

**Legislative & Nominating
Committee Agenda
March 8, 2022**



MEMBERS
Councilor April Fournier, Chair
Mayor Kate Snyder
Councilor Pious Ali

ZOOM INFORMATION:

This meeting will be held remotely pursuant to the Remote Meeting Policy adopted by the Legislative & Nominating Committee and as authorized under 1 M.R.S. 403-B because of the existence of an emergency or urgent issue that requires the committee to meet by remote methods. Allow your computer to install the free Zoom app to get the best meeting experience. If you are not able to attend live, a recording will be available following the meeting.

For public comment, 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.

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II. Call to Order

III. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- a. Minutes from the Meeting of March 1, 2022

IV. Legislative Update

- a. For Consideration: Written Testimony for LD 1986 (An Act To Exempt Permanently Disabled Veterans from Payment of Property Tax) (5 minutes)
- b. Discussion: LD 2003 (An Act To Implement the Recommendations of the Commission To Increase Housing Opportunities in Maine by Studying Zoning and Land Use Restrictions) (5 minutes)

A public hearing on this item was held March 7, 2022.

- c. For Discussion: LD 906 (An Act To Provide Passamaquoddy Tribal Members Access to Clean Drinking Water)

A public hearing on this bill was held on February 17, 2022. A work session is scheduled for March 10, 2022.

- d. Review of Legislative Tracker (Bernstein Shur) (5 minutes)

V. Other Business

- a. Review: Governor's Proposed Supplemental Budget (Bernstein Shur) (35 minutes)

The complete document can be viewed at <https://legislature.maine.gov/doc/8172>.

- b. 2022 Federal Priorities Memo (staff and Committee recommendations) (5 minutes)
- c. Support for Bridging the Gap for New Americans Act (S. 3157)

Staff ask that the Legislative & Nominating Committee consider signing a digital letter of support for the Bridging the Gap for New Americans Act. This legislation calls upon the United States Department of Labor (DOL) to study the factors that impact the employment opportunities of immigrants and refugees who hold international credentials and to issue recommendations for reform.

VI. Adjournment

**Legislative & Nominating
Committee Minutes**
March 1, 2022



MEMBERS
Councilor April Fournier, Chair
Mayor Kate Snyder
Councilor Pious Ali

I. ZOOM INFORMATION:

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II. Call to Order

Chair Fournier called the meeting to order at 8:01 AM.

Councilor April Fournier (Chair), Mayor Kate Snyder, Councilor Pious Ali, Dena Libner (Chief of Staff), Sheba Brown (Executive Office Manager), Representative Mike Sylvester, Kate Knox (Bernstein Shur), Alysia Melnick (Bernstein Shur), and Chris Feeney (Bernstein Shur) were in attendance.

Chair Fournier asked Mayor Snyder to report on Portland's response to the State's General Assistance law. Mayor Snyder shared that there would be a one-time allocation in the Governor's budget that could help with resettlement coordination and services for individuals experiencing housing insecurity.

III. Approval of Meeting Minutes

a. Minutes from the Meeting of February 22, 2022

Motion was made by Mayor Kate Snyder and seconded by City Councilor Pious Ali to approve the February 22, 2022 meeting minutes, vote (3-0)

IV. Legislative Update

a. Discussion: LD 1899 (An Act To Ensure Safe Entry and Access for People Seeking Health Care and Other Constitutional Rights)

The Committee discussed this legislation. Testimony was prepared at start of session. Staff did not have concerns about this legislation at the staff level. The Committee had asked for feedback on buffer zone, and Corporation Counsel indicated that this might encounter legal challenges, however this does not impact the ability for the Committee to provide testimony in support of this bill.

Motion was made by City Councilor Pious Ali and seconded by Mayor Kate Snyder to approve submitting testimony in support of this legislation, vote (3-0)

i. *A public hearing has been scheduled for March 1, 2022 at 9:00 am.*

b. Discussion: LD 1673 (An Act To Create a Comprehensive Permit Process for the Construction of Affordable Housing)

The Committee discussed this legislation in depth, highlighting concerns about the language of the bill that would cause challenges for the City of Portland, which is considered for the purposes of this legislation as a municipality in good standing. The Committee asked for staff to work with legislators to develop refinements to the language of the bill in order to make it amenable to the City's specific needs. The Committee will then consider draft testimony in support of this legislation.

c. Review of Draft Testimony for 1772 (An Act To Amend the Remote Meeting Law in Maine's Freedom of Access Act)

Committee Discussed this legislation. Testimony had already been submitted for this bill in the previous session, however it does not contain the provisions the Committee hoped for. It likely that this legislation will move forward.

Motion was made by Mayor Kate Snyder and seconded by City Councilor Pious Ali to support LD 1772, vote (3-0).

d. Discussion: LD 1986 (An Act To Exempt Permanently Disabled Veterans from Payment of Property Tax)

Committee discussed this legislation, highlighting concerns about the potential cost to the City of approximately \$90,000 in property tax revenue loss. Maine Municipal Association has provided testimony neither for nor against this legislation. The Committee would like for the State to increase reimbursement to cover the cost of this legislation. The committee will review draft testimony on this matter at the next meeting.

i. *A public hearing on LD 1986 is scheduled for March 1, 2022 at 10:00 AM.*

b. 2022 Federal Priorities Memo (staff recommendations)

Councilor Ali asked to discuss this matter in greater depth, given that Committee members plan to attend the National League of Cities Conference in Washington, D.C. where they plan to advocate with federal legislators on these priorities.

VI. Adjournment

Motion was made by Mayor Kate Snyder and seconded by Councilor Pious Ali to adjourn the meeting, vote (3-0).

V. Other Business

a. Review: Governor's Proposed Supplemental Budget (Bernstein Shur)

i. *The Governor released her proposed supplemental budget last week; the complete document can be viewed at <https://legislature.maine.gov/doc/8172>. Public hearings are scheduled to begin February 28, 2022.*

c. For Discussion: Regional Housing Report Release and Forward

e. LD Tracker (Bernstein Shur)



130th MAINE LEGISLATURE

SECOND REGULAR SESSION-2022

Legislative Document

No. 1986

H.P. 1472

House of Representatives, February 16, 2022

An Act To Exempt Permanently Disabled Veterans from Payment of Property Tax

(AFTER DEADLINE)

Approved for introduction by a majority of the Legislative Council pursuant to Joint Rule 205.

Reference to the Committee on Taxation suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert B. Hunt".

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative ROCHE of Wells.
Cosponsored by President JACKSON of Aroostook and
Representatives: BERRY of Bowdoinham, BROOKS of Lewiston, DILLINGHAM of Oxford,
FAY of Raymond, HARNETT of Gardiner, STOVER of Boothbay, Senators: KEIM of
Oxford, RAFFERTY of York.

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 36 MRSA §653, sub-§1, ¶C, as amended by PL 2019, c. 501, §20, is further amended to read:

C. The estates up to the just value of \$6,000, having a taxable situs in the place of residence, of veterans who served in the Armed Forces of the United States:

(1) During any federally recognized war period, including the Korean Conflict, the Vietnam War, the Persian Gulf War, the periods from August 24, 1982 to July 31, 1984 and December 20, 1989 to January 31, 1990, Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation New Dawn, or who were awarded the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, when they have reached the age of 62 years or when they are receiving any form of pension or compensation from the United States Government for total disability, service-connected or nonservice-connected, as a veteran. A veteran of the Vietnam War must have served on active duty after February 27, 1961 and before May 8, 1975. "Persian Gulf War" means service on active duty on or after August 2, 1990 and before or on the date that the United States Government recognizes as the end of that war period; or

(2) ~~Who~~ Except as provided in paragraph C-2, who are disabled by injury or disease incurred or aggravated during active military service in the line of duty and are receiving any form of pension or compensation from the United States Government for total, service-connected disability.

