is prorated if the number of hours is less than 2,000.

The Taxation committee will work the bill on Wed., February 6 at 10:00 a.m. If you have any questions, please contact Linda Caprara at lcaprara@mainechamber.org. □

U.S. Constitution, and conflicts with the ability and rights of states to regulate or interfere with international trade.

Going Forward...

It is likely that LD 201 will be scheduled for a public hearing before the 129th Legislature's Labor and Housing committee in the coming weeks. The passage of time has not in any way improved the ideas contained in the bill. To our knowledge, no other state has enacted similar legislation. It most certainly sends the wrong type of message – not only to any call centers that might be interested in locating here, but to other employers who would legitimately wonder who is next.

The Maine State Chamber will update members as to the scheduling of LD 201's public hearing. For additional information or questions, please contact Peter Gore by calling (207) 623-4568, ext. 107, or by emailing pgore@mainechamber.org. □

Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing

Committee mail can be sent to the Legislative Information Office at 100 State House Station, Augusta, Maine 04333. The committee meets in Room 202 of the Cross Building. The committee clerk can be reached by calling (207) 287-1331. Additional information can be found online at legislature.maine.gov/committee/#Committees/LBHS.

* Ranking Republican Member

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Maine businesses asked to help achieve MaineSpark's goal of "60% by 2025"



As of January 2019, the work of *Next Step Maine* - providing well-coordinated support for adult learners and direct connections between aspirational adults, educators and employers - is now being implemented by the MaineSpark initiative. The Chamber is a proud core member of this coalition. We hope we can count on your continued involvement.

Employers are a key part of this workforce development initiative, they have allowed us to deepen the conversation about adult learners in our state. But, we need more! We hope you'll find out more about MaineSpark (mainespark.me/about-mainespark) and the exciting efforts to keep education and employers connected!

The opportunity offered by Next Step Maine Employees of Promise Scholarships will continue as part of this broader effort. Maine Community Foundation (www.mainecef.org/find-a-scholarship/available-scholarships/for-adult-learners) will continue to offer adult centered scholarship funding going forward and we are encouraging our Educational Partners to continue to offer some form of tuition reduction for adult learners.

As a key partner in the Maine Spark coalition, the Chamber's education and workforce partnership-building efforts will be enhanced. Maine Spark's Adult Promise (mainespark.me/adult-promise)

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Overtime Rules...

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and hourly employees has increased. That threshold is tied to any increase in the state's minimum wage. The precise language is "3,000 times" the state's minimum wage. Therefore, the past three minimum wage increases, mandated by the citizen's initiated referendum passed in November 2016, has increased the salary threshold to \$33,000. By 2020, even without any additional legislative action, the threshold will again increase to \$36,000. It is important to note that the national salary threshold standard is \$23,660. This is the amount most states use as their salary test for overtime eligibility.

In the closing years of the his administration, former U.S. President Barack Obama instructed the U.S. Department of Labor to undertake rulemaking that would increase at the federal level the salary test portion that determines exempt versus non-exempt employees. The \$23,660 salary threshold, at that time, had remained unchanged since its adoption under the Bush administration. After more than a year of work, and the submission of hundreds of thousands of comments by employers and other interested parties, the final rules were released in 2016. The salary threshold was increased to \$47,456, or \$913 a week. In addition, the rule called for indexing the threshold every three years, tied to changes in the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

The rule was challenged in federal court and the Eastern District of Texas later invalidated this regulation on the basis that the \$47,456 annual salary (\$913 per week) was so high as to render the duties tests for exemption irrelevant. The court's ruling left the 2004 annual salary threshold of \$23,660 (\$455/week) in place nationally. Furthermore, the court ruled that the salary test was increased so much as to supplant the duties portion of the test; the new salary test would render non-exempt

employees who should be exempt due to the duties they perform, thereby making the regulation contrary to Congressional intent and rendering it invalid.

The Trump administration has since been working on a new rule that would increase the salary threshold, but do so in a way that kept a balance between the two separate tests. It is expected to release these new rules this spring.

As was with the case with the Obama administration's proposed rule, LD 402 would create havoc in the Maine workplace. At \$56,000+, managers who are currently considered salaried could lose this status unless employers somehow found the financial wherewithal to increase their compensation - in many cases substantially. Workers who found themselves listed as hourly employees could be forced to turn in all phones, tablets, laptops, etc., in an effort to ensure that after-hours - and therefore compensable - work did not take place. Maine's entire economy would be negatively impacted.

What's more, Maine would be an outlier when it comes to the differential between what constitutes a salaried versus hourly employee. Nearly all states use the current federal designation, and only a handful of other states have adopted a different, more stringent standard. Maine already is one of those states, but LD 402 would put us far outside the norm - *significantly* increasing the cost of doing business here, and hurt our businesses ability to compete and grow.

