

**Legislative/Nominating
Committee Meeting - March 13,
2026 Agenda**
March 13, 2026



MEMBERS
Mayor Mark Dion, Chair
Councilor Benjamin Grant
Councilor Kate Sykes

REMOTE ACCESS INFORMATION:

This meeting will be conducted remotely via Zoom pursuant to the Remote Meeting Policy adopted by the Portland City Council. Allow your computer to install the free Zoom app to get the best meeting experience. If you are not able to attend live either in person or via Zoom, a recording will be available in the [Agenda Center](#) following the meeting.

For public comment via Zoom, you will need to use the "raise your hand" feature. To raise your hand via the telephone, please hit *9. You will be unmuted by the host when it is time for public comment.

<https://portlandmaine-gov.zoom.us/j/82617505137?pwd=F3GVV0u1SXE4FD7FHp7sorgTBA1bLF.1>

I. Call to Order

II. Approval of Meeting minutes

- a. Legislative/Nominating Committee Meeting - February 10, 2026

III. Legislative Update

- a. Review LD List and Tracker (Bernstein Shur)

IV. Other Business

- a. Priorities for National League of Cities Congressional City Conference

V. Adjournment

**Legislative/Nominating
Committee Meeting**
February 10, 2026



MEMBERS

Mayor Mark Dion, Chair
Councilor Ben Grant
Councilor Kate Sykes

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 8:06 am. In attendance were Mayor Mark Dion, Councilor Kate Sykes, Councilor Regina Phillips, City Manager Danielle West, Special Assistant to the City Manager Max Wilder, Sustainability Director Troy Moon, Sean Donaghue, Maggie McLoughlin, Lisa Prosienski (Bernstein Shur), and Alysia Melnick (Bernstein Shur). Councilor Ben Grant was absent.

II. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Mayor Dion made a motion to accept the minutes from the previous meeting, moved by Councilor Sykes, seconded by Mayor Dion, vote (2-0).

III. Legislative Update

- a. Follow-up from December 15, 2025 Legislative/Nominating Committee Meeting
- b. Review LD List and Tracker (Bernstein Shur)

LD 2119: Councilor Sykes made a motion to support; seconded by Mayor Dion, vote (2-0).

LD 2112: Mayor Dion made a motion to support; seconded by Councilor Sykes, vote (2-0).

LD 2137 (First Amendment): Councilor Sykes made a motion to oppose; seconded by Mayor Dion, vote (2-0).

IV. Other Business

LD 2196: Mayor Dion made a motion to support; seconded by Councilor Sykes, vote (2-0).

LD 2124: Mayor Dion made a motion to support; seconded by Councilor Sykes, vote (2-0).

LD 2040: Mayor Dion made a motion to support; seconded by Councilor Sykes, vote (2-0).

V. Adjournment

Mayor Dion made a motion to adjourn the meeting, moved by Mayor Dion, seconded by Councilor Sykes, vote (2-0). The meeting was adjourned at 8:33 am.



**Bernstein, Shur,
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T (207) 623 - 1596
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Memorandum

To: Portland, City of
From: Bernstein Shur
Date: March 11, 2026
Re: New Legislative Bills Report (Updated)

Please find below the new legislative documents (LD) printed this week that we have flagged to be of possible interest to your organization. Please indicate to us which bills you would like included on your tracking report.

Thank you.