The exemptions provided in this paragraph apply to the property of that veteran, including property held in joint tenancy with that veteran's spouse or held in a revocable living trust for the benefit of that veteran.

Sec. 2. 36 MRSA §653, sub-§1, ¶C-2 is enacted to read:

C-2. The estates, up to 100% of the just value, having a taxable situs in the place of residence, of veterans who served in the Armed Forces of the United States who are totally and permanently disabled by injury or disease incurred or aggravated during active military service in the line of duty and are receiving any form of pension or compensation from the United States Government for total, service-connected disability.

The exemption provided in this paragraph is in lieu of any exemption under paragraph C and applies to the property of that veteran, including property held in joint tenancy with that veteran's spouse or held in a revocable living trust for the benefit of that veteran.

Sec. 3. Application. This Act applies to property taxes based on the status of property on or after April 1, 2023.

SUMMARY

Current law provides an exemption from property taxes in an amount up to \$6,000 of the just value of the property to veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States who are disabled by injury or disease during active military service. This bill provides a property tax exemption up to 100% of the just value to a veteran who is totally and permanently disabled.

City of Portland | City Council

Kate Snyder, *Mayor*



To: Joint Standing Committee on Taxation

From: Portland City Council's Legislative Committee

Date: 3/3/2022

Re: LD 1986

Testimony Neither For Nor Against LD 1986, An Act To Exempt Permanently Disabled Veterans from Payment of Property Tax

Senator Chipman, Representative Terry, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Taxation:

The Portland City Council's Legislative Committee writes to you neither for nor against LD 1986, An Act To Exempt Permanently Disabled Veterans from Payment of Property Tax.

While the City Council's Legislative Committee supports the concept in LD 1986 to grant property exemptions to permanently service-related disabled veterans, we believe the funding of the proposed exemption should be done with broad-based revenues.

Extending a tax exemption without fully reimbursing municipalities for the lost revenue has the impact of shifting additional burdens onto all other property owners, including some of our most vulnerable residents. For that reason, we ask the committee to fund this proposed exemption with broad-based revenues, rather than shift additional burdens onto municipalities and the remaining property owners.

Thank you for your consideration.

389 Congress Street, Portland, Maine 04101 | 207-874-8300 | info@portlandmaine.gov

¹Heyman, M. & Dill, J. & Douglass, R. (2018). Mental Health and Suicide of First Responders [White Paper]. Ruderman Family Foundation.
https://www.scribd.com/document/376280678/First-Responder-White-Paper-Final#download&from_embed



130th MAINE LEGISLATURE

SECOND REGULAR SESSION-2022

Legislative Document

No. 2003

H.P. 1489

House of Representatives, March 2, 2022

**An Act To Implement the Recommendations of the Commission To
Increase Housing Opportunities in Maine by Studying Zoning and
Land Use Restrictions**

(EMERGENCY)

Approved for introduction by a majority of the Legislative Council pursuant to Joint Rule 203.

Received by the Clerk of the House on February 28, 2022. Referred to the Committee on Labor and Housing pursuant to Joint Rule 308.2 and ordered printed pursuant to Joint Rule 401.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "R B. Hunt".

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Speaker FECTEAU of Biddeford.
Cosponsored by Senator HICKMAN of Kennebec and
Representative: ARATA of New Gloucester.

1 **Emergency preamble.** Whereas, acts and resolves of the Legislature do not
2 become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

3 **Whereas,** the Commission To Increase Housing Opportunities in Maine by Studying
4 Zoning and Land Use Restrictions published its final report in December 2021 and the
5 information within that report indicates an urgent need to address the availability of
6 affordable housing in Maine; and

7 **Whereas,** the recommendations within that report are essential to addressing the
8 availability of affordable housing in Maine; and

9 **Whereas,** the provisions in this legislation are based upon the recommendations in
10 that report; and

11 **Whereas,** in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within
12 the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as
13 immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now,
14 therefore,

15 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

16 **Sec. 1. 5 MRSA §4581-A, sub-§3, ¶B,** as amended by PL 2021, c. 366, §10 and
17 c. 476, §3, is further amended to read:

18 B. Discriminate in the granting of financial assistance, or in the terms, conditions or
19 privileges relating to obtaining or the use of any financial assistance, against any
20 applicant because of race or color, sex, sexual orientation or gender identity, physical
21 or mental disability, religion, ancestry, national origin, familial status or any previous
22 actions seeking and receiving an order of protection under Title 19-A, section 4007; ~~or~~

23 **Sec. 2. 5 MRSA §4581-A, sub-§4,** as enacted by PL 2011, c. 613, §11 and affected
24 by §29, is amended to read:

25 **4. Receipt of public assistance.** For any person furnishing rental premises or public
26 accommodations to refuse to rent or impose different terms of tenancy to any individual
27 who is a recipient of federal, state or local public assistance, including medical assistance
28 and housing subsidies, primarily because of the individual's status as recipient; or

29 **Sec. 3. 5 MRSA §4581-A, sub-§5** is enacted to read:

30 **5. Housing development.** For any municipality or government entity to restrict the
31 construction or development of housing accommodations in any area based upon criteria
32 that refers to the character of a location, the overcrowding of land or the undue
33 concentration of the population. For the purposes of this subsection, the following terms
34 have the following meanings.

35 A. "Character of a location" means the unique characteristics of a municipality or
36 specific area within a municipality or other political subdivision.

37 B. "Concentration of the population" means the density of the population within a
38 municipality or specific area within a municipality or other political subdivision being
39 too high.

1 C. "Overcrowding of land" means the density of residential dwellings or other
2 development in a municipality or specific area within a municipality or other political
3 subdivision being too high.

4 **Sec. 4. 5 MRSA §12004-B, sub-§11** is enacted to read:

5 **11.**

6 <u>Municipal Housing Development Permit</u>	<u>Expenses Only</u>	<u>30-A MRSA</u>
7 <u>Review Board</u>		<u>§4364-E</u>

8 **Sec. 5. 30-A MRSA §4360, sub-§3**, as amended by PL 2007, c. 77, §§1 and 2 and
9 c. 155, §1 and affected by c. 466, Pt. B, §§20 and 21, is further amended to read:

10 **3. Ordinance requirements.** A municipality may adopt a rate of growth ordinance
11 only if:

12 A. The ordinance is consistent with section 4314, subsection 3; and

13 ~~B. The ordinance sets the number of building or development permits for new~~
14 ~~residential dwellings, not including permits for affordable housing, at 105% or more~~
15 ~~of the mean number of permits issued for new residential dwellings within the~~
16 ~~municipality during the 10 years immediately prior to the year in which the number is~~
17 ~~calculated. The mean is determined by adding together the total number of permits~~
18 ~~issued, excluding permits issued for affordable housing, for new residential dwellings~~
19 ~~for each year in the prior 10 years and then dividing by 10;~~

20 ~~C. In addition to the permits established pursuant to paragraph B, the ordinance sets~~
21 ~~the number of building or development permits for affordable housing at no less than~~
22 ~~10% of the number of permits set in the ordinance pursuant to paragraph B; and~~

23 ~~D. The number of building or development permits for new any kind of residential~~
24 ~~dwellings, including but not limited to building or development permits for affordable~~
25 ~~housing, allowed under the ordinance is recalculated every 3 years not restricted.~~

26 **Sec. 6. 30-A MRSA §4360, sub-§4** is enacted to read:

27 **4. Growth caps prohibited.** A municipality may not adopt an ordinance that caps the
28 number of building or development permits each year for any kind of residential dwellings,
29 including but not limited to building or development permits for affordable housing.

