



Summary of the 131st Legislature Second Regular Session

Laws passed as Emergency Measures became effective upon signature by the Governor.

All other laws go into effect August 8, 2024.

Laws that Passed

APPROPRIATIONS AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

LD 419 An Act to Ensure Polling Place Security
Resolve Chapter 73

Directs the Department of the Secretary of State to convene a working group to study the use of school buildings as polling places, to consider options to protect the security of school students and staff and election staff and voters and to consider polling place accessibility. The working group is required to submit a report to the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs by January 1, 2024. The committee may report out legislation based on the report to the Second Regular Session of the 131st Legislature.

[LD 912](#) An Act To Authorize A General Fund Bond Issue To Restore Historic
Community Buildings
Public Law Chapter 653

The funds provided by this bond issue, in the amount of \$10,000,000, will be used to restore historic community buildings, with funds being issued contingent on a 25% local match requirement from either private or nonprofit sources, the process to be administered by the Director of the Maine Historic Preservation Commission.

LD 1156 An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Promote the Design,
Development and Maintenance of Trails for Outdoor Recreation and Active
Transportation
Public Law Chapter 652

The funds provided by this bond issue, in the amount of \$30,000,000, will be used to provide funds to the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Bureau of Parks and Lands for the design, development and maintenance of nonmotorized, motorized and multi-use trails statewide.

Other qualified subdivisions of State Government eligible for funding under the bond issue include executive branch departments and agencies; changes the percentage of funds that must be expended in support of nonmotorized trails from 30% to 25% and the percentage of funds that must be expended in support of motorized trails from 20% to 25%; changes the matching contributions requirement from 20% to 10%; and specifies that bond proceeds may not be used to dismantle state-owned tracks and ties for nonrail use except as provided for under the State Railroad Preservation and Assistance Act.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY

[LD 2053](#) An Act To Exempt Buildings Used To Cultivate Crops From The Maine Uniform
Building And Energy Code
[Public Law Chapter 527](#)

This bill exempts buildings used to cultivate crops from the Maine Uniform Building and Energy Code, except that it does not exempt buildings used to cultivate cannabis.

EDUCATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS

[LD 2179](#) Resolve, Regarding Legislative Review Of Portions Of Chapter 64: Maine School Facilities Program And School Revolving Renovation Fund, A Major Substantive Rule Of The Department Of Education And The Maine Municipal Bond Bank (Emergency)
Resolve Chapter 144

This resolve authorizes amendments to Chapter 64: Maine School Facilities Program and School Revolving Renovation Fund, a major substantive rule of the Department of Education and the Maine Municipal Bond Bank:

1. That the maximum total loans from the fund for repair, renovation, and improvement projects for Priority One, Priority Two, Priority Three, Priority Four and Priority Five be increased from \$4,000,000 to \$8,000,000, and
2. That the maximum loan amount from the fund to address each priority level in a school building be increased from \$1,000,000 to \$2,000,000 within any 5-year period.

[LD 2181](#) Resolve, Regarding Legislative Review Of Portions Of Chapter 61: State Board Of Education Rules For Major Capital School Construction Projects, A Major Substantive Rule Of The Department Of Education, State Board Of Education (Emergency)
Resolve Chapter 141

This resolve authorizes amendments to Chapter 61: State Board of Education Rules for Major Capital School Construction Projects, a major substantive rule of the Department of Education, State Board of Education:

- The definition of Emergency Project has been updated to provide greater clarity in the determination of project approval.
- Guidance for the Major Capital School Construction Project Application Form section has been updated to include integrated, consolidated 9-16 educational facilities.
- The school construction eligibility section has been updated to remove specifically identified school years from the graduation rate criteria.
- The movable equipment cost has been updated, using a phased approach, to 4% instead of the identified 9% listed in the rule. This reflects State Board practice and takes into account the increasing cost of major capital school construction projects. The Board reserves the right to review the percentage for potential increases on a case-by-case basis.
- Project management authority and contracted representatives have been updated in the Final Funding Approval section as a result of State Board practice.
- The Bureau of General Services has been removed from most of the language in the rule as they no longer provide those services to school projects.

ENERGY, UTILITIES AND TECHNOLOGY

[LD 589](#) An Act To Ensure That The Maine Electric Grid Provides Additional Benefits To
Maine Ratepayers
[Public Law Chapter 553](#)

This law does the following:

1. The Public Utilities Commission shall conduct a review or contract with a consultant to conduct a review of available grid-enhancing technology that may be implemented by large investor-owned transmission and distribution utilities to reduce or defer the need for investment in grid infrastructure in the State. The commission may produce a report or contract with a consultant to produce a report. The report may be used by the commission in rate cases or other proceedings involving a large investor-owned transmission and distribution utility, including the integrated grid planning proceeding.

2. Defines "beneficial load" for the purposes of the Beneficial Electrification Policy Act.

3. Requires the Efficiency Maine Trust, as a part of its development of a 3-year beneficial electrification plan for end uses of energy, to consider incentivizing the appropriate placement of and promoting commercial or industrial beneficial load and integrate the ongoing energy planning efforts of the Governor's Energy Office as appropriate.