LD 2232 (HP1507)
An Act to Increase County Jail Funding

LD #	Category	Bill Title	Sponsor	Cmte	Bill Information	COP Position	Public Hearing	Work Session	Status	Notes	Priority	LR #
25	Bond	An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Fund Wastewater Treatment Facility Planning and Construction of Infrastructure Projects (Bond)	Sen Brenner	AFA	Bill Text		4/10/25 1:00 PM Rm 228 SH			Carried over 6/25/25		160
560	Bond	An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Improve Coastal Climate Resiliency (Bond)	Sen Bailey	AFA	Bill Text	Support	4/10/25 1:00 PM Rm 228 SH			Testimony submitted Carried over 6/25/25		1923
690	Bond	An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Provide Funding for Affordable and Low-income Housing Programs (Bond)	Sen Pierce	AFA	Bill Text	Support	4/9/25 10:00 AM Rm 228 SH			Testimony submitted Carried over 6/25/25		308
826	Bond	An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Establish the School Energy Savings Revolving Loan Fund (Bond)	Sen Pierce	AFA	Bill Text		4/17/25 1:00 PM Rm 228 SH			Chair Lentz is researching. Carried over 6/25/25		1987
836	Bond	An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Upgrade Municipal Culverts at Stream Crossings (Bond)	President Daughtry	AFA	Bill Text	Support	4/15/25 1:00 PM Rm 228 SH			Bernstein Shur is to monitor. Carried over 6/25/25		1677
2112	Electricity	An Act to Authorize Municipalities to Form Community Choice Aggregation Programs to Procure Electricity	Rep Runte	EUT	Bill Text	Support	1/22/26 1:00 PM Rm 211 COB	3/5/26 1:10 PM Rm 211 COB	Voted 3/5/26 MAJ: OTP-AM MIN: ONTP Not rpt out	2/10/26: Troy doing written testimony ahead of WS.		2849
32	Energy	An Act to Repeal the Laws Regarding Net Energy Billing	Sen Guerin	EUT	Bill Text	Oppose	2/27/25 9:00 AM Rm 211 COB	1/6/26 10:00 AM Rm 211 COB	Voted 1/6/26 MAJ: OTP-AM MIN: OTP-AM Not rpt out	Written testimony in opposition submitted Troy Moon reports possible \$1M loss to City Carried over 6/25/25		75
1017	GA	An Act to Include Food Provided or Served at Emergency Shelters in General Assistance Reimbursement	Sen Talbot Ross	HHS	Bill Text		4/7/25 10:00 AM Rm 209 COB	5/15/25 1:00 PM Rm 209 COB		Councilor Grant testified_City submitted legislation Meeting requested by Sen. Talbot Ross Carried over 6/25/25	Yes	2300
1959	GA	An Act to Prohibit the Department of Health and Human Services from Reducing General Assistance Reimbursement Maximums for Payment of Costs of Providing Emergency Shelter	Sen Talbot Ross	HHS	Bill Text		5/19/25 1:30 PM Rm 209 COB	2/19/26 10:00 AM Rm 209 COB	Voted 2/19/26 ONTP Not rpt out	Carried over 6/25/25		309
1996	GA	An Act to Clarify Responsibilities of the State in the Laws Governing General Assistance	Sen Ingwersen	HHS	Bill Text		1/29/26 10:00 AM Rm 209 COB	2/19/26 10:00 AM Rm 209 COB	Voted 2/19/26 OTP-AM Not rpt out	LNC voted to add to tracker and lobbying team will research		2801
111	Health Insurance	An Act to Increase the State's Share of Retired Teacher Health Insurance (Emergency)	Rep Dodge	LBR	Bill Text	Support	2/12/25 10:00 AM Rm 202 COB	3/5/25 11:30 AM Rm 202 COB		Carried over 6/25/25		176