30 **Sec. 7. 30-A MRSA §4364** is enacted to read:

31 **§4364. Technical assistance to municipalities related to zoning and land use**
32 **ordinances**

33 The Department of Economic and Community Development, referred to in this section
34 as "the department," shall make technical assistance for the purposes of developing and
35 implementing zoning ordinances and land use ordinances available to municipalities in
36 accordance with this section.

37 **1. Technical assistance program.** The department shall develop a program to provide
38 technical assistance to municipalities for the purposes of developing and implementing
39 zoning ordinances and land use ordinances in accordance with this chapter, including but
40 not limited to:

1 A. Ensuring that zoning ordinances and land use ordinances developed by
2 municipalities conform with state and federal laws; and

3 B. Assisting in the formal review of municipal building and development permits.

4 **2. Grant program.** The department shall develop a program to provide grants from
5 the Municipal Planning Assistance Grant and Incentive Program Fund established under
6 subsection 3 to municipalities for the purposes of contracting for services and hiring staff
7 to help administer municipal responsibilities under this chapter. The department shall adopt
8 rules outlining the application process and criteria for a municipality to receive a grant
9 under this subsection. Approved uses of grants issued under this subsection include but are
10 not limited to the following:

11 A. Contracting for the services of a regional planning organization or other private
12 entity for assistance in the development and implementation of zoning ordinances and
13 land use ordinances under this chapter; and

14 B. Hiring municipal employees to oversee or assist in the development and
15 implementation of zoning ordinances and land use ordinances under this chapter.

16 **3. Municipal Planning Assistance Grant and Incentive Program Fund.** The
17 Municipal Planning Assistance Grant and Incentive Program Fund is established as an
18 ongoing, nonlapsing General Fund program account within the department. The fund
19 receives funds appropriated by the Legislature for the purposes of providing grants under
20 subsection 2 and funding any staffing positions in the department necessary to administer
21 this section.

22 **4. Rules.** The department shall adopt rules to administer this section. Rules adopted
23 pursuant to this section are routine technical rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375,
24 subchapter 2-A.

25 **Sec. 8. 30-A MRSA §4364-A** is enacted to read:

26 **§4364-A. Municipal incentive program**

27 The Department of Economic and Community Development, referred to in this section
28 as "the department," shall develop a program to incentivize review of municipal zoning
29 ordinances and land use ordinances. A municipality may participate in the program for up
30 to 3 years.

31 **1. Municipal incentives.** The department shall provide a grant of up to \$25,000 to a
32 municipality for each year the municipality participates in the program. To be eligible for
33 a grant under the program, a municipality must commit to:

34 A. In the first year, establishing a working group to review how the municipality's
35 zoning ordinances and land use ordinances may impact the availability of housing in
36 the municipality. A municipality may satisfy the requirements of this paragraph by
37 creating a joint working group with one or more other municipalities;

38 B. In the 2nd year, adopting or amending the municipality's zoning ordinances and
39 land use ordinances to promote the availability of housing in the municipality, based
40 upon the recommendations of the working group described in paragraph A, as
41 determined by the department; and

1 C. In the 3rd year, providing information to the department about current or
2 prospective housing developments, or permits issued for the construction of housing,
3 that resulted from the zoning ordinances or land use ordinances the municipality
4 adopted or amended under paragraph B.

5 **2. Rules.** The department shall adopt rules to administer this section. Rules adopted
6 pursuant to this subsection are routine technical rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375,
7 subchapter 2-A.

8 **Sec. 9. 30-A MRSA §4364-B** is enacted to read:

9 **§4364-B. Affordable housing density**

10 For an affordable housing development approved on or after April 20, 2022, a
11 municipality shall apply density requirements in accordance with this section.

12 **1. Definition.** For the purposes of this section, "affordable housing development"
13 means:

14 A. For rental housing, a development in which a household with an income at 80% of
15 the local area median income can afford a majority of the units without spending more
16 than 30% of the household's monthly income on housing costs; and

17 B. For owned housing, a development in which a household with an income at 120%
18 of the local area median income can afford a majority of the units without spending
19 more than 30% of the household's monthly income on housing costs.

20 **2. Density requirements.** A municipality shall allow an affordable housing
21 development to have a dwelling unit density of at least 2 1/2 times the density that is
22 otherwise allowed in the zone where the affordable housing development is located and
23 may not require more than 2 off-street parking spaces for every 3 units.

24 **3. Long-term affordability.** Before approving an affordable housing development, a
25 municipality shall require that the person proposing the affordable housing development
26 has agreed to ensure that for at least 30 years:

27 A. For rental housing, occupancy of the development will remain limited to households
28 at or below 80% of the local area median income and, for owned housing, occupancy
29 of the development will remain limited to households at or below 120% of the local
30 area median income; and

31 B. A unit will not be rented to a person for less than a 30-day period.

32 **4. Rules.** The Department of Economic and Community Development shall adopt
33 rules to administer and enforce this section. The rules must include criteria for a
34 municipality to use in calculating local area median income and housing costs. Rules
35 adopted pursuant to this subsection are routine technical rules as defined in Title 5, chapter
36 375, subchapter 2-A.

37 **Sec. 10. 30-A MRSA §4364-C** is enacted to read:

38 **§4364-C. Residential zones, generally; up to 4 dwelling units permitted**

39 Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, for any zone in which housing
40 is permitted, a municipality shall permit structures with up to 4 dwelling units.

1 For any zone in which housing is permitted, municipal ordinances must comply with
2 the following conditions.

3 **1. Dimensional and setback requirements.** Municipal ordinances may not establish
4 dimensional size requirements or setback distances for multifamily housing structures that
5 are greater than dimensional or setback requirements for single-family housing structures.

6 **2. Water and wastewater.** Municipal ordinances must provide that the owner of a
7 housing structure must provide written verification to the municipality that the structure is
8 connected to adequate water and wastewater services before the municipality may certify
9 the structure for occupancy. Written verification under this subsection must include:

10 A. If a housing structure is connected to the municipal sewer system, proof of adequate
11 service to support any additional flow created by the structure and proof of payment
12 for the connection to the municipal sewer system;

13 B. If a housing structure is connected to a septic system, proof of adequate sewage
14 disposal for subsurface wastewater. The septic system must be verified as adequate by
15 a local plumbing inspector under section 4221. Plans for subsurface wastewater
16 disposal must be prepared by a licensed site evaluator in accordance with subsurface
17 wastewater disposal rules adopted under Title 22, section 42;

18 C. If a housing structure is connected to a public water system, the volume and supply
19 of water required for the structure; and

20 D. If a housing structure is connected to a well, proof of access to potable water. Any
21 tests of an existing well or proposed well must indicate that the water supply is potable
22 and acceptable for domestic use.

23 **3. Municipal implementation.** In adopting an ordinance, a municipality may:

24 A. Establish an application and permitting process for housing structures;

25 B. Impose fines for violations of building, zoning and utility requirements for housing
26 structures; and

27 C. Establish alternative criteria that are less restrictive than the requirements of
28 subsection 2 for the approval of a housing structure only in circumstances in which the
29 municipality would be able to provide a variance under section 4353, subsection 4,
30 4-A, 4-B or 4-C.

31 **4. Shoreland zoning.** Municipal ordinances must require that housing structures
32 comply with minimum shoreland zoning requirements set by the Department of
33 Environmental Protection under Title 38, chapter 3.

34 **5. Implementation.** A municipality is not required to implement the requirements of
35 this section until April 20, 2023.

36 **Sec. 11. 30-A MRSA §4364-D** is enacted to read:

37 **§4364-D. Accessory dwelling units**

38 **1. Use permitted.** A municipality shall allow an accessory dwelling unit to be located
39 on the same lot as a single-family dwelling unit in any zone in which housing is permitted.
40 For the purposes of this section, "accessory dwelling unit" has the same meaning as in
41 section 4301, subsection 1-C.

1 **2. Restrictions.** An accessory dwelling unit may be constructed only:

2 A. Within an existing structure on the lot;

3 B. Attached to or sharing a wall with a single-family dwelling unit; or

4 C. As a new structure on the lot for the primary purpose of creating an accessory
5 dwelling unit.

6 This subsection does not restrict the construction or permitting of accessory dwelling units
7 constructed and certified for occupancy prior to April 20, 2023.

8 **3. Zoning.** With respect to accessory dwelling units, municipal zoning ordinances
9 must comply with the following conditions:

10 A. At least one accessory dwelling unit must be allowed on any lot where a single-
11 family dwelling unit is the primary structure;

12 B. A lot where a single-family dwelling unit is the primary structure and an accessory
13 dwelling unit has been constructed must be zoned as single-family;

14 C. A municipality shall exempt an accessory dwelling unit from any density
15 requirements or calculations related to the zone in which the accessory dwelling unit is
16 constructed;

17 D. For an accessory dwelling unit located within the same structure as a single-family
18 dwelling unit, the setback requirements and dimensional requirements must be the
19 same as the setback requirements and dimensional requirements of the single-family
20 dwelling unit;

21 E. An accessory dwelling unit may not be subject to any additional parking
22 requirements beyond the parking requirements of the single-family dwelling unit on
23 the lot where the accessory dwelling unit is located;

24 F. An accessory dwelling unit must comply with minimum shoreland zoning
25 requirements set by the Department of Environmental Protection under Title 38,
26 chapter 3;

27 G. An accessory dwelling unit must meet the minimum size for a dwelling unit set by
28 the Maine Uniform Building Code, adopted by the Technical Building Codes and
29 Standards Board under Title 10, section 9722; and

30 H. An accessory dwelling unit may not be rented to a person for a period of less than
31 30 days. This paragraph does not apply to an accessory dwelling unit constructed or
32 permitted prior to April 20, 2022.

33 **4. Water and wastewater.** The owner of an accessory dwelling unit must provide
34 written verification to the municipality that the accessory dwelling unit is connected to
35 adequate water and wastewater services before the municipality may certify the accessory
36 dwelling unit for occupancy. Written verification under this subsection must include:

37 A. If an accessory dwelling unit is connected to the municipal sewer system, proof of
38 adequate service to support any additional flow created by the accessory dwelling unit
39 and proof of payment for the connection to the municipal sewer system;

40 B. If an accessory dwelling unit is connected to a septic system, proof of adequate
41 sewage disposal for subsurface wastewater. The septic system must be verified as

adequate by a local plumbing inspector under section 4221. Plans for subsurface wastewater disposal must be prepared by a licensed site evaluator in accordance with subsurface wastewater disposal rules adopted under Title 22, section 42;

C. If an accessory dwelling unit is connected to a public water system, the volume and supply of water required for the accessory dwelling unit; and

D. If an accessory dwelling unit is connected to a well, proof of access to potable water. Any tests of an existing well or proposed well must indicate that the water supply is potable and acceptable for domestic use.

5. Municipal implementation. In adopting an ordinance under this section, a municipality may:

A. Establish an application and permitting process for accessory dwelling units;

B. Impose fines for violations of building, zoning and utility requirements for accessory dwelling units; and

C. Establish alternative criteria that are less restrictive than the requirements of subsection 3, paragraph C, D, E, F or G or subsection 4 for the approval of an accessory dwelling unit only in circumstances in which the municipality would be able to provide a variance under section 4353, subsection 4, 4-A, 4-B or 4-C.

6. Implementation. A municipality is not required to implement the requirements of this section until April 20, 2023.

Sec. 12. 30-A MRSA §4364-E is enacted to read:

§4364-E. Municipal Housing Development Permit Review Board

The Municipal Housing Development Permit Review Board, established in Title 5, section 12004-I, subsection 30-C and referred to in this section as "the board," is responsible for the review of municipal housing development permit decisions.

1. Organization. The board consists of 7 members appointed by the Governor for terms of 5 years. A member may continue to serve on the board after the end of the member's term until the member's replacement is designated. In making appointments under this subsection, the Governor shall make 2 appointments based upon recommendations from the President of the Senate and 2 appointments based upon recommendations from the Speaker of the House of Representatives. After all members have been appointed, the board shall convene an initial meeting to elect a chair by majority vote. If a vacancy occurs on the board, the Governor may appoint a replacement to serve the remainder of the term.

2. Meetings. The chair shall convene meetings of the board as necessary. A majority of the board's members constitutes a quorum. The chair shall preside at all meetings of the board and is the official spokesperson of the board.

3. Review of municipal decisions. A person that has received a final decision from a municipality denying an application for a housing project may file a complaint to the board requesting review of that decision. Upon receipt of a complaint, the board shall set a time and place to convene and hold a hearing. The board shall give written notice of the hearing at least 20 days in advance of the hearing to the person that submitted the complaint and the municipality that denied the application. During the hearing, the board shall invite the

1 person that submitted the complaint and representatives from the municipality to provide
2 testimony regarding the project under review. After the hearing, the board shall issue an
3 opinion determining whether the project should have been approved. The board shall issue
4 the opinion in writing to the person that submitted the complaint and to the municipality.
5 If the board determines that a project should have been approved, the municipality that
6 denied the project shall approve the project. A determination issued under this subsection
7 is a final agency action as defined in Title 5, section 8002, subsection 4.

8 **4. Staff.** The chair may hire one full-time staff person to assist the board in performing
9 its duties under this section. The primary responsibilities of that staff person include, but
10 are not limited to, performing administrative tasks and conducting research.

11 **Sec. 13. 30-A MRSA c. 206, sub-c. 7** is enacted to read:

12 **SUBCHAPTER 7**

13 **PRIORITY DEVELOPMENT ZONES**

14 **§5250-U. Priority development zones required**

15 A municipality shall designate an area within the municipality as a priority
16 development zone. A priority development zone must be located in an area that has
17 significant potential for housing development and is located near community resources, as
18 determined by the Department of Economic and Community Development. A priority
19 development zone must comply with the requirements of this section and any rules adopted
20 under subsection 3.