4. It requires the Efficiency Maine Trust to provide, by February 1, 2025, a written update on its beneficial electrification planning as well as any recommendations to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over energy matters.

[LD 1606](#) Resolve, To Study Opportunities And Provide Guidance For School Clean Energy
And Energy Efficiency Programs
[Resolve Chapter 150](#)

This Resolve does the following:

1. The Department of Education's office of innovation shall conduct a study and develop guidance, in coordination with the Office of Policy Innovation and the Future, the Governor's Energy Office and the Efficiency Maine Trust, to assist public elementary and secondary schools in the State with achieving energy efficiency and maximizing the use of clean energy. The guidance must address how the programs and contracting options reviewed as a part of the study may be effectively accessed and used by public elementary and secondary schools in the State and incorporate the best practices and standards. No later than January 31, 2025, the Department of Education's office of innovation must provide a report of its activities, as well as guidance for public elementary and secondary schools in the State for achieving energy efficiency, to the joint standing committees of the Legislature having jurisdiction over energy matters and education matters. The joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over energy matters may report out a bill related to the report to the 132nd Legislature in 2025.

2. The Department of Education, in consultation with the Office of Policy Innovation and the Future, the Governor's Energy Office, the Efficiency Maine Trust, relevant state agencies and representatives from school leadership, including superintendents, business officers and facilities managers, shall develop contracting guidance for public elementary and secondary schools to assist the schools with saving money through energy efficiency, clean energy and clean transportation projects. No later than January 31, 2025, the Department of Education must provide a report, including draft guidance, to the joint standing committees of the Legislature having jurisdiction over energy matters and education matters. The joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over education matters may report out a bill related to the report to the 132nd Legislature in 2025.

[LD 1775](#) An Act To Establish A Clean Hydrogen Pilot Program
[Public Law Chapter 554](#)

This law requires the Public Utilities Commission, in collaboration with the Governor's Energy Office and the Department of Environmental Protection, to develop and oversee a pilot program designed to select a proposal for the development and operation of a clean hydrogen facility. To be selected for participation in the program, the facility must be located in the State, meet requirements for a 100% clean hydrogen production tax credit under the federal Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 and IRS production tax credit regulations, have a peak electricity demand of no more than 20 megawatts and meet other requirements. After selecting one facility for participation in the program, the commission is required to direct the transmission and distribution utility in whose territory the facility is located to negotiate with that facility for a special contract that may be approved by the commission. A facility selected for the program must meet specified wage requirements and meet clean hydrogen production volumes identified in the proposal it submits for participation in the program.

[LD 1963](#) An Act Regarding The Future Of Renewable Energy Transmission In Northern
Maine
Public Law Chapter 660

This law

1. Provides that a transmission line or lines developed under the Northern Maine Renewable Energy Development Program pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 35-A, section 3210-I, subsection 2 and proposed within the unorganized or deorganized areas of the State is reviewed and permits are issued by the Department of Environmental Protection.

2. Provides that the Public Utilities Commission must give preference to proposals for the development and operation of a transmission line or lines or renewable generation projects under Title 35-A, section 3210-I, that maximize federal tax credits by including agreements described in 29 United States Code, Section 158(f).

3. In administering the program established by Title 35-A, section 3210-I, it directs the commission, in collaboration with the Governor's Energy Office, to seek to partner with other states, governmental entities or utilities within New England.

4. It provides that the Public Utilities Commission's request for proposals under Title 35-A, section 3210-I, subsection 2 must be for the development and construction of a transmission line or lines necessary to connect no more than 2,000 megawatts of renewable energy resources located in northern Maine, instead of for the development and construction of a 345-kilovolt double circuit generation connection line, or, in the commission's discretion, a transmission line or lines of greater capacity.

5. It allows the Public Utilities Commission to consider, under Title 35-A, section 3210-I, proposals for the development and construction of a transmission line or lines and renewable energy generation projects that include mechanisms to mitigate and allocate risks associated with development and operation of those projects.

6. It provides that, in any proceeding for a certificate of public convenience and necessity related to a transmission line or lines selected under Title 35-A, section 3210-I, subsection 2, the commission shall primarily consider economics, reliability, public health and safety and any other factors that demonstrate the viability of such transmission line as determined by the commission. In determining a public need and taking into account the scenic, historic, recreational and environmental impacts and alternative routes for a proposed transmission line

or lines, the commission may rely upon any Department of Environmental Protection findings for any related application for a department license or permit for such transmission line or lines.

7. It provides that the bidder that submits a proposal selected by the Public Utilities Commission for the development and construction of a transmission line or lines, upon the issuance by the commission of a certificate of public convenience and necessity, is considered a transmission and distribution utility, except that the commission may limit the rights of the utility to the extent necessary to protect ratepayers from financial risks.

8. It updates dates and terminology within Title 35-A, section 3210-I.

9. It provides that a term sheet awarded by the Public Utilities Commission to a bidder for the development and construction of a transmission line or lines and renewable energy generation projects under the program established by Title 35-A, section 3210-I, must be considered sufficient title, right or interest for a permitting agency to accept and begin processing the application for the project. It also requires the commission, in an order awarding a term sheet to a bidder selected for the development of a transmission line or lines, to provide an explanation of the commission's considerations and findings regarding the costs and benefits associated with the development and construction of the transmission line or lines.

10. It requires the Public Utilities Commission and the Department of Environmental Protection to ensure coordinated public notification and opportunities for public participation, including explanation of all public participation procedures, in connection with regulatory approvals and permitting under Title 35-A and Title 38 for a transmission line or lines and renewable energy generation projects under the Northern Maine Renewable Energy Development Program.

11. It provides that a judicial appeal of final action by the Board of Environmental Protection or the Commissioner of Environmental Protection regarding an application for a transmission line or lines developed pursuant to Title 35-A, section 3210-I, subsection 2, must be taken to the Supreme Judicial Court sitting as the Law Court.

12. It requires the Board of Environmental Protection or the Department of Environmental Protection, as applicable, to hold a hearing in accordance with Title 38, section 486-A, and prohibits the issuance of an order without a hearing in connection with an application for the development and construction of a transmission line or lines.

13. It requires the Department of Environmental Protection to require an applicant for a permit under the site location of development laws for the development and construction of a transmission line or lines to demonstrate to the department that the applicant conducted one or more public meetings regarding the transmission line or lines prior to the submission of its application.

[LD 2087](#) An Act To Protect Property Owners By Making Certain Changes To The Laws Governing The Use Of Eminent Domain By Transmission And Distribution Utilities (Emergency)
[Public Law Chapter 644](#)

This law does the following:

1. It defines "service land" and excepts those public lands from the provision of law that considers a high-impact electric transmission line crossing or utilizing public lands a substantial alteration.

2. It prohibits the Public Utilities Commission from approving a transmission and distribution utility's taking of a location for a high-impact electric transmission line by 2 eminent domain if the location is on a lot or parcel of real property that is 200 contiguous acres or less and the transmission and distribution utility seeks to take less than the entire property, unless

the transmission and distribution utility demonstrates that, in its negotiations with the owner of the property for a voluntary acquisition of the location, it made both an offer for the entire property and an offer for just the location.

3. It clarifies the provisions of law that apply to the determination of damages for property taken by eminent domain for the construction, rebuilding or relocation of a high-impact electric transmission line designed to carry voltages of 5,000 volts or more and of necessary appurtenances.

4. If a location approved by the commission for a taking by eminent domain for a high-impact electric transmission line is on a lot or parcel of real property that is 200 contiguous acres or less and the transmission and distribution utility seeks to take less than the entire property, it requires the county commissioners' estimate of damages to include 2 estimates, one for the entire property in fee simple absolute and one for the portion of the property approved for a taking. It provides that the owner of the property has the option to require the transmission and distribution utility to take the entire property and, if the owner elects to require the transmission and distribution utility to take the entire property, the commission must approve the taking of the entire property.

5. It requires the commission to adopt rules regarding notice and educational materials that must be sent by certified mail to an owner of real property whose property may be taken by eminent domain for the construction, rebuilding or relocation of a high-impact electric transmission line, as well as to an owner whose property abuts the proposed high impact electric transmission line, by an entity selected to construct a high-impact electric transmission line pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 35-A, section 3210-I, subsection 2, or a transmission and distribution utility.

6. It establishes the circumstances under which a property owner's fees and expenses associated with seeking an award of damages for property taken by eminent domain must be paid by a transmission and distribution utility.

7. It prohibits the Department of Environmental Protection and the Board of Environmental Protection from issuing an order without a hearing for a development of a high-impact electric transmission line of state or regional significance that may substantially affect the environment. It also requires the department to require an applicant for such development to demonstrate to the department that the applicant conducted one or more public meetings regarding the transmission line prior to the submission of any application to the department.

8. It requires the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Bureau of Parks and Lands to adopt rules pursuant to Title 12, section 598-C to provide, in the case of a high-impact electric transmission line crossing or utilizing a rail trail or recreational corridor or land of similar configuration designated under Title 12, chapter 202-A, criteria for determining that the high-impact transmission line would not cause the land to be reduced or the uses of the land to be substantially altered.

ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

[LD 1471](#) Resolve, Regarding Legislative Review Of Portions Of Chapter 200: Metallic Mineral Exploration, Advanced Exploration And Mining, A Late-filed Major Substantive Rule Of The Department Of Environmental Protection (Emergency)
[Resolve Chapter 169](#)

This Resolve authorizes amendments to Chapter 200: Metallic Mineral Exploration, Advanced Exploration and Mining, a major substantive rule of the Department of Environmental Protection with changes:

1. The rule must be amended, as necessary, in section 36(B), and any other relevant sections to provide that, as part of a preapplication mine waste and ore sampling and testing plan, proposed rock sampling under such plan must:

A. Include a minimum of 4 samples per acre of proposed exclusion area, except that the department may require less than 4 but not less than 2 samples per acre in cases where the department determines that the geology is uniform and not complex, such that requiring less than 4 but not less than 2 samples per acre is appropriate; and

B. Be conducted by a qualified professional;

2. The rule must be amended, as necessary, in section 36(C), and any other relevant sections to provide that, as part of a preapplication water quality evaluation plan, proposed water quality testing on groundwater and surface water samples from a proposed exclusion area must include, but not be limited to, testing for perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances, or PFAS. The rule must also require water quality testing on groundwater and surface water samples from reclaimed portions of an exclusion area, as directed by the department, that includes, but is not limited to, testing of those samples for PFAS;

3. The rule must be amended, as necessary, in section 39 to require, as a condition of the department's approval of an exclusion application, that all lighting fixtures implemented or used by the licensee within the exclusion area must be designed to reduce, to the greatest extent practicable, the glare and light pollution on all adjacent areas through the use of shielding, reflectors, light diffusers and other measures, as specified by the department. The rules must establish requirements for allowable lighting fixtures within the exclusion area that limit each lighting fixture to a light emittance rating of not more than 2,000 lumens and a correlated color temperature of not more than 3,000K;

4. The rule must be amended, as necessary, in section 39 to require, as a condition of the department's approval of an exclusion application, that reclamation within an exclusion area must, to the greatest extent practicable, be designed to result in restoration of natural vegetation and other wildlife and aquatic resources that existed prior to the commencement of mining activities within the exclusion area;

5. The rule must be amended, as necessary, in section 39(D)(4), and any other relevant sections, to provide that the total area within an exclusion area that is actively used for the physical extraction of metallic minerals and not yet reclaimed does not exceed 5 acres.

A. In calculating whether the 5-acre limit is reached, the rule may not include the areas within an exclusion area that are not actively used for the physical extraction of metallic minerals, including, but not limited to, areas where extracted material is stockpiled or stored; areas where extracted material is crushed, ground or physically sorted; areas that include buildings or other structures relating to or supporting mining activities; and access roads, parking lots and related infrastructure.

B. Once the 5-acre limit is reached, the rule must require reclamation in order to expand the area within the exclusion area that is actively used for the physical extraction of metallic minerals such that, at any time, a maximum of 5 acres in total are actively used for the physical extraction of metallic minerals and not yet reclaimed. The rule must provide for the requirements and standards applicable to the reclamation of all areas within the exclusion area, including those areas not actively used for the physical extraction of metallic minerals; and

6. All other necessary changes must be made to the rule to ensure conformity and consistency throughout the rule and to ensure consistency between the rule and the provisions of the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 38, section 490-NN, subsection 4, including any necessary grammatical, formatting, punctuation or other technical, nonsubstantive editing changes.

The Department of Environmental Protection is not required to hold hearings or undertake further proceedings prior to final adoption of the rule in accordance with this section.

[LD 1537](#) An Act To Amend The Laws Relating To The Prevention Of Perfluoroalkyl And Polyfluoroalkyl Substances Pollution
[Public Law Chapter 630](#)

It amends the laws governing products containing perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances, or PFAS, as follows.

1. It amends the manufacturer notification requirement to provide that a manufacturer is only required to submit to the Department of Environmental Protection information regarding a product containing intentionally added PFAS that the manufacturer sells, offers for sale or distributes for sale in this State if the sale of that product is otherwise prohibited and the department has determined by rule that the use of PFAS in the product is a currently unavoidable use. A manufacturer that submits such a notification must at the same time pay to the department a fee established by the department by rule to cover the department's costs in administering the law.

2. Effective January 1, 2026, a person may not sell, offer for sale or distribute for sale in this State any of the following products containing intentionally added PFAS: a cleaning product, a cookware product, a cosmetic product, dental floss, a juvenile product, a menstruation product, a textile article, ski wax or upholstered furniture. This prohibition does not apply to any such product for which the department has determined by rule that the use of PFAS in the product is a currently unavoidable use.

3. Effective January 1, 2029, a person may not sell, offer for sale or distribute for sale in this State any of the following products containing intentionally added PFAS: artificial turf or, except where accompanied by a disclosure regarding PFAS in the product, outdoor apparel for severe wet conditions. This prohibition does not apply to any such product for which the department has determined by rule that the use of PFAS in the product is a currently unavoidable use.

4. Effective January 1, 2032, a person may not sell, offer for sale or distribute for sale in this State any products containing intentionally added PFAS not already prohibited from sale, offer for sale or distribution for sale in this State, excluding cooling, heating, ventilation, air conditioning and refrigeration equipment and certain refrigerants, foams and aerosol propellants. This prohibition does not apply to any such product for which the department has determined by rule that the use of PFAS in the product is a currently unavoidable use.

5. Effective January 1, 2040, a person may not sell, offer for sale or distribute for sale in this State any cooling, heating, ventilation, air conditioning or refrigeration equipment or any refrigerants, foams or aerosol propellants that contain intentionally added PFAS. This prohibition does not apply to any such product for which the department has determined by rule that the use of PFAS in the product is a currently unavoidable use.

6. Exempt products: firefighting foams; federally regulated medical products and federally regulated veterinary medical products; certain public health, environmental and water quality testing products; products required to meet certain federal standards or requirements; motor vehicles and motor vehicle equipment; watercraft and seaplanes; semiconductors; and certain nonconsumer electronics and nonconsumer laboratory equipment.

7. The department may by rule determine that the use of PFAS in a product or product category is a currently unavoidable use. A product or product category for which the department determines the use of PFAS is a currently unavoidable use is exempt from an otherwise applicable sales prohibition for one of the following periods of time, whichever provides a longer period of exemption: 5 years from the effective date of the rule determining that the use of PFAS

in the product or product category is a currently unavoidable use, or 5 years from the effective date of the otherwise applicable sales prohibition.

8. The department, by January 1, 2026, and biennially thereafter, shall submit to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over environment and natural resources matters a report regarding implementation of the law and other state and federal laws governing the presence of PFAS in products, including any recommendations for necessary legislative changes. For this report due January 1, 2026, the department must include findings and recommendations resulting from an evaluation regarding the feasibility of implementing one or more product stewardship programs for certain regulated products containing intentionally added PFAS that are exempted from or otherwise regulated under the law.

9. Proprietary information submitted to the department by a manufacturer pursuant to the requirements of the laws governing products containing PFAS that is identified by the manufacturer as proprietary information is confidential and must be handled by the department in the same manner as confidential information is handled under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 38, section 1310-B.

[LD 2030](#) An Act To Amend The Natural Resources Protection Act To Enhance The State's Ability To Respond To And Prepare For Significant Flood Events And Storm Surge
[Public Law Chapter 531](#)

This law creates exemptions and allowances in the Natural Resources Protection Act for emergency activities, as follows:

1. Allows a NRPA permit by rule for an increase in the height of a pier, wharf or dock located wholly or partially in, on or over a coastal wetland when reconstructed or replaced where the height of the pier, wharf or dock is increased by no more than the amount necessary for the bottom of the lowest horizontal structural component of the deck to be 4 feet above base flood elevation, subject to additional specified limitations.

2. Allows a NRPA permit by rule for the reconstruction or replacement of a pier, wharf or dock in, on or over a coastal sand dune system if the pier, wharf or dock that was in existence on January 1, 2024 and the reconstructed or replaced pier, wharf or dock is built on pilings, posts or similar supports that allow for the free movement of water, wind and sand under the deck, subject to additional specified limitations.

3. Exempts activities to alleviate flood events, as long as materials are later removed from the water resource. A local government conducting or overseeing such activity shall notify and maintain communication with the Department of Environmental Protection.

4. Exempts from NRPA the repair of a pier, wharf or dock located wholly or partially in, on or over a coastal wetland where the height of the pier, wharf or dock is increased by no more than the amount necessary for the bottom of the lowest horizontal structural component of the deck to be 4 feet above base flood elevation, subject to additional specified limitations.

5. Exempts from NRPA the elevation of building foundation located on a pier over a coastal wetland, adjacent to protected resource, or in a coastal sand dune system; as long as certain requirements are met.

[LD 2058](#) An Act Regarding Compliance With Environmental Permit And License Application Requirements
[Public Law Chapter 509](#)

The Department of Environmental Protection may refuse a permit or license application that was submitted after the activity requiring the permit or license has begun, if: the applicant knowingly

violated a requirement to obtain a permit or license for the activity; or the applicant violated within the 5 years immediately preceding the submission of the application, a requirement to obtain a permit or license.

[LD 2059](#) An Act Regarding Processing Of Applications Under The Natural Resources Protection Act To Ensure Consistency With Shoreland Zoning Laws
[Public Law Chapter 497](#)

The Department of Environmental Protection may return as incomplete an application for a permit under the Natural Resources Protection Act if the commissioner finds that there is a reasonable likelihood that the proposed activity would be inconsistent with the minimum guidelines for municipal zoning and land use controls adopted by the Board of Environmental Protection under the laws governing shoreland zoning.

[LD 2168](#) Resolve, Regarding Legislative Review Of Portions Of Chapter 355: Coastal Sand Dune Rules, A Major Substantive Rule Of The Department Of Environmental Protection
Resolve Chapter 130

This resolve authorizes an amendment to Chapter 355: Coastal Sand Dune Rules, a major substantive rule of the Department of Environmental Protection, which updates references to sand dune maps.

[LD 2253](#) An Act To Authorize A Stop-work Order Regarding An Activity That Is Creating An Immediate And Substantial Adverse Impact To A Protected Natural Resource
[Public Law Chapter 623](#)

This law authorizes the Department of Environmental Protection to issue a stop-work order whenever the Commissioner finds that an activity is being performed in a manner that violates state environmental protection laws or rules or the terms or conditions of a license, permit or order issued by the Board of Environmental Protection, or the department and that the activity is creating an immediate and substantial adverse impact to a protected natural resource.

The law provides similar enforcement authority to the Maine Land Use Planning Commission with respect to activities under its jurisdiction that are creating an immediate and substantial adverse impact to a protected natural resource.

[LD 2261](#) An Act Regarding New Motor Vehicle Emissions Rules
[Public Law Chapter 624](#)

Rules governing new motor vehicle emission standards adopted or amended by the Board of Environmental Protection on or after August 1, 2024, including but not limited to, rules to establish zero-emission requirements, are major substantive rules as defined in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

Beginning January 1, 2025, and annually thereafter, the Department of Environmental Protection shall submit a report to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over environment and natural resources matters regarding the status of the regulatory program adopted by the California Air Resources Board for new motor vehicle

emissions, known as the Advanced Clean Cars II program, and the adoption of that program by other states, as well as any updates regarding federal motor vehicle emissions control requirements. After reviewing the report, the committee may report out legislation relating to the report.

For the first such report due January 1, 2025, the amendment requires the Department of Environmental Protection to collaborate with the Department of Transportation, the Governor's Energy Office, the Office of Policy Innovation and the Future and the Efficiency Maine Trust in evaluating relevant barriers to the adoption of zero-emission vehicle standards or requirements in the State. This report must include an analysis of zero-emission vehicle adoption rates in the State relative to national trends and identification of barriers to achieving higher adoption rates, identification of strategies to reduce those barriers with particular consideration given to barriers present in rural communities and an evaluation of policies or market trends for overcoming those barriers.

HOUSING

[LD 772](#) An Act To Limit Retroactive Application Of Land Use Ordinances To Pending Permit Applications That Propose Housing (Priority Bill)
[Public Law Chapter 598](#)

A municipality or municipal reviewing authority may not apply a land use ordinance retroactively with regard to a permit application for a development that includes residential housing if the ordinance was proposed after the permit was submitted and deemed complete for processing.

[LD 1505](#) An Act To Amend The Maine Cooperative Affordable Housing Ownership Act
[Public Law Chapter 513](#)

This bill amends the Maine Cooperative Affordable Housing Ownership Act to include group equity cooperatives. It also provides that a housing assistance program must be made reasonably available to residents of housing cooperatives. This law also clarifies how housing cooperatives and residents of housing cooperatives are considered homeowners, landlords, tenants or renters for the purposes of eligibility for state and municipal housing assistance programs.

[LD 1673](#) Resolve, Establishing A Working Group To Coordinate Collaboration Among State Agencies For The Purpose Of Promoting Smart Growth And Development In High-use Corridors
[Resolve Chapter 156](#)

This Resolve directs the Director of the Office of Policy Innovation and the Future to convene a working group consisting of the Commissioner of Transportation, the Commissioner of Environmental Protection, the Commissioner of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, the Commissioner of Economic and Community Development and the director of the Maine State Housing Authority to design a plan for agency coordination to maximize state resources and promote smart growth in high-use corridors and to propose a plan for technical assistance grants to municipalities. The Director of the Office of Policy Innovation and the Future shall submit, no later than January 15, 2025, a report to the joint standing and joint select committees of the Legislature having jurisdiction over housing matters regarding the working group's

findings and recommendations. A joint standing or joint select committee that receives the report may submit legislation related to the report to the 132nd Legislature in 2025.

[LD 1721](#) Resolve, To Establish A Plan To Provide Transitional Housing And To Support The Growth Of Maine's Workforce
[Resolve Chapter 136](#)

This Resolve directs the Office of Policy Innovation and the Future to propose a plan to provide transitional housing and support services to persons seeking federal work permits and submit a report to the joint standing committee or the joint select committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over housing matters no later than January 15, 2025.

[LD 2169](#) Resolve, Directing The Office Of Policy Innovation And The Future To Recommend Proposals To Support The Development Of Attainable Housing
[Resolve Chapter 162](#)

This Resolve directs the Director of the Office of Policy Innovation and the Future to develop proposals for potential financial assistance programs to support the development of rental housing for persons making 80% to 150% of the area median income and programs to support homeownership by persons making 120% to 180% of the area median income. The office is required to seek input from entities familiar with programs that assist with the development of affordable housing as well as commercial real estate developers, the Maine State Chamber of Commerce and the Maine State Housing Authority.

[LD 2209](#) An Act To Increase The Cap On Bonds Issued By The Maine State Housing Authority To Reflect Current Housing Production Needs In The State
[Public Law Chapter 559](#)

This law increases the cap on mortgage purchase bonds authorized to be issued by the Maine State Housing Authority to \$3,000,000,000.

INNOVATION, DEVELOPMENT, ECONOMIC ADVANCEMENT AND BUSINESS

[LD 2060](#) An Act To Amend Licensing Requirements For Landscape Architects (Emergency)
[Public Law Chapter 548](#)

This law aligns the licensure requirements for applicants for the landscape architect license with those for architects and removes the requirement that an applicant must complete both the education and experience requirements before being qualified to take the required examination. It also authorizes the Maine State Board for Licensure of Architects, Landscape Architects and Interior Designers to specify by rule the required amount of practical experience that an applicant for licensure as a landscape architect must complete before obtaining a license.

STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

[LD 2047](#) An Act To Increase The Expenditure Limit For Informal Bidding Processes And Update References To The Office Of Procurement Services
[Public Law Chapter 516](#)

This law increases the limit for using informal bidding processes for the procurement of goods or services from \$10,000 or less to \$25,000.

[LD 2101](#) An Act To Strengthen Shoreland Zoning Enforcement
[Public Law Chapter 602](#)

This law authorizes, but does not require, the Maine Land Use Planning Commission and municipalities to take certain actions when a violation of a law, ordinance, standard, rule, permit or order occurs on land in a shoreland zone within the jurisdiction of the commission or the municipality. Before taking any of the actions, the commission or municipality must provide the owner and any occupant written notice of the violation and 10 days within which to remove, abate or otherwise correct the violation. The actions that the commission or municipality may take include:

1. Denying the issuance of a permit to or suspending or revoking a permit of the owner or occupant for further development of all or a portion of the land on which the violation occurred until the violation is removed, abated or otherwise corrected and any penalties and court-awarded fees are paid;
2. Filing a civil action against the owner or occupant to recover unpaid penalties, the cost to remove, abate or otherwise correct the violation and court costs and reasonable attorney's fees necessary to file and pursue the civil action; and
3. Claiming a lien against the land on which the violation occurred if the commission or municipality is the prevailing party in the civil action. The amendment also requires persons selling property to disclose any actual or alleged violations of shoreland zoning statutes, ordinances, rules or regulations.

TRANSPORTATION

[LD 1640](#) An Act Directing The Department Of Transportation To Adopt Rules Regarding Corrosion Mitigation Methods For Steel Bridges
Public Law Chapter 657

Directs the Department of Transportation to adopt routine technical rules governing corrosion mitigation methods for steel bridges wholly under the control of the State and specifies that the rules must include, but are not limited to, establishing processes for ensuring that corrosion mitigation activities are carried out in accordance with established federal corrosion mitigation standards and under the supervision of personnel who are industry-trained and industry certified in corrosion mitigation methods on an appropriate substrate or surface; requiring plans to prevent environmental degradation that might result from corrosion mitigation activities; and requiring compliance with all applicable state and federal rules and regulations and corrosion mitigation standards.

[LD 2190](#) An Act To Make Allocations From Maine Turnpike Authority Funds For The Maine Turnpike Authority For The Calendar Year Ending December 31, 2025
[Private and Special Law Chapter 19](#)

This bill makes allocations from gross revenues of the Maine Turnpike Authority for the payment of the authority's operating expenses for the calendar year ending December 31, 2025 in accordance with the requirements of the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 23, section 1961, subsection 6.

[LD 2229](#) An Act To Make Supplemental Appropriations And Allocations For The Expenditures Of State Government, Highway Fund And Other Funds And To Change Certain Provisions Of The Law Necessary To The Proper Operations Of State Government For The Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2024 And June 30, 2025 (Emergency)
Public Law Chapter 645

LD 2214 An Act to Make Supplemental Appropriations For The Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2024 And June 30, 2025
Public Law Chapter 643

PART EE requires the transfer of \$5,000,000 in fiscal year 2024-25 from the unappropriated surplus of the General Fund to the Executive Department, GOPIF - Community Resilience Partnership program, Other Special Revenue Funds account for the purpose of supporting grants and technical assistance to municipalities and federally recognized Indian tribes in the State for climate planning and actions, including adaptation and resilience projects and emissions reduction initiatives, including clean energy and energy efficiency projects.

PART GG requires the transfer of \$10,000,000 from the unappropriated surplus of the General Fund to the Maine State Housing Authority, Housing Authority - State, Other Special Revenue Funds account to provide funds for new housing units through the affordable homeownership program to expand affordable, energy-efficient housing options that are affordable to workers and support state workforce needs.

Part YYY establishes within the Department of Environmental Protection the Coastal Sand Dune Restoration and Protection Fund, from which the department may pay up to 50% of the eligible costs incurred in a project to restore, protect, conserve, nourish or revegetate a coastal sand dune system and up to 100% of eligible costs for projects relating to coastal sand dune systems and addressing technical assistance and public education.

The Part also authorizes the Department of Environmental Protection, notwithstanding any provision of law or department rule prohibiting the construction of new structures in a coastal sand dune system, to consider and potentially grant a permit under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 38, section 480-D for construction of an offshore wind terminal on Sears Island in the Town of Searsport to be located on or that will otherwise impact a coastal sand dune system on the island, as long as the project satisfies all other applicable permitting and licensing criteria under Title 35-A, chapter 34 and Title 38, chapter 3. The coastal sand dune system on Sears Island that would potentially be impacted through the construction of an offshore wind terminal is approximately 4/10 of an acre in size and located south of and abutting the jetty on the western side of the island on the parcel of land reserved for port development, also known as "the Transportation Parcel." The Part also directs the Department of Transportation, in collaboration with the Maine Coast Heritage Trust, to take all reasonable steps to ensure the conservation and protection of a parcel of land in the northwest portion of Sears Island that is approximately 10 acres in size and that includes a different coastal sand dune system on the island and to

provide pedestrian access to that parcel and dune from the causeway to Sears Island through the intertidal zone. The coastal sand dune system on Sears Island to be conserved and protected is approximately one and one-half acres in size, approximately 1,200 feet long and 30 to 65 feet wide and located on the northwestern side of the island, north of the jetty and southwest of the causeway to Sears Island, on the parcel of land reserved for port development, also known as "the Transportation Parcel."

Bills that Failed

- [LD 75](#) An Act To Establish Maximum Contaminant Levels Under The State's Drinking Water Rules To Prohibit Certain Perfluoroalkyl And Polyfluoroalkyl Substances
- [LD 226](#) An Act To Address Maine's Affordable Housing Crisis
- [LD 277](#) An Act Regarding Perfluoroalkyl And Polyfluoroalkyl Substances
- [LD 306](#) An Act Related To Water
- [LD 314](#) An Act To Establish The Permanent Commission On The Status Of Housing In Maine
- [LD 367](#) An Act To Authorize General Fund Bond Issues To Improve Highways, Bridges And Nonhighway Modes Of Transportation (*Priority Bill*)
- [LD 371](#) An Act To Address Certain Local Zoning Ordinances
- [LD 401](#) An Act To Improve Transportation In Maine
- [LD 412](#) An Act To Fully Engage The Efficiency Maine Trust In Mitigating Climate Change By Creating Electrification Programs
- [LD 417](#) An Act To Facilitate Net Energy Billing
- [LD 527](#) An Act To Allow Municipalities To Create Bicycle And Pedestrian Zones With Reduced Speed Limits
- [LD 683](#) An Act To Reduce Electricity Rates
- [LD 749](#) An Act To Authorize A General Fund Bond Issue To Provide A New Dormitory Facility At The Maine School Of Science And Mathematics
- [LD 928](#) Resolution, Proposing An Amendment To The Constitution Of Maine To Establish A Right To A Clean And Healthy Environment
- [LD 932](#) An Act Requiring Climate Impact Notes On Proposed Transportation Legislation And Agency Rules

- [LD 1006](#) An Act To Ensure Access To Safe Drinking Water From Household Wells In Rural Areas By Expanding Testing
- [LD 1134](#) An Act To Improve Housing Affordability By Amending The Definition Of "subdivision" Under The Site Location Of Development Laws
- [LD 1145](#) An Act To Create The Southern Maine Coastal Waters Commission
- [LD 1185](#) An Act To Authorize A General Fund Bond Issue To Recapitalize The School Revolving Renovation Fund (*Priority Bill*)
- [LD 1210](#) An Act To Establish A Maine Highway Capital Fund To Provide Consistent Funding For The Construction And Repair Of Maine's Roads And Bridges
- [LD 1227](#) An Act To Balance Renewable Energy Development With Natural And Working Lands Conservation
- [LD 1257](#) An Act To Increase Housing Capacity And Protect The Municipal Tax Base And Working Lands
- [LD 1294](#) An Act To Implement Certain Recommendations Of The Commission To Increase Housing Opportunities In Maine By Studying Land Use Regulations And Short-term Rentals
- [LD 1465](#) An Act To Amend The Calculation Of Tariff Rates And Billing Credits Under Net Energy Billing
- [LD 1488](#) An Act To Expand Testing For Perfluoroalkyl And Polyfluoroalkyl Substances To Private Drinking Water Wells
- [LD 1493](#) An Act To Increase Affordable Housing By Expanding Tax Increment Financing
- [LD 1538](#) An Act To Provide Tax Benefits To Persons Constructing Accessory Dwelling Units
- [LD 1549](#) An Act To Direct The Public Utilities Commission To Seek Informational Bids Regarding Small Modular Nuclear Reactors In The State
- [LD 1672](#) An Act To Establish An Affordable Housing Permitting Process
- [LD 1752](#) Resolve, To Prepare Preapproved Building Types
- [LD 1787](#) Resolve, Directing The Department Of Agriculture, Conservation And Forestry To Convene A Stakeholder Group Tasked With A Comprehensive Overhaul And Modernization Of The State Subdivision Statutes
- [LD 1810](#) An Act To Expand The Maine Historic Rehabilitation Credit And Establish A Weatherization Tax Credit

- [LD 1864](#) An Act To Increase Maine's Housing Supply By Prohibiting Certain Zoning Requirements In Areas Where Public Sewer And Water Infrastructure Are Available And In Designated Growth Areas
- [LD 1867](#) An Act To Establish The Community Housing Production Program
- [LD 1871](#) An Act To Authorize A General Fund Bond Issue To Invest In A Green Energy Materials Building At The University Of Maine (*Priority Bill*)
- [LD 1929](#) An Act To Protect Consumers By Licensing Home Building Contractors
- [LD 1957](#) An Act To Authorize A General Fund Bond Issue To Invest In Maine's Railroad Infrastructure
- [LD 1960](#) An Act To Support Farming In Maine By Extending The Deadline For Manufacturers Of Products Containing Perfluoroalkyl And Polyfluoroalkyl Substances To Report On Those Products
- [LD 1983](#) An Act To Establish The Maine Buy American And Build Maine Act
- [LD 1997](#) An Act To Enhance Services Provided By The Department Of Environmental Protection
- [LD 2077](#) Resolve, To Study The Role Of Natural Gas In An Equitable Clean Energy Transition For Maine (*Priority Bill*)
- [LD 2118](#) An Act To Provide Funding To The Maine School Of Science And Mathematics
- [LD 2135](#) Resolve, Regarding The Operation And Future Capacity Of State-owned Landfills
- [LD 2170](#) An Act To Prioritize School Construction Projects For Schools Affected By Disasters
- [LD 2205](#) Resolve, To Direct The Governor's Energy Office To Conduct A Study Regarding The Future Of Electric Transmission Infrastructure In The State
- [LD 2206](#) An Act Regarding Incentives For Heat Pumps And Other Weatherization Products And Services
- [LD 2225](#) An Act To Provide Funding To Rebuild Infrastructure Affected By Extreme Inland And Coastal Weather Events
- [LD 2266](#) An Act Regarding Restoration And Protection Of Coastal Sand Dune Systems And Permitting Of An Offshore Wind Terminal On Sears Island