LD #	Category	Bill Title	Sponsor	Cmte	Bill Information	COP Position	Public Hearing	Work Session	Status	Notes	Priority	LR #
2196	Health Insurance	An Act to Lower Health Insurance Costs, Reduce Barriers to Health Care and Ensure Fair Prices for Health Care	Rep Gattine	HHS	Bill Text	Support	3/5/26 1:00 PM Rm 209 COB	3/12/26 1:00 PM Rm 209 COB		2/10/26: Anne on COP staff working on testimony		2841
140	Homestead Tax	An Act to Incrementally Increase the Homestead Property Tax Exemption	Sen Baldacci	TAX	Bill Text		3/19/25 9:30 AM Rm 127 COB	4/1/25 1:00 PM Rm 127 COB		Carried over 6/25/25		354
264	Homestead Tax	An Act to Remove the 12-month Waiting Period for the Maine Resident Homestead Property Tax Exemption	Rep Hepler	TAX	Bill Text		3/5/25 10:00 AM Rm 127 SH	3/18/25 1:00 PM Rm 127 SH		1/13/26: Staff recommended NFNA and LNC's position, to monitor 12/15, LNC has not yet taken a position; staff will provide feedback Carried over 6/25/25		612
438	Homestead Tax	An Act to Allow Municipalities to Limit Nonprofit Property Tax Exemptions	Rep Hymes	TAX	Bill Text		5/6/25 3:00 PM Rm 127 SH	1/8/26 10:00 AM Rm 127 SH	DEAD	12/15, LNC has not yet taken a position; lobbying team will take stock and follow up Carried over 6/25/25		1411
1424	Housing	An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue for Investment in Workforce Housing and Raise Certain Income Eligibility Limits in the Affordable Homeownership Program (Bond)	President Daughtry	AFA	Bill Text	Support	4/10/25 1:00 PM Rm 228 SH			Testimony submitted Carried over 6/25/25		1358
1443	Housing	An Act to Ensure the Financial Stability of Behavioral Health Service Providers and Housing Assistance Providers (Emergency)	Sen Bennett	HHS	Bill Text	Monitor	4/14/25 1:00 PM Rm 209 COB	5/15/25 1:00 PM Rm 209 COB		Carried over 6/25/25		1363
2135	Housing	An Act to Provide Funding to Keep Maine Veterans Housed	Sen Nangle	VLA	Bill Text	Track/ Monitor	1/21/26 10:00 AM Rm 437 SH	2/18/26 10:30 AM Rm 437 SH	Voted 2/18/26 OTP-AM Not rpt out	2/10/26: This is currently tabled. Mayor asked us to flag if there is action. 1/13/26: Landlord incentives for housing		2883
2164	Housing	An Act to Assist Communities with Converting Vacant School Buildings into Housing	Rep Gere	HED	Bill Text		2/17/26 10:00 AM Rm 206 COB	3/3/26 1:30 PM Rm 206 COB	Voted 3/3/26 MAJ: OTP-AM MIN: ONTP Not rpt out			2846
2173	Housing	An Act to Update the Laws Regarding Housing Developments and Accessory Dwelling Units (Emergency)	Rep Collamore	HED	Bill Text		2/17/26 10:00 AM Rm 206 COB	2/26/26 2:00 PM Rm 206 COB	Tabled 2/26/26			2757
35	MaineCare	An Act to Strengthen Local Emergency Medical Services by Increasing the MaineCare Reimbursement Rate for Ambulance Services (Emergency)	Sen Curry	HHS	Bill Text		4/17/25 1:01 PM Rm 209 COB	9/9/25 2:15 PM Rm 209 COB	ONTP Reported out 9/16/25	Carried over 6/25/25		241
34	Other	An Act to Increase the Minimum Salary for Teachers	Sen Pierce	EDU	Bill Text	Monitor	2/26/25 10:00 AM Rm 208 COB	5/12/25 10:00 AM Rm 208 COB		Monitor; Defer to school board Carried over 6/25/25		233

LD #	Category	Bill Title	Sponsor	Cmte	Bill Information	COP Position	Public Hearing	Work Session	Status	Notes	Priority	LR #
245	Other	An Act to Implement the Recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Commission to Study Emergency Medical Services in the State (Emergency)	Sen Ross	CJPS	Bill Text		2/10/25 10:30 AM Rm 436 SH	5/15/25 1:30 PM Rm 436 SH	1/11/26 Public Law Ch. 520	Held by the Governor 7/8/25		202
574	Other	An Act to Improve Labor Conditions for Workers in the State	Sen Tipping	LBR	Bill Text	Monitor				Carried over 6/25/25		2334
605	Other	An Act to Provide Solutions for Sustainable Management of Municipal Solid Waste	Rep Campbell	ENR	Bill Text	Monitor		5/15/25 1:00 PM Rm 216 COB	Tabled 5/15/25	Carried over 6/25/25		7
634	Other	Resolve, to Establish the Commission to Study the Reduction of Unfunded and Outdated Municipal and County Mandates	Rep Tuell	SLG	Bill Text	Monitor	3/19/25 10:00 AM Rm 214 COB	4/2/25 1:00 PM Rm 214 COB		Carried over 6/25/25		816
799	Other	An Act to Report Gender Wage Gaps	Rep Roeder	LBR	Bill Text		3/12/25 10:30 AM Rm 202 COB	3/19/25 1:00 PM Rm 202 COB		Staff to research before taking a position Carried over 6/25/25		1179
1870	Other	An Act to Establish a Climate Superfund Cost Recovery Program to Impose Penalties on Climate Polluters	Sen Brenner	ENR	Bill Text		5/5/25 10:00 AM Rm 216 COB	Work session reconsidered 3/3/26	Voted 3/3/26 MAJ: OTP-AM MIN: ONTP Not rpt out	Carried over 6/25/25		2359
2040	Other	Resolve, to Study Food Insecurity Measures in Maine (Title change)	Rep Pluecker	ACF	Bill Text	Support	1/7/26 2:00 PM Rm 214 COB	1/27/26 2:00 PM Rm 214 COB	OTP-AM Reported out 2/26/26	2/10/26: Maggie has drafted testimony already. 1/13/26: Consistency in info re food		2744
2051	Other	An Act to Ensure Access to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program in Maine	Rep Pluecker	HHS	Bill Text		1/14/26 1:00 PM Rm 209 COB	2/25/26 1:00 PM Rm 209 COB	Voted 2/25/26 MAJ: OTP-AM MIN: ONTP Not rpt out	1/13/26: SNAP for lawfully present immigrants; Maggie preparing testimony for Mark's signature		2773
2079	Other	An Act to Amend the Laws Governing Municipal Reporting on Residential Buildings	Rep Gere	HED	Bill Text		1/20/26 1:00 PM Rm 206 COB	1/27/26 1:00 PM Rm 206 COB	MAJ: OTP MIN: ONTP Reported out 3/4/26			2639
2106	Other	An Act to Prohibit the Disclosure of Nonpublic Records Without Proper Judicial Review (Emergency)	Rep Sato	JUD	Bill Text		1/29/26 1:00 PM Rm 438 SH	2/25/26 10:00 AM Rm 438 SH	Voted 2/25/26 MAJ: OTP-AM MIN: ONTP			2939
2119	Other	An Act to Expand Reimbursement for Treatment in Place, Community Paramedicine and Alternate Destination Transport	Rep DeBrito	HHS	Bill Text	Support	2/11/26 10:00 AM Rm 209 COB	3/10/26 1:00 PM Rm 209 COB	Tabled 3/4/26	2/10/26: PFD doing written testimony ahead of 2/11 PH.		2793