21 **1. Definitions.** For the purposes of this section, the following terms have the following
22 meanings.

23 A. "Community resources" means services available to the community within a
24 municipality, including but not limited to transportation, schools, recreational
25 opportunities and any other services provided by the municipality. "Community
26 resources" also includes business and employment opportunities within the
27 municipality.

28 B. "Priority development zone" means a zone in which owned or rented multifamily
29 housing composed of both market rate units and units that meet the definition of
30 "affordable housing" under section 4301, subsection 1 is permitted at a specified
31 density that is greater than the density allowed in other zones within the municipality.

32 **2. Review.** Prior to adopting an ordinance designating a priority development zone, a
33 municipality shall submit a draft ordinance for review to the Department of Economic and
34 Community Development. Upon receipt of a draft ordinance, the department shall conduct
35 a review to ensure compliance with this section and any applicable rules adopted under
36 subsection 3.

37 **3. Rules.** The Department of Economic and Community Development shall adopt
38 rules to administer the requirements of this section. Rules adopted under this subsection
39 must include but are not limited to:

- 1 A. Criteria to evaluate whether an area has significant potential for housing
- 2 development;
- 3 B. Criteria to evaluate whether an area is located near community resources;
- 4 C. Minimum density requirements for an area to qualify as a priority development
- 5 zone; and
- 6 D. Minimum criteria to evaluate whether an ordinance incentivizes the development
- 7 of multifamily housing within a priority development zone, including but not limited
- 8 to establishing reduced parking requirements.

9 Rules adopted pursuant to this subsection are routine technical rules as defined in Title 5,
10 chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

11 **4. Application; compliance.** A municipality is not required to comply with the
12 requirements of this section until 2 years following the adoption of rules under subsection
13 3.

14 **Sec. 14. Initial appointments; staggered terms.** Notwithstanding the Maine
15 Revised Statutes, Title 30-A, section 4364-E, subsection 1, with regard to the initial
16 appointments to the Municipal Housing Development Permit Review Board, the Governor
17 shall appoint 2 members for a term of one year, 2 members for a term of 3 years and 3
18 members for a term of 5 years.

19 **Sec. 15. Appropriations and allocations.** The following appropriations and
20 allocations are made.

21 **ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, DEPARTMENT OF**
22 **Municipal Housing Development Permit Review Board N414**

23 Initiative: Provides ongoing funds for one Planning and Research Assistant position to
24 provide assistance to the Municipal Housing Development Permit Review Board including
25 performing administrative tasks and conducting research.

26 GENERAL FUND	2021-22	2022-23
27 POSITIONS - LEGISLATIVE COUNT	0.000	1.000
28 Personal Services	\$0	\$72,262
29 All Other	\$0	\$7,500
30		
31 GENERAL FUND TOTAL	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$79,762</u>

32 **Municipal Land Use and Zoning Ordinances Review Incentive Program N412**

33 Initiative: Provides ongoing funds for one Public Service Coordinator I position to
34 implement a municipal land use and zoning ordinances review incentive program and to
35 provide technical assistance to municipalities.

36 GENERAL FUND	2021-22	2022-23
37 POSITIONS - LEGISLATIVE COUNT	0.000	1.000
38 Personal Services	\$0	\$82,260
39 All Other	\$0	\$7,500
40		
41 GENERAL FUND TOTAL	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$89,760</u>

1	Municipal Land Use and Zoning Ordinances Review Incentive Program N412		
2	Initiative: Provides ongoing funds for grants to municipalities to review municipal land use		
3	and zoning ordinances.		
4	GENERAL FUND	2021-22	2022-23
5	All Other	\$0	\$3,000,000
6			
7	GENERAL FUND TOTAL	\$0	\$3,000,000
8	Municipal Planning Assistance Grant and Incentive Program Fund N411		
9	Initiative: Provides ongoing funds for one Public Service Coordinator II position to serve		
10	as a municipal planning coordinator providing expertise in zoning and land use ordinances		
11	to municipalities.		
12	GENERAL FUND	2021-22	2022-23
13	POSITIONS - LEGISLATIVE COUNT	0.000	1.000
14	Personal Services	\$0	\$108,060
15	All Other	\$0	\$7,500
16			
17	GENERAL FUND TOTAL	\$0	\$115,560
18	Municipal Planning Assistance Grant and Incentive Program Fund N411		
19	Initiative: Provides ongoing funds to assist municipalities in the development and		
20	implementation of zoning and land use ordinances. Funding appropriated for this purpose		
21	does not lapse but must be carried forward into the next fiscal year to be used only for the		
22	purpose for which it was provided.		
23	GENERAL FUND	2021-22	2022-23
24	All Other	\$0	\$1,294,680
25			
26	GENERAL FUND TOTAL	\$0	\$1,294,680
27			
28	ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY		
29	DEVELOPMENT, DEPARTMENT OF		
30	DEPARTMENT TOTALS	2021-22	2022-23
31			
32	GENERAL FUND	\$0	\$4,579,762
33			
34	DEPARTMENT TOTAL - ALL FUNDS	\$0	\$4,579,762
35	Emergency clause. In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this legislation		
36	takes effect when approved.		
37	SUMMARY		
38	This bill makes changes to zoning and land use laws based upon the recommendations		
39	in the report of the Commission To Increase Housing Opportunities in Maine by Studying		
40	Zoning and Land Use Restrictions. The bill:		

- 1 1. Amends the fair housing provisions of the Maine Human Rights Act to define the
2 terms "character of a location," "overcrowding of land" and "concentration of the
3 population" and to prohibit municipalities and government entities from using these criteria
4 to restrict the construction or development of housing accommodations in any area;
- 5 2. Establishes the Municipal Housing Development Permit Review Board, which is
6 responsible for the review of municipal housing development permit decisions;
- 7 3. Prohibits municipalities from adopting any ordinance that caps the number of
8 building or development permits each year for any kind of residential dwellings;
- 9 4. Requires the Department of Economic and Community Development to develop a
10 program to provide technical assistance to municipalities for the purposes of developing
11 and implementing zoning and land use ordinances;
- 12 5. Requires the Department of Economic and Community Development to implement
13 a program to provide grants to municipalities for the purposes of contracting for services
14 and hiring staff to help administer municipal responsibilities in developing and
15 implementing zoning and land use ordinances and appropriates \$1,294,680 for that
16 program in fiscal year 2022-23;
- 17 6. Requires the Department of Economic and Community Development to create an
18 incentive program that a municipality may participate in for up to 3 years and receive grants
19 of up to \$25,000 per year for fulfilling certain requirements related to reviewing how its
20 zoning and land use ordinances may impact the availability of housing;
- 21 7. Defines "affordable housing development," requires municipalities to allow
22 affordable housing developments to be built at certain densities and sets certain criteria to
23 ensure that an affordable housing development remains affordable for at least 30 years;
- 24 8. Requires, for any zone in which housing is permitted, that a municipality permit
25 structures with up to 4 dwelling units and creates general requirements for municipal
26 ordinances governing residential zones;
- 27 9. Beginning April 20, 2023, requires municipalities to allow the construction of
28 accessory dwelling units and sets out specific requirements for the permitting and
29 construction of accessory dwelling units; and
- 30 10. Requires that a municipality designate an area within the municipality as a priority
31 development zone, which is defined as a zone in which multifamily housing is permitted at
32 a greater density, and requires the priority development zone to be located in an area that
33 has significant potential for housing development and is located near community resources.
34 Municipalities are not required to designate a priority development zone until 2 years
35 following adoption of rules by the Department of Economic and Community Development.



Dena Libner <dlibner@portlandmaine.gov>

Staff Feedback on Housing Report

Dena Libner <dlibner@portlandmaine.gov>

Tue, Jan 11, 2022 at 2:18 PM

Bcc: April Fournier <afournier@portlandmaine.gov>, Pious Ali <pali@portlandmaine.gov>, Kate Snyder <ksnyder@portlandmaine.gov>, Danielle West-Chuhta <dwest@portlandmaine.gov>

Please see below, from Planning & Urban Development:

We are already doing most of the recommendations in the report, or something similar. That said, there are also some recommendations in the report that represent the varied views of the Commission members. Regarding individual recommendations:

Recommendation #1. Allow accessory dwelling units by right in all zoning districts currently zoned for single-family homes. [We already do this.](#)

Recommendation #2. Eliminate single-family zoning restrictions in all residential zones across the State by allowing up to four residential units on all lots, in compliance with any health and safety requirements such as minimum septic and lot sizes, with a sunrise clause to provide adequate time for municipalities to prepare for this change. [Staff believes this is fairly arbitrary, although the intent is fine.](#)

Recommendation #3. Prohibit municipal growth caps on the production of new housing. [We don't prohibit or implement growth caps.](#)

Recommendation #4. Provide technical and financial assistance for all communities seeking support in making zoning improvements and in identifying opportunities for increasing affordable housing. [More technical and financial assistance to municipalities is a great idea.](#)

Recommendation #5. Create density bonuses in all residential zones throughout the State, giving low to middle-income housing projects 2.5 times the density of the existing zone, with a parking requirement of no more than .66 spaces per unit for the additional units, and with the requirement that those units be protected as affordable for a specific period of time. [We support this concept, but it's very specific on what the bonus and the parking ratio should be and I don't know if those are the numbers to shoot for in all conditions and contexts. Our parking requirements are more relaxed than this in much of the city, and we give affordable bonuses in many zones, though not all.](#)

Recommendation #6. Create a three-year statewide incentive program for municipalities as follows: in Year 1, a qualifying community must make a commitment to reviewing zoning and land use restrictions. In Years 2 and 3, adopt zoning and land use policies to promote housing opportunities; qualifying communities would receive a state financial reward for up to three years, so long as they remain in good standing with the program requirements. [We're already reviewing our code, and already encourage housing creation and affordability. We believe we would meet this standard today, and don't have concerns about this being a state requirement, and would welcome the financial reward aspect for the City;](#)

Recommendation #7. Create a system of priority development areas, where multifamily housing is permitted with limited regulatory barriers. [This is a fine idea. Our comp plan highlights priority areas in the Future Land Use section, and we reference it often when considering zoning and other policy changes](#)

Recommendation #8. Strengthen Maine's Fair Housing Act by eliminating the terms "character," "overcrowding of land," and "undue concentration of population" as legal bases for zoning regulations. [We have no concerns here.](#)

Recommendation #9. Create a state-level housing appeals board to review denials of affordable housing projects made at the local level. [We do not believe the housing appeals board is a good idea, and the recommendation comments reflect our and others' concerns.](#)

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130th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2021

Legislative Document

No. 906

H.P. 662

House of Representatives, March 8, 2021

An Act To Provide Passamaquoddy Tribal Members Access to Clean Drinking Water

(EMERGENCY)

Reference to the Committee on Judiciary suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "R. B. Hunt".

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative NEWELL of the Passamaquoddy Tribe.

1 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

2 **CONCEPT DRAFT**

3 **SUMMARY**

4 This bill is a concept draft pursuant to Joint Rule 208.

5 This bill, as emergency legislation, proposes to provide clean drinking water to the
6 Passamaquoddy Reservation at Pleasant Point and to nearby municipalities.

LD #	LR #	Title	Sponsor	Cmte	Bill Information	COP Position	Public Hearing	Work Session	Status	Category	Notes	Priority
1866	2507	An Act To Ensure Low-income Families and Children with Special Needs Can Access After-school Services	Gramlich	HHS	Bill Text		1/25/22 1:00 PM Rm 209 COB	3/7/22 10:00 AM Rm 209 COB		After school services	Provides new reimbursement to schools for after school programs	
1386	923	Resolve, To Improve Access to Bariatric Care (Emergency)	Perry	HHS	Bill Text	Monitor	4/14/21 2:00 PM Rm 209 COB	4/26/21 10:00 AM Rm 209 COB	Carry over approved 7/19/21	Bariatric care	This will not directly affect City operations, but staff is supportive from a policy perspective.	
1945	2477	An Act To Regulate the Use of Biometric Identifiers	O'Neil	JUD	Bill Text	Monitor/ Support	2/22/22 9:00 AM Rm 438 SH	3/2/22 1:00 PM Rm 438 SH		Biometric Identifiers		
49	271	An Act To Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue To Invest in Infrastructure To Address Sea Level Rise (Bond)	Brennan	AFA	Bill Text		4/26/21 10:00 AM Rm 228 SH		Carry over approved 7/13/21	Bond		
50	272	An Act To Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue To Invest in Housing for Persons Who Are Homeless (Bond)	Brennan	AFA	Bill Text		4/21/21 1:00 PM Rm 228 SH	2/22/22 10:00 AM Rm 228 SH	Voted 2/22/22 ONTP Not rpt out	Bond		
133	930	An Act To Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue To Invest in Fire Stations (Bond)	Crockett	AFA	Bill Text	Support	4/27/21 10:00 AM Rm 228 SH		Carry over approved 7/13/21	Bond		High
150	140	An Act To Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue To Fund Hazardous Substance Site Cleanups (Bond)	Fay	AFA	Bill Text	Staff to review	4/26/21 10:00 AM Rm 228 SH		Carry over approved 7/13/21	Bond	This is in line with the City's own regulations. No issues.	
175	1096	An Act To Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue To Create and Enhance Regional Homeless Shelters (Bond)	Cloutier	AFA	Bill Text	Support/ Testify	4/21/21 1:00 PM Rm 228 SH	2/22/22 10:00 AM Rm 228 SH	Voted 2/22/22 ONTP Not rpt out	Bond	Provided testimony.	
181	955	An Act To Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue To Complete the Renovation of a Wharf and Bulkhead in Portland for Marine Research (Bond)	Sylvester	AFA	Bill Text	Staff to review	4/20/21 1:00 PM Rm 228 SH	2/22/22 10:00 AM Rm 228 SH	Tabled 2/22/22	Bond		

LD #	LR #	Title	Sponsor	Cmte	Bill Information	COP Position	Public Hearing	Work Session	Status	Category	Notes	Priority
969	1496	An Act To Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue for the Construction of a Convention Center in Portland, Improvements to the Augusta Civic Center and a Competitive Grant Program for Capital Improvements to Public Venues across the State (Bond)	Bailey	AFA	Bill Text		4/27/21 10:00 AM Rm 228 SH	2/22/22 10:00 AM Rm 228 SH	Voted 2/22/22 ONTP Not rpt out	Bond	Staff to provide a memo.	
987	1638	An Act To Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue for the Portland Harbor Commercial Revitalization Project's Confined Aquatic Disposal Cell and Dredging Projects (Bond)	Chipman	AFA	Bill Text	Support/ Testify	4/29/21 10:00 AM Rm 228 SH		Carry over approved 7/13/21	Bond	Staff strongly support and recommend direct lobbying, close monitoring and testimony.	
1086	1440	An Act To Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue To Upgrade Customs Facilities at the Portland International Jetport and the Bangor International Airport To Promote International Tourism and Commerce (Bond)	Bailey	AFA	Bill Text	Support/ Testify	4/29/21 10:00 AM Rm 228 SH	2/22/22 10:00 AM Rm 228 SH	Tabled 2/22/22	Bond	Paul Bradbury to testify, watch for ICE detention facility integration	
1094	1816	An Act To Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue To Reduce Homeowner and Municipal Energy Bills through Increased Efficiency and Weatherization Projects (Bond)	Pouliot	AFA	Bill Text	Support	4/21/21 1:00 PM Rm 228 SH	2/22/22 10:00 AM Rm 228 SH	Voted 2/22/22 ONTP Not rpt out	Bond		
1475	1621	An Act To Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue for Targeted Food Processing Infrastructure (Bond)	Talbot Ross	AFA	Bill Text	Monitor	4/20/21 1:00 PM Rm 228 SH		Carry over approved 7/13/21	Bond	Staff support	
1555	1863	An Act To Fund Broadband Internet Infrastructure for Marginalized Groups in the State	Talbot Ross	EUT	Bill Text		4/27/21 9:00 AM Rm 211 COB	Work session held 5/27/21	Carry over approved 7/19/21	Broadband	Will not impact City operations.	

LD #	LR #	Title	Sponsor	Cmte	Bill Information	COP Position	Public Hearing	Work Session	Status	Category	Notes	Priority
1894	2293	An Act To Support Municipal Broadband Infrastructure through Incentives and Competition	Vitelli	EUT	Bill Text		2/3/22 9:00 AM Rm 211 COB	3/10/22 11:00 AM Rm 211 COB		Broadband		
1940	2394	An Act To Ensure That Building Codes Allow the Installation and Use of Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Products and Equipment That Use Certain Federally Regulated Refrigerants (Title change)	Timberlake	CJPS	Bill Text	Monitor	2/7/22 9:00 AM Rm 216 COB	2/7/22 9:15 AM Rm 216 COB	OTP-AM Reported out 2/16/22	Building codes	From staff - This bill may prohibit municipalities from adopting certain energy codes that are stricter than the base code, potentially undermining local energy efficiency initiatives. Staff recommend that this bill be monitored as they look into it further	
	1847	An Act To Allow the Bureau of Motor Vehicles To Assist in the Critical Incident Contact Chain	Sanborn			Need language				Contact chain		High
1874	2397	An Act To Clarify COVID-19 Paid Leave for School Employees (Emergency)	White	LH	Bill Text		1/31/22 9:00 AM Rm 202 COB	2/7/22 10:00 AM Rm 202 COB	Voted 2/7/22 OTP-AM Not rpt out	COVID-19		
1845	2310	An Act To Amend the Education Statutes	Brennan	ECA	Bill Text	Monitor	1/13/22 9:30 AM Rm 208 COB	1/27/22 9:30 AM Rm 208 COB	Voted 1/27/22 OTP-AM Not rpt out	Education		
1935	2602	Resolve, Regarding Legislative Review of Portions of Chapter 60: New School Siting Approval, Portions of Chapter 61: State Board of Education Rules for Major Capital School Construction Projects and Portions of Chapter 125: Basic School Approval Standards: Public Schools and School Administrative Units, Major Substantive Rules of the Department of Education, State Board of Education (Emergency)	Brennan	ECA	Bill Text		2/8/22 9:30 AM Rm 208 COB	2/15/22 9:30 AM Rm 208 COB	Voted 2/15/22 Anticipated Divided Rpt Not rpt out	Education		

LD #	LR #	Title	Sponsor	Cmte	Bill Information	COP Position	Public Hearing	Work Session	Status	Category	Notes	Priority
1830	2351	An Act To Amend the Election Laws	Luchini	VLA	Bill Text	Monitor	1/12/22 9:00 AM Rm 437 SH	2/7/22 1:00 PM Rm 437 SH	Voted 2/7/22 Anticipated Divided Rpt Not rpt out	Elections	Kathy testified for MTTCa.	
555	906	An Act To Expand the Rights of Public Sector Employees	Sylvester	LH	Bill Text	Oppose/ Monitor	1/19/22 9:00 AM Rm 202 COB	Work session held	DEAD	Employment		
2006	2548	An Act To Improve the Low-income Home Energy Assistance Program (Emergency)	LaRochelle	LH	Bill Text		3/8/22 10:00 AM Rm 216 COB			Energy Assistance		
1898	2313	An Act To Address the Economic Impact of Federal Closures on Maine's Fixed Gear Fishing Industry (Emergency)	Stover	MR	Bill Text		2/1/22 9:00 AM Rm 206 COB	2/15/22 9:00 AM Rm 206 COB	Voted 2/15/22 Anticipated Divided Rpt Not rpt out	Fishing Industry		
1772	2382	An Act To Amend the Remote Meeting Law in Maine's Freedom of Access Act	Harnett	JUD	Bill Text	Monitor	2/1/22 1:00 PM Rm 438 SH	3/11/22 9:30 AM Rm 438 SH		FOIA	Staff is supporting	
910	284	An Act To Amend the General Assistance Laws Governing Reimbursement	Brennan	HHS	Bill Text	Support/ Testify	4/1/21 12:00 PM Rm 209 COB	4/22/21 10:00 AM Rm 209 COB	Carry over approved 7/19/21	General Assistance	Written testimony submitted	High
343	1804	An Act To Set Aside Funds from Federal Block Grants for Certain Communities	Talbot Ross	HHS	Bill Text	Monitor	3/24/21 10:00 AM Rm 209 COB	3/3/22 2:00 PM Rm 209 COB	Voted 3/3/22 OTP-AM Not rpt out	Grants	Concerns Ask for language from Rep. Talbot Ross	
1939	2510	An Act To Protect School Administration Officials from Harassment and Abuse	Breen	CJPS	Bill Text		2/18/22 10:00 AM Rm 436 SH	3/3/22 1:00 PM Rm 436 SH	Voted 3/3/22 Anticipated Divided Rpt Not rpt out	Harassment		

LD #	LR #	Title	Sponsor	Cmte	Bill Information	COP Position	Public Hearing	Work Session	Status	Category	Notes	Priority
1523	1388	An Act To Establish the Trust for a Healthy Maine	Millett	HHS	Bill Text	Monitor	2/9/22 10:00 AM Rm 209 COB	3/2/22 10:00 AM Rm 209 COB	Voted 3/2/22 Anticipated Divided Rpt Not rpt out	Health		
1693	1927	An Act To Advance Health Equity, Improve the Well-being of All Maine People and Create a Health Trust	Talbot Ross	HHS	Bill Text	Monitor	2/9/22 10:00 AM Rm 209 COB	3/2/22 10:00 AM Rm 209 COB	Voted 3/2/22 Anticipated Divided Rpt Not rpt out	Health		
1968	2352	An Act To Expand Access to Mental Health and Crisis Care for Individuals in Jails and Individuals Experiencing Homelessness	Talbot Ross	HHS	Bill Text		3/1/22 1:00 PM Rm 209 COB	3/4/22 10:00 AM Rm 209 COB		Health		
1899	2386	An Act To Ensure Safe Entry and Access for People Seeking Health Care and Other Constitutional Rights	McCreight	JUD	Bill Text		3/1/22 9:00 AM Rm 438 SH	3/8/22 9:00 AM Rm 438 SH		Health Care	Support. Would like more information. Adds municipal requirements to patrolling health care provider sites	
1909	2384	An Act To Remove Restrictions on Syringe Service Programs (Emergency)	McDonald	HHS	Bill Text	Monitor	2/1/22 1:00 PM Rm 209 COB	2/8/22 1:00 PM Rm 209 COB	MAJ: OTP-AM MIN: ONTP Reported out 2/24/22	Health Care	Staff recommends tracking.	
1966	2596	An Act To Facilitate Access to Heating Assistance	Curry	LH	Bill Text		2/28/22 10:15 AM Rm 202 COB	3/8/22 1:00 PM Rm 216 COB		Heating assistance		
1448	1597	An Act To Increase the Homestead Property Tax Exemption (Title change)	Talbot Ross	TAX	Bill Text		5/4/21 11:00 AM Rm 127 SH	5/10/21 9:00 AM Rm 127 SH	Carry over approved 7/19/21	Homestead Exemption		High
1246	1616	Resolve, To Study Best Practices and Different Area Needs for Development of Affordable Homes and Expanding Home Ownership in Maine Communities	Gere	LH	Bill Text	Monitor	4/16/21 9:00 AM Rm 202 COB	4/30/21 12:30 PM Rm 202 COB	Carry over approved 7/19/21	Housing	Staff support. Similar goal to LD 48.	

LD #	LR #	Title	Sponsor	Cmte	Bill Information	COP Position	Public Hearing	Work Session	Status	Category	Notes	Priority
1300	684	An Act To Require County Governments To Coordinate with Municipalities To Create Plans To Address Homelessness	Supica	SLG	Bill Text		4/16/21 9:00 AM Rm 214 COB	4/26/21 10:30 AM Rm 214 COB	Carry over approved 7/19/21	Housing		
1337	103	An Act To Increase Affordable Housing and Reduce Property Taxes through an Impact Fee on Vacant Residences	Kessler	TAX	Bill Text	Support w/changes	4/14/21 9:00 AM Rm 127 SH	2/3/22 9:00 AM Rm 127 SH	MAJ: OTP-AM MIN: ONTP Reported out 3/1/22	Housing	Bernstein to contact sponsor to discuss. Staff strongly support vacancy fees, but believe program should be local with revenue staying in the municipality to further affordable housing goals and/or reducing the tax burden	
1961	2339	An Act To Help Alleviate Maine's Housing Shortage and Change the Membership of the Maine State Housing Authority (Emergency)	Hickman	LH	Bill Text		3/7/22 10:00 AM Rm 202 COB			Housing		
2003	2299	An Act To Implement the Recommendations of the Commission To Increase Housing Opportunities in Maine by Studying Zoning and Land Use Restrictions (Emergency)	Fecteau	LH	Bill Text		3/7/22 10:00 AM Rm 202 COB			Housing		
17	373	Resolve, To Provide Rural Nonmedical Transportation Services to the Elderly and Adults with Disabilities Receiving Home and Community Benefits under the MaineCare Program (Emergency)	Maxmin	HHS	Bill Text	High Priority	2/10/21 10:00 AM Rm 209 COB	5/13/21 1:00 PM Rm 209 COB	Carry over approved 7/19/21	MaineCare		High
684	953	Resolve, To Amend MaineCare Reimbursement Provisions Governing Supplemental Payments to Nursing Facilities with High MaineCare Use (Emergency)	Timberlake	HHS	Bill Text		3/17/21 1:00 PM Rm 209 COB	4/6/21 2:00 PM Rm 209 COB	Carry over approved 7/19/21	MaineCare	Staff to check	

LD #	LR #	Title	Sponsor	Cmte	Bill Information	COP Position	Public Hearing	Work Session	Status	Category	Notes	Priority
1195	800	An Act To Increase Funding to Qualifying Municipalities by Sharing Adult Use Marijuana Sales and Excise Tax Revenue	Roberts	TAX	Bill Text	Strong support/ Testify	4/7/21 9:00 AM Rm 127 SH	3/10/22 9:00 AM Rm 127 SH	Tabled 2/24/22	Marijuana	Staff will submit written testimony	
1930	2582	Resolve, Regarding Legislative Review of Portions of Chapter 1: Adult Use Marijuana Program Rule, a Major Substantive Rule of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, Office of Marijuana Policy (Emergency)	Caiazzo	VLA	Bill Text		1/31/22 11:00 AM Rm 437 SH	3/7/22 9:00 AM Rm 437 SH		Marijuana		
1428	1626	An Act To Increase the Availability of Nasal Naloxone in Community Settings	Dodge	HHS	Bill Text	Monitor	4/23/21 9:00 AM Rm 209 COB	2/22/22 10:00 AM Rm 209 COB	Voted 2/22/22 Anticipated Divided Rpt Not rpt out	Naloxone	Staff support	
250	1098	An Act To Assist Nursing Homes in the Management of Facility Beds	Perry	HHS	Bill Text	City staff to check	3/17/21 1:00 PM Rm 209 COB	4/6/21 2:00 PM Rm 209 COB	Carry over approved 7/19/21	Nursing homes	No issue (will not affect BC unless we reduced bed size and then increased bed size).	
1482	1310	An Act To Improve Access to Property Tax Exemptions for New Homeowners	Grohoski	TAX	Bill Text		5/4/21 11:00 AM Rm 127 SH	5/10/21 9:00 AM Rm 127 SH	Carry over approved 7/19/21	Property tax		High
1879	2421	An Act To Support Law Enforcement Officers, Corrections Officers, E-9-1-1 Dispatchers, Firefighters and Emergency Medical Services Persons Diagnosed with Post-traumatic Stress Disorder	Sylvester	LH	Bill Text		1/31/22 9:00 AM Rm 202 COB	2/7/22 10:00 AM Rm 202 COB	Voted 2/7/22 OTP-AM Not rpt out	PTSD	Support. FD & PD may testify.	
202	758	RESOLUTION, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine To Implement Ranked-choice Voting	Miramant	VLA	Bill Text	Monitor	2/10/21 10:00 AM Rm 437 SH	3/26/21 11:30 AM Rm 437 SH	Carry over approved 7/19/21	Ranked choice		

LD #	LR #	Title	Sponsor	Cmte	Bill Information	COP Position	Public Hearing	Work Session	Status	Category	Notes	Priority
328	711	An Act To Fully Fund and Restore State-Municipal Revenue Sharing (Emergency)	Harnett	TAX	Bill Text	Support/ Testify	3/9/21 9:30 AM Rm 127 SH	3/18/21 9:30 AM Rm 127 SH	Carry over approved 7/19/21	Revenue sharing	Mayor will testify	
1971	2594	An Act To Implement the Recommendations of the Right To Know Advisory Committee Concerning Remote Participation	Harnett	JUD	Bill Text		2/25/22 10:00 AM Rm 438 SH	3/11/22 9:30 AM Rm 438 SH		Right to know		
1440	1401	An Act To Provide Safe Gear for Female Firefighters	Roeder	CJPS	Bill Text	Support	4/21/21 2:00 PM Rm 436 SH	4