LD 402 has currently not been scheduled for a public hearing. The Maine State Chamber will be following this bill very closely and will let members know when the hearing date is scheduled. For additional information or questions, please contact Peter Gore by calling (207) 623-4568, ext. 107, or by emailing pgore@mainechamber.org. □

Chamber supports proposal to make changes, improvements in Maine education standards

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The following testimony was delivered by Megan Sanborn on behalf of the Maine State Chamber of Commerce in support of LD 14, An Act to Improve Science and Engineering Education for Maine's Students, at a public hearing held on Wednesday, January 30, 2019, before the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs. We have reprinted it here for your review.*

“Chairman Millett, Chairman Kornfield, distinguished members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee: I am Megan Sanborn, Senior Government Relations Specialist at the Maine State Chamber of Commerce, a statewide business association representing both large and small businesses and a member of the business organization ReadyNation. I am pleased to be with you today to speak in support for the proposal to make certain changes and improvements in Maine education standards.

I am not here today as an education expert, though I do have a teaching degree; I am here as a representative of the business community. Maine's business community is incredibly invested in our state's PreK-12 public education system. We believe that Maine students, teachers, and the entire education system deserve our investment. Producing well-rounded and highly-skilled graduates will help keep businesses investing in our state, and potentially attract more businesses to Maine. When our students succeed, Maine businesses succeed, and our state's economy and competitiveness greatly benefits.

We know that Maine currently has a skills gap. According to a ReadyNation report, if current education and labor market trends continue, Maine will face a deficit of at least 15,000 high-skilled workers to fill the jobs of the future. We also know that 66 percent of job openings this decade (between 2010 and 2020) require post-secondary education. Positions in STEM are growing in Maine and 86 percent of these jobs require postsecondary education. Yet only 57 percent of working age adult in Maine have that level of education. Maine businesses tell us every day that they have high-wage jobs with good benefits they cannot fill because of the lack of skilled or qualified workers. To be competitive in the global workplace of the future, Maine will need approximately 158,000 more workers with postsecondary degrees or credentials by 2025.

Maine needs an education system that provides rich, relevant, and core academic curricula that prepare students for education and careers beyond high school, while also providing students with practical job skills, hands-on experience and connections to local employers – the Next Generation Science Standards are part of that.

The future of many Maine businesses depends upon the caliber and skills of our workforce. We believe this bill takes a step in the right direction and will equip our students for success in both postsecondary education or training and their future careers.”

For more information, please contact Megan Sanborn by calling (207) 623-4568, ext. 108, or by emailing msanborn@mainechamber.org. □

MaineSpark...

(Continued from Page 4...)

program, will help adults ease into the workplace and increase adult degree attainment in Maine. Research indicates that Maine has approximately 190,000 adult workers who have started, but have not completed, their postsecondary program. One of the first, and most challenging, steps for an adult who is thinking about going back to college is reaching out to someone for information and help. Adult learners who are successful in completing a credential often cite their support network – those individuals who helped them navigate the education landscape - as essential in helping them start and finish. Employers like you are part of that critical support network through your encouragement and support.

We hope you will consider becoming a champion of the MaineSpark Initiative by:

- 1 Find out more by visiting mainespark.me/for-organizations;
- 2 Keep doing the good work you're already doing, and tell us about it by sending stories of how your organization is helping Maine get to 60% by 2025 to connect@mainespark.me;
- 3 Strengthen collaborations and partnerships with other MaineSpark agencies and in your local community by visiting mainespark.me to get involved and stay in touch;
- 4 Download and sign the resolution in support of the MaineSpark “60% by 2025” goal at mainespark.me/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/MaineSpark_Resolution_Updated_12.1.17.pdf.

For more information, please contact Megan Sanborn by calling (207) 623-4568, ext. 108, or by emailing msanborn@mainechamber.org. □

Digest of New Legislation

Maine Chamber staff have studied each of these recently printed bills to assess potential impact on business trends. If you have concerns regarding any bill, please communicate those concerns to a member of our governmental services staff at (207) 623-4568.

A total of 108 business-related bills have been tracked to date since the session began on January 2, 2019!

BOND ISSUES

LD 394, An Act To Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue To Provide for Student Loan Debt Relief. (Rep. Hobbs, D-Wells) *Joint Standing Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Commerce.* The funds provided by this bond issue, in the amount of \$50,000,000, will be used to provide funds to the Finance Authority of Maine for zero-interest student loans and loan consolidation or refinancing interest rate reductions for certain Maine residents who agree to live and work in Maine for at least 5 years. The bill creates the Maine Student Loan Debt Relief Program. Under the program, zero-interest loans up to \$10,000 per year for a maximum of 5 years are available to certain Maine residents who study at qualified in-state institutions of higher education and agree to live and work in Maine for at least 5 years following graduation. Loans bearing an annual interest rate of the prime rate of interest plus 2% are available to those who do not live and work in the State upon graduation. The Finance Authority of Maine may provide interest rate reduction payments to residents who use the authority's existing loan consolidation and refinancing program. This option is available to individuals who studied in Maine or outside of Maine and agree to live and work in Maine for at least 5 years. The bill exempts from Maine income tax any benefits received under the program to the extent included in federal adjusted gross income and prohibits individuals who have received benefits under the program from receiving the Maine educational opportunity tax credit.

LD 469, An Act To Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue To Provide Funding for Upgrades of Learning Spaces and Other Projects Funded by the School Revolving Renovation Fund. (Rep. Farnsworth, D-Portland) *Joint Standing Committee on*

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Public Hearings

Public hearings are open to everyone. This public hearing schedule is subject to change. Questions may be directed to the Secretary of the Senate's Office at (207) 287-1540. For the most current schedule, please visit <http://legislature.maine.gov/committee/#Committees> or contact the committee clerk.

Monday, February 4, 2019

Herbig of Waldo)

Education and Cultural Affairs

1:00 p.m.; Cross Building, Room 208

LD 137, An Act To Make the Maine Learning Technology Initiative More Cost-effective (Rep. Rudnicki of Fairfield)

Tuesday, February 5, 2019

Energy Utilities and Technology

1:00 p.m.; Cross Building, Room 211

LD 173, An Act To Promote Economic Development and Critical Communications for Family Farms, Businesses and Residences by Strategic Public Investment in High-speed Internet (Rep. McCrea of Fort Fairfield)

LD 273, An Act To Require Transmission and Distribution Utilities To Purchase Electricity from Renewable Resources at Certain Prices (Sen. Miramant of Knox)

Wednesday, February 6, 2019

Labor and Housing

10:00 a.m.; Cross Building, Room 202

LD 122, An Act To Prohibit an Employer from Asking a Prospective Hire about the Person's Compensation History until after a Job Offer Is Made (Rep. Bryant of Windham)

LD 139, An Act To Address the Unmet Workforce Needs of Employers and To Improve the Economic Future of Workers (Rep. Fecteau of Biddeford)

LD 140, An Act To Facilitate the Employment of Persons with Substance Use Disorder (Rep. Fecteau of Biddeford)

LD 278, An Act Regarding Pay Equality (Sen. Breen of Cumberland)

Taxation

10:00 a.m.; State House, Room 127

LD 70 (Work Session), An Act To Support the Trades through a Tax Credit for Apprenticeship Programs (Sen.

Thursday, February 7, 2019

Energy Utilities and Technology

1:00 p.m.; Cross Building, Room 211

LD 13 (Work Session), An Act To Allow Microgrids That Are in the Public Interest (Rep. Devin of Newcastle)

LD 41 (Work Session), An Act To Replace Net Energy Billing with a Market-based Mechanism (Rep. O'Connor of Berwick)

LD 91 (Work Session), An Act To Eliminate Gross Metering (Rep. Berry of Bowdoinham)

Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Business

1:00 p.m.; Cross Building, Room 202

LD 50, An Act To Implement the Recommendations of the Government Oversight Committee To Improve the Development of a Long-range Strategic Plan for Economic Improvement in the State (Rep. Mastraccio of Sanford)

Tuesday, February 12, 2019

Appropriations and Financial Affairs

1:00 p.m.; State House, Room 228

LD 469, An Act To Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue To Provide Funding for Upgrades of Learning Spaces and Other Projects Funded by the School Revolving Renovation Fund (Rep. Farnsworth of Portland)

Wednesday, February 13, 2019

Labor and Housing

11:00 a.m.; Cross Building, Room 202

LD 369, An Act To Support Healthy Workplaces and Healthy Families by Providing Earned Paid Sick Leave to Certain Employees (Sen. Millett of Cumberland)

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New Legislation... (Continued from Page 6...)

Appropriations and Financial Affairs. The funds provided by this bond issue, in the amount of \$50,000,000 in fiscal year 2019-20 and \$50,000,000 in fiscal year 2020-21, will be used to provide funds to the School Revolving Renovation Fund for the purpose of providing funds to public schools to upgrade learning spaces in school buildings and make other necessary repairs.

LD 547, An Act To Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue To Support Maine Aquaculture. Emergency (Sen. Chipman, D-Cumberland) *Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs.* The funds provided by this bond issue, in the amount of \$25,000,000, will be used to provide funds to the Gulf of Maine Research Institute to study and promote Maine aquaculture.

EDUCATION

LD 149, An Act To Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue To Provide Student Debt Forgiveness To Support Workforce Attraction and Retention. (Sen. Libby, D-Androscoggin) *Joint Standing Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Commerce.*

- 1 Requires a General Fund bond obligation in the amount of \$250,000,000 for a program administered by the Finance Authority of Maine to provide funds for payment of student loan debt for individuals who agree to live and work in Maine for 5 years and to reimburse employers that make student loan debt payments on behalf of their employees who agree to live and work in Maine for 5 years; and,
- 2 Establishes the Maine Student Loan Debt Relief Program and the Maine Student Loan Debt Relief Fund and requires the Finance Authority of Maine to adopt major substantive rules to implement the program and submit the rules to the Second Regular Session of the 129th Legislature.

LD 210, An Act To Increase Technology and Engineering Education for Grades 7 to 12. (Rep. Ordway, R-Standish) *Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs.* This bill is a concept draft pursuant to Joint Rule 208. This bill proposes to enact measures to enhance technology and engineering education for students in grades 7 to 12. The measures include, but are not limited to:

- 1 Changing the industrial arts/technology teacher endorsement to a technology and engineering endorsement and amending the endorsement requirements. The amended endorsement requirements would grandfather all current teachers

who hold an industrial arts/technology endorsement and make them technology and engineering teachers. The amended endorsement requirements would also allow a college graduate with an engineering degree to obtain a technology and engineering endorsement; and,

- 2 Creating 3 categories of science endorsements: life science, physical science and technology and engineering.

LD 240, An Act To Allow Public Employers of Teachers to Negotiate Regarding Educational Policies. (Rep. Sylvester, D-Portland) *Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing.* This bill allows, but does not require, public employers of teachers to negotiate with respect to educational policies.

LD 259, An Act To Require the State To Meet the Mandatory 55 Percent Contribution to Schools. (Sen. Miramont, D-Knox) *Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs.* This bill increases the target for the state share percentage of the statewide adjusted total cost of the components of essential programs and services to 55%, as required by law, beginning in fiscal year 2019-20 and continuing at that rate annually.

LD 307, An Act To Limit the Number of Charter Schools in Maine. (Rep. Brennan, D-Portland) *Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs.* Under current law, the number of public charter schools approved by the Maine Charter School Commission that may operate at any time is capped at 10 until July 1, 2022. This bill makes that cap permanent.

LD 318, An Act To Prepare All Students for Work and Life by Requiring That Students Receive Instruction in Vocational Preparation and Practical Life Skills. (Rep. Keschl, R-Belgrade) *Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs.* This bill changes the requirement in the system of learning results from “career and education development” to “vocational preparation and practical life skills.” The bill defines “vocational preparation and practical life skills” to mean experiential instruction of students, regardless of career choice or pathway, that develops their understanding of interests, aptitudes and options related to work and study; develops core workplace skills in areas such as planning, communication, problem solving, teamwork and computer applications; and includes practical workplace and home economics experiences that maximize learning through hands-on application.

LD 345, An Act To Help New Teachers Succeed. (Rep. McCrea, D-Fort Fairfield) *Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs.* This bill requires a probationary teacher to be evaluated during each year of employment as a probationary teacher and provides that if a 3rd-year probationary

Public Hearings... (Continued from Page 6...)

Thursday, February 14, 2019

Education and Cultural Affairs

1:00 p.m.; Cross Building, Room 208
LD 236, An Act Regarding the Use of Unanticipated State Aid for Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education (Rep. Stearns of Guilford)

LD 283, Resolve, Regarding Legislative Review of Portions of Chapter 132: Learning Results: Parameters for Essential Instruction, a Major Substantive Rule of the Department of Education (EMERGENCY)

Energy Utilities and Technology

1:00 p.m.; Cross Building, Room 211
LD 224, An Act To Fund the Municipal Gigabit Broadband Network Access Fund (Rep. Higgins of Dover-Foxcroft)
LD 398, An Act To Allow for Greater Flexibility in Addressing Energy Efficiency Needs in the State (Rep. Kessler of South Portland) □

teacher does not receive a summative effectiveness rating indicating ineffectiveness during the first or 2nd year of the probationary teacher’s contract, the probationary teacher’s contract must be extended automatically. This bill also requires special procedures for probationary teachers in a school administrative unit’s performance evaluation and professional growth system.

LD 358, An Act To Fully Fund Career and Technical Education for Fiscal Year 2018-19. (Sen. Woodsome, R-York) *Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs.* This bill provides \$1,000,000 in fiscal year 2018-19 to the General Purpose Aid for Local Schools program within the Department of Education in order to fully fund the cost of career and technical education pursuant to current law. This bill also amends Public Law 2017, chapter 446 to reflect the additional funding.

LD 359, An Act To Address Student Hunger with a “Breakfast after the Bell” Program. (Sen. Moore, R-Washington) *Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs.* This bill requires a school administrative unit with a public school in which at least 50% of students qualified for a free or reduced-price lunch during the preceding school year to operate an alternative breakfast delivery ser-

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New Legislation... (Continued from Page 7...)

vice that provides breakfast after the start of the school day for students at that public school. It also provides a process for a school administrative unit to opt out of the alternative breakfast delivery service. This bill requires the Department of Education to adopt rules to develop an application process and to adopt standards to address evaluation criteria based on need for funding assistance for alternative breakfast delivery services in school administrative units. It also requires the department to develop a means to track health and academic outcomes of students and schools that participate in alternative breakfast delivery services.

LD 385, An Act To Base School Funding on the Number of Students Sent by a Town to a Regional School Unit. (Rep. Ackley, D-Monmouth) *Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs.* This bill amends the method by which the share of the total cost of education from kindergarten to grade 12 is calculated for a municipality that is within a regional school unit. Current law establishes that share as the lesser of the municipality's total cost of education as determined under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A, section 15688, subsection 1 and an amount equal to the product of the education mill rate for the municipality multiplied by the total valuation of property in the municipality. This bill instead determines the share of the total cost of education from kindergarten to grade 12 of a municipality within a regional school unit based upon the product of the statewide per-pupil rate calculated under Title 20-A, section 15671-A, subsection 2-A and the number of pupils in the municipality who reside in the municipality and who are educated at public expense. The bill phases in this method of determining a municipality's share of the total cost of education from kindergarten to grade 12 over 3 years: in fiscal year 2020-21, the total cost is 2/3 of the amount determined based on property values and 1/3 of the amount determined based on number of pupils; in fiscal year 2021-22, the total cost is 1/3 of the amount determined based on property values and 2/3 of the amount determined based on number of pupils; and, in fiscal year 2022-23 and subsequent years, the total cost is determined based entirely on number of pupils.

LD 405, An Act To Increase the Statewide Minimum Salary for Teachers. (Rep. Kornfield, D-Bangor) *Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs.* This bill increases the minimum salary for certified teachers, beginning with the 2020-2021 school year. This bill also requires the Commissioner of Education to increase the

state share of the total allocation to a qualifying school administrative unit to achieve the minimum salary for certified teachers.

LD 406, An Act To Establish Regional School Leadership Academies. (Rep. Kornfield, D-Bangor) *Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs.* This bill allows school administrative units to enter into collaborative agreements to establish regional school leadership academies that combine state and local programs and resources, including the preparation, licensure, certification, professional development and training for educational leadership, into a coherent system that can significantly improve the recruitment and preparation of prospective candidates for school principalship and other school leadership positions, as well as the induction, mentoring and retention of principals and school leaders during the first 2 years of employment in their school leadership positions. The bill repeals provisions in current law regarding regional school leadership academies.

LD 412, An Act To Restore System Administration Allocations in Maine School Administrative Units to the Level Prescribed for Fiscal Year 2017-18. (Rep. McCrea, D-Fort Fairfield) *Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs.* Current law requires that, beginning in fiscal year 2018-19, a portion of the system administration allocation must be allocated to school administrative units that have established regionalized administrative services. This bill instead establishes the system administration allocation at \$135 per pupil, the same as it was for fiscal year 2017-18, and repeals provisions that increase for future fiscal years the per-pupil amount and restrict allocation of portions of the funds to school administrative units that have established regionalized administrative services.

LD 419, An Act To Require a Minimum Salary of \$50,000 for Public School Teachers. (Rep. Collings, D-Portland) *Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs.* This bill requires that the minimum salary of certified teachers in public schools be established at \$50,000 for the school year starting after June 30, 2020.

LD 427, An Act To Require the State To Fund Teacher Retirement. (Rep. Brennan, D-Portland) *Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs.* This bill changes the method for funding teacher retirement costs. It repeals those provisions of law enacted pursuant to Public Law 2013, chapter 368 that require school administrative units and private schools to pay a portion of the costs for teacher retirement.

LD 438, An Act To Allow the Creation of New Innovative School Models by Removing the Cap on the Number of Authorized Charter Schools. (Sen. Pouliot, R-Kennebec) *Joint Standing Committee on Education and*

Cultural Affairs. This bill removes the cap on the number of charter schools the Maine Charter School Commission may authorize.

LD 461, An Act To Improve the Affordability of Higher Education. (Rep. Daughtry, D-Brunswick) *Joint Standing Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Commerce.* This bill provides additional funding to the Maine State Grant Program in the 2020-2021 biennium. It requires the Finance Authority of Maine to expand the Maine State Grant Program to enable more low-income residents of the State to attend an institution of higher education within the State. It also requires the Finance Authority of Maine and the Department of Health and Human Services to jointly examine ways to maximize the delivery of federally funded support services to postsecondary students, including, but not limited to, the federal supplemental nutrition assistance program.

LD 468, An Act To Require That the State Fund on an Ongoing Basis a Minimum of 50 Percent of the Costs Associated with Public Preschool Programs. (Rep. Farnsworth, D-Portland) *Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs.* This bill requires the State to fund a minimum of 50% of the costs of eligible public preschool programs for each year the school administrative unit operates the eligible public preschool program, other than the year in which the school administrative unit receives start-up funds.

LD 484, Resolve, To Establish a Maine State High School Diploma. (Sen. Pouliot, R-Kennebec) *Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs.* This resolve directs the Department of Education, in consultation with the State Board of Education, to develop a Maine state high school diploma and report to the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs on its findings and recommendations no later than January 15, 2020.

LD 502, An Act To Establish the Summer Success Program Fund. (Rep. Pierce, D-Falmouth) *Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs.* This bill establishes the Summer Success Program Fund, a dedicated fund to be directed and administered by the Commissioner of Education and held by the Treasurer of State, to encourage the facilitation of high-quality summer success programs in school administrative units throughout the State. The bill accomplishes the following:

- 1 It provides that money paid into the fund may include General Fund appropriations, as well as grants, gifts and other money from any unit of federal, state or local government or from any person, firm, partnership or corporation for deposit to the fund, money received from a social impact bond and interest, divi-

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New Legislation... (Continued from Page 8...)

dends and other pecuniary gains. It requires that school administrative units ensure that grants provided from the fund for expanding access to summer success programs supplement and not supplant federal funding.

2. It requires the commissioner to administer the fund within the Department of Education and to establish standards and approval for the allocation and use of fund money for summer success programs offered at elementary and secondary schools in the State. It also allows the commissioner to include the following in the standards: A. Guidelines similar to the federal 21st Century Community Learning Centers program to close the achievement gap between high-performing and low-performing students; B. Effective models of summer success programs that involve networking and partnerships with community-based organizations that provide a range of high-quality services to support student learning and development; and C. Implementation of the formative and summative assessment methods to measure student achievement in order to monitor the progress of students participating in summer success programs.
3. It provides that, beginning in fiscal year 2020-21, the department is required to provide grant funding, through a grant application process, to cover 90% of the costs of summer success programs in school administrative units with greater than 50% student participation in the federal free and reduced-price lunch program.
4. It adds the fund to the enhancing student performance and opportunity provisions of the Essential Programs and Services Funding Act. 5. It requires the commissioner to submit a report to the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs by December 15, 2019 that outlines the proposed rules to implement the fund by the 2020-2021 school year.

LD 504, An Act To Enhance the Development of Innovative Career and Technical Education Programs. (Rep. Higgins, R-Dover-Foxcroft) *Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs.* This bill streamlines the procedure for authorizing career and technical education satellite programs. Current law requires any affiliated unit that wishes to operate a career and technical education satellite program to submit a written request to operate a satellite program to the governing body of the center or region with which the unit is affiliated. The governing body of the center or region

considers the request and then forwards its recommendation to the Commissioner of Education. Instead, the bill provides that the written request be submitted directly to the Commissioner of Education for approval.

LD 509, An Act To Increase the Minimum Grant Amount under the Maine State Grant Program. (Rep. Pierce, D-Falmouth) *Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs.* This bill provides that the minimum grant amount under the Maine State Grant Program may not be less than \$2,500 if sufficient funds are appropriated for this purpose, subject to the current grant amount modifications under the program.

LD 512, Resolve, To Create the Task Force To Study and Plan for the Implementation of Maine's Early Childhood Special Education Services. Emergency (Rep. Farnsworth, D-Portland) *Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs.* This resolve establishes the Task Force To Study and Plan for the Implementation of Maine's Early Childhood Special Education Services to examine the national trends and relevant models of governing and delivering early childhood special education systems and the short-term and long-term costs and benefits to the Department of Education's proposed plan to restructure the Child Development Services System and to make recommendations for an early childhood special education services program plan.

LD 513, An Act To Limit the Number of Students and Prevent the Addition of Grade Levels at Virtual Public Charter Schools. (Rep. Brennan, D-Portland) *Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs.* This bill limits total enrollment at all virtual public charter schools authorized by the commission to the total enrollment at the end of the 2018-2019 school year. It also prohibits a virtual public charter school authorized by the commission from expanding to serve a grade level not included in the school's initial charter contract or, for a school whose charter was renewed prior to November 1, 2019, the renewed charter contract.

LD 549, An Act To Promote Academic Achievement through Hunger Relief for Maine Children. (Sen. Breen, D-Cumberland) *Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs.* This bill directs the State to fund the difference between the federal reimbursements for reduced-price and free lunches in order to provide all children from families with incomes under 185% of the federal poverty level free lunch at school.

ENVIRONMENTAL

LD 327, An Act To Revise Maine's Environmental Laws. (Rep. Tucker, D-Brunswick) *Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources.* This bill

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New Legislation... (Continued from Page 9...)

is a concept draft pursuant to Joint Rule 208. This bill proposes to revise laws governing environmental protection.

LD 401, An Act To Preserve State Landfill Capacity and Promote Recycling. (Rep. Tipping, D-Orono) *Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources.* This bill proposes to enact measures to ensure accurate tracking of the origin and type of waste materials disposed of in Maine, to discourage landfilling of recyclable materials, to preserve landfill capacity at state-owned facilities for Maine-generated materials, and to ensure the rights of host communities and abutters of waste disposal facilities. In order to achieve these goals, the bill proposes to:

- 1 Ensure there is accurate tracking and record keeping identifying the origin, amounts and types of materials disposed in waste facilities in the State;
- 2 Ensure waste is effectively tracked from generation point through processing to final disposal point, including the following types of facilities and disposal sites where tracking is required: landfills; landfill leachate discharge sites; incinerator ash and slag disposal sites; and

- 3 Ensure that waste materials imported from outside the State that are processed at facilities in the State are not classified as Maine-generated waste;
- 4 Ensure that waste materials that end up in a landfill, such as construction and demolition debris, which are used for daily cover in a landfill, are not counted toward the State's recycling goals;
- 5 Ensure adequate legal standing and strengthen protections for the health and well-being of people living in close proximity to waste disposal facilities;
- 6 Strengthen conflict-of-interest protections in awarding and management and oversight of state waste contracts to prevent price fixing and market manipulation; and,
- 7 Direct the Department of Environmental Protection to amend rule Chapter 400, Maine Solid Waste Management Rules to:
 - A Amend the definition of "bypass" to limit the waste that is considered bypass to solid waste that cannot be disposed of, processed or beneficially used at that facility because of malfunction, insufficient capacity, downtime or inability of the facility to process or burn;
 - B Amend the definition of "recycle" and "recycling" to add a provision that any material left at a landfill is not considered recycled; and,
 - C Define "Maine-generated waste" as solid waste that is discarded for the first time within the physical confines of the State.

LD 413, An Act To Ensure the Rights of Citizens to Groundwater in the State. (Rep. Riseman, I-Harrison) *Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources.* This bill proposes to change the laws governing groundwater to recognize that the citizens of the State collectively own the State's groundwater. The bill establishes the State as the trustee and steward of the State's groundwater on behalf of the citizens of the State and requires the State to endeavor to ensure that the groundwater will always be available to the benefit of all the citizens of the State. It also directs the State to take all reasonable measures to ensure an adequate supply of usable groundwater for the citizens of the State and to monitor the level of sustainability of the groundwater and protect against uses of groundwater that are detrimental to aquifers, bodies of surface water or wetlands or to public health and welfare.

LD 434, An Act To Price Carbon Pollution in Maine. (Rep. Rykerson, D-Kittery) *Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology.* This bill requires an assessment on the carbon content of fuels sold by a distributor in the State. The bill defines "distributor" and

requires a distributor to submit on a monthly basis the required assessment to the Public Utilities Commission. The commission is required to transfer any assessment it receives to the Carbon Content Assessment Fund, which the bill establishes. The bill requires the commission at the end of each fiscal year to transfer funds from the fund to transmission and distribution utilities in the State. The funds are to be used to reduce the rates of those utilities' customers in a manner that is equitable and that provides maximum benefit to the economy of the State. The bill gives the commission the authority to review the books and records of a distributor and to impose an administrative penalty if necessary. It requires the commission to adopt routine technical rules.

LD 505, An Act To Require the Use of Reusable Food Ware at Eating Establishments. (Rep. Rykerson, D-Kittery) *Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources.* This bill requires that a prepared food vendor may sell or provide prepared food to a customer for consumption on the vendor's premises only if the prepared food is served to the customer using reusable food ware. The bill also requires that a prepared food vendor may sell or provide prepared food to a customer for consumption off the vendor's premises using single-use disposable food ware only if the prepared food is served to the customer using single-use disposable food ware approved by the Department of Environmental Protection as recyclable or compostable.

The bill also requires that a prepared food vendor selling take-out food to a customer for consumption off the vendor's premises must require payment by the customer of a fee, retained by the prepared food vendor, of 25¢ for certain items of single-use disposable food ware in which the customer's take-out food is served or for each take-out meal served to the customer, whichever is less. The provisions of this bill also apply to a prepared food vendor or other food server providing or serving prepared food to customers at a state facility or state function. This legislation takes effect January 1, 2021.

LABOR

LD 201, An Act To Protect Jobs in the State by Requiring Advance Notice of Closure of Call Centers. (Rep. Michelle Dunphy, D-Old Town) *Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing.* This bill requires a person that operates a call center in the State to provide the Commissioner of Labor 120 days' notice before relocating the call center or a part of the call center. If the employer fails to notify the Commissioner of Labor of the relocation of the call center at least 120 days before the relocation, a daily fine of \$10,000 may be assessed.

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Legislative Week Ahead

Check it out at
www.mainechamber.org/legweekahead.php

A snapshot of the biggest legislative issues of the week, the Legislative Week Ahead, provides a weekly video forecast of the biggest issues facing lawmakers in Augusta during the upcoming week. The Maine State Chamber's Advocacy team breaks down the issues and what each means to your business. New episodes are posted each Monday during the legislative session.

View the Legislative Week Ahead by visiting www.mainechamber.org/legweekahead.php, or see past Legislative Week Ahead videos by visiting www.mainechamber.org/legweekaheadarchive.php. □

New Legislation...

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The bill requires the Commissioner of Labor to create a list of employers who have relocated a call center, or a facility or operating unit handling at least 30% of call volume within a call center, from the State to a foreign country. An employer appearing on the list is ineligible for a state grant, loan or tax benefit for 5 years and is required to pay back the unamortized value of a state grant, loan or tax benefit previously issued to the employer. The bill requires that call center work for executive branch agencies of the State be performed in the State.

LD 403, An Act To Restore Overtime Protections for Maine Workers. (Rep. Tipping, D-Orono) *Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing*. This bill annually raises the minimum salary that an employee who works in an executive, administrative or professional capacity must earn in order for that employee to be exempt from the laws governing the minimum wage and overtime pay until it is \$55,224 on January 1, 2022. The bill provides for an annual adjustment, beginning January 1, 2023, based on the percentage annual increase in certain earnings as published by the United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

LD 480, An Act To Ensure Pay Transparency and To Reduce Gender and Racial Wage Inequities. (Sen. Miramant, D-Knox) *Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing*. This bill requires certain employers, including, but not limited to, state agencies, to annually submit wage data reports regarding employee gender, race and ethnicity to the Maine Human Rights Commission.

LD 507, An Act To Amend the Laws Governing Employer Recovery of Overcompensation Paid to an Employee. (Rep. Doore, D-Augusta) *Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing*. This bill amends the definition of “overcompensation” by an employer to include compensation in the form of paid leave. It changes the maximum amount an employer can withhold from an employee’s pay to recover overcompensation from 10% to 5%. It prohibits an employer from recovering more than the amount of overcompensation paid to an employee in the 3 years preceding the discovery of the overcompensation. The bill also specifies that the section of law regarding overcompensation by employers that includes these provisions does not limit or affect an employee’s general civil remedies against an employer.

MINIMUM WAGE

LD 410, An Act To Eliminate the Subminimum Wage for Workers with Disabilities and Agricultural and Tipped Workers. (Rep. Brooks, D-Lewiston) *Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing*. This bill makes changes to a law passed in a session that reinstated the “tip credit” used by restaurants in Maine. It would eliminate current exemptions from the minimum wage law that allow the payment of wages at less than the minimum wage rate to individuals employed in certain agricultural jobs, to individuals employed in service jobs in which tipping is customary and to certain individuals with disabilities, effective October 1, 2019.

LD 425, An Act To Strengthen Small Businesses in Rural Maine by Changing the Minimum Wage. (Rep. White, R-Washburn) *Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing*. This bill sets the minimum wage at \$10.00 per hour and removes the provision that requires the minimum wage to be increased annually by the increase, if any, in the cost of living.

TAXATION

LD 403, An Act to Prevent Tax Haven Abuse. (Rep. Ryan Tipping, D-Orono) *Joint Standing Committee on Taxation*. The bill would require that corporations that file unitary tax returns in Maine to include income from other certain jurisdictions outside the US in net income when apportioning among tax jurisdictions.

LD 444, An Act to Restore Revenue Sharing. (Sen. Bellows, D-Kennebec) *Joint Standing Committee on Taxation*. The bill would restore state municipal revenue sharing to 5% from 2%, 3 months earlier than currently provided in law.

UTILITIES AND ENERGY

LD 334, An Act To Change the Definition of “Renewable Capacity Resource”. (Rep. Babine, D-Scarborough) *Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology*. This bill aligns the definition of “renewable capacity resource” with that of “renewable resource” in the laws governing renewable energy by adding generators fueled by municipal solid waste in conjunction with recycling to the definition of “renewable capacity resource.”

LD 347, An Act To Provide Sustainable Funding for Drinking Water and Wastewater Infrastructure. (Rep. DeChant, D-Bath) *Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology*. This bill proposes to provide ongoing funding for improvements to water and wastewater infrastructure statewide, including, but not limited to, funding to support the State Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Fund established in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 30-A, section 6006-H.

LD 354, An Act To Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue To Encourage the Provision of Reliable High-speed Internet in Rural Underserved Areas of Maine. (Sen. Herbig, D-Waldo) *Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology*. The funds provided by this bond issue, in the amount of \$20,000,000, will be used for encouraging the provision of reliable high-speed Internet in rural underserved areas of Maine.

LD 372, An Act To Increase the Safety of Municipal Residents by Allowing Municipalities To Address Downed Wires in Extended Power Outages. (Rep. McCreight, D-Harpswell) *Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources*. This bill allows a municipality, in the event of a power outage of 5 or more days, to hire appropriately licensed professionals to address power, telephone and similar lines that have been felled by weather events and that are preventing access to roadways within the municipality. It allows a municipality to apply to receive compensation from the local electric utility, the Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management Agency, the United States Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency or another funding source.

LD 375, An Act To Promote the Forest Products Industry in School Construction and Renovation Involving Heating Systems. (Rep. Stewart, D-Presque Isle) *Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology*. This bill requires consideration of modern wood heating systems, with wood biomass fuels sourced locally and in a manner that benefits the State’s economy, in the construction of new or substantially renovated schools or school buildings subject to State Board of Education approval.

LD 383, Resolve, Regarding Legislative Review of Portions of Chapter 101: ConnectME Authority, a Major Substantive Rule of the ConnectME Authority. (Rep. Berry, D-Bowdoinham) *Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology*. This resolve provides for legislative review of portions of Chapter 101: ConnectME Authority, a major substantive rule of the ConnectME Authority.

LD 398, An Act To Allow for Greater Flexibility in Addressing Energy Efficiency Needs in the State. (Rep. Kessler, D-South Portland) *Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology*. This bill removes the provision that requires the Efficiency Maine Trust to allocate 50% of the funds in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative Trust Fund for residential programs and 50% for commercial and industrial programs. □

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The Maine State Chamber of Commerce is hosting its annual **Business Day at the Statehouse** on **Thursday, March 14, 2019**, from **8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.** in the **Hall of Flags** (Statehouse, Second Floor). *The snow date for this event is Thursday, May 2.*

For more information or to RSVP, please contact Linda Caprara, director of grassroots advocacy, by calling (207) 623-4568, ext. 106, or by emailing lcaprara@mainechamber.org. With your participation, the "Voice of Maine Business" will resonate throughout Augusta!