LD #	Category	Bill Title	Sponsor	Cmte	Bill Information	COP Position	Public Hearing	Work Session	Status	Notes	Priority	LR #
2137	Other	An Act to Modify Provisions of Law Governing Parking Enforcement on Property Accessible to the Public (Emergency)	Sen Nangle	TRA	Bill Text	Oppose	1/22/26 10:00 AM Rm 126 SH	Work session reconsidered 3/3/26	Voted 3/3/26 MAJ: OTP-AM MIN: OTP-AM Not rpt out	2/10/26: COP opposes the 1st amendment, and are ok with the 2nd. Councilor Sykes drafting testimony opposed for 2/10 WS. 1/13/26: Lobbying team to investigate bill		2938
1665	Property Tax	An Act to Provide Property Tax Relief to Maine Families	Sen Carney	TAX	Bill Text	Support	5/1/25 1:00 PM Rm 127 SH	Work session reconsidered 5/22/25		Testimony submitted Carried over 6/25/25		1107
1177	Public Health	Resolve, to Study the Public Health and Environmental Risks from Synthetic Turf (Title change)	Rep Gramlich	ENR	Bill Text	Oppose	4/9/25 10:00 AM Rm 216 COB	4/30/25 1:00 PM Rm 216 COB		Testimony submitted Carried over 6/25/25		1210
2042	Public Notice	An Act to Eliminate the Requirement for Municipalities to Provide Public Notice in a Newspaper	Sen Black	SLG	Bill Text		1/21/26 11:00 AM Rm 214 COB	2/18/26 9:15 AM Rm 214 COB	Voted 2/18/26 OTP-AM Not rpt out	1/13/26: Staff recommendation is to support and that is now the COP position; lobbying team will develop testimony in support of LD 2042 12/15/25, LNC has not yet taken a position; staff will provide feedback		2804
1259	Public Safety	An Act to Enhance Public Safety in Maine by Defining the Relationship Between Local and Federal Law Enforcement	Rep Rana	JUD	Bill Text	Support	5/19/25 1:00 PM Rm 438 SH	6/4/25 2:00 PM Rm 438 SH		Testimony submitted Carried over 6/25/25		2275
2062	Safety	An Act to Enhance the Safety of Public Transit Bus Operators Through the Installation of Vehicle Security Barriers	Sen Pierce	TRA	Bill Text		1/15/26 10:00 AM Rm 126 SH	1/29/26 10:30 AM Rm 126 SH	Voted 1/29/26 OTP-AM Not rpt out			2647
2121	Safety	An Act to Enhance the Safety of Judicial and Elected Officials, Constitutional Officers and the State Auditor by Allowing Certain Personal Information to Be Removed from Designated Public Records	Rep Faircloth	JUD	Bill Text		1/20/26 1:00 PM Rm 438 SH	3/4/26 10:00 AM Rm 438 SH	Voted 3/4/26 A: OTP-AM B: ONTP C: OTP-AM Not rpt out			2650
1892	School Construction	An Act to Establish Procedures for School Construction Projects	Rep Brennan	EDU	Bill Text	Support	5/9/25 10:30 AM Rm 208 COB	1/21/26 10:01 AM Rm 208 COB	Tabled 1/21/26	1/13/26: Testimony support-lobbying team to work with COP on testimony Carried over 6/25/25		903
2124	Shelter	An Act to Support Emergency Shelter Funding Using Revenue from the Real Estate Transfer Tax	Rep Gattine	HED	Bill Text	Support	2/10/26 1:00 PM Rm 206 COB	3/3/26 1:30 PM Rm 206 COB	Voted 3/3/26 MAJ: OTP-AM MIN: OTP-AM Not rpt out	2/10/26: Maggie and Alysa coordinating on testimony that Mayor will deliver. 1/13/26: Investigate impact of LD 2124, re: public records		2746
1694	Tax	An Act to Provide an Income Tax Credit for Certain Disaster Mitigation Projects for Working Waterfront Property	Rep Riley	TAX	Bill Text	Monitor	5/16/25 9:00 AM Rm 127 SH	1/8/26 10:00 AM Rm 127 SH	DEAD	Carried over 6/25/25		72

Preserving Housing Voucher Assistance for Mixed-Status Households

- **ADVOCACY:** Oppose HUD rule “Preserving Housing Voucher Assistance for Mixed-Status Households and Reducing Administrative Barriers,” the proposed ruling to restrict housing assistance based on immigration status of mixed households, risking the increase of homelessness and separation of families.
- **BACKGROUND:** Historically, HUD policy has allowed mixed-status households to receive partial subsidies to U.S. citizens or eligible immigrant members living there, but not undocumented residents. The new HUD rule would bar most mixed-status households from receiving any kind of assistance, including families where a child is a U.S. citizen but their parents or caregivers are not. Families will be forced to make a difficult choice: separating or giving up rental assistance and facing eviction or homelessness. Additional requirements will also be placed on eligible individuals to document their status, creating administrative barriers to accessing the support they are qualified to receive. Nearly 80,000 people are at risk of losing assistance if this rule changes, with children being affected the most ([Center on Budget and Policy Priorities](#)).
- **ACTION:** The City can submit comment in opposition via [public comment](#) portal by April 21, 2026 at 11:59PM, however, also good to discuss with other delegations to increase collective action
- **RELEVANT LINKS**
 - HUD [press release](#)
 - HUD [rule](#)
 - CBPP Analysis [here](#)

Protecting Our Workforce: The Urgent Need to Fast-Track (Not Block) Asylum Work Permits

- **ADVOCACY:** Oppose “Employment Authorization for Asylum Applicants,” which would indefinitely pause the issuance of work permits to asylum seekers, making it impossible for asylum seekers to legally work, increasing dependency on General Assistance and other safety net programs, and preventing progress on workforce solutions.
- **BACKGROUND:** The current wait time for an asylum seeker to apply for employment authorization is 180 days and the required period to process the employee authorization document (“work permit”) is 30 days after it is received. During this period, asylum applicants cannot join the workforce and face challenges to support themselves. Under the proposed new rule, the waiting period to apply would be doubled to 365 days and the processing of new work permits would be extended to 180 days. Furthermore, work permit applications would not even be accepted when the average processing time for affirmative asylum applications exceeds 180 days. Given the current case backlog, DHS's own estimates suggest it could take between 14 and 173 years to reach that threshold,

effectively creating a permanent pause on legal employment for the current population of asylum seekers.

- **ACTION:** [Submit a public comment](#) by April 24, 2026 at 11:59PM and discuss with other delegations to prioritize
- **RELEVANT LINKS**
 - US Citizenship and Immigration Services [Press Release](#)
 - Proposed rule: [Employment Authorization for Asylum Applicants](#)
 - [Executive Order 14159](#): Protecting the American People Against Invasion

Addressing Substance Use Disorder- Expanding/Stabilizing our BH Workforce

- **ADVOCACY:** Prioritize and support initiatives which can help to expand, or at the very least stabilize, our behavioral health workforce.
- **BACKGROUND:** A significant barrier to increasing the availability of substance use disorder/behavioral health treatment and recovery resources is the lack of a sufficient workforce. The root causes are manifold from licensing standardization and administrative challenges, reimbursement rates, housing shortages, etc. This limits our capacity to link individuals who are ready for treatment with appropriate providers, as well as our ability to resource recovery solutions that increase abstinence rates.
 - **ACTION:** While there is no specific pending legislation or rule in this moment, initiatives tied to insurance coverage and provider reimbursement, housing, DHHS (Federal) funding are all relevant. As such, this is a good one to keep aware of and discuss with other delegations for prioritization.
 - **RELEVANT LINKS**
 - HRSA Bureau of Health Workforce- State of BH Workforce (2025)- [link](#)
 - ME's Behavioral Health Workforce Challenge- [link](#)
 - ME specific policy solutions- [link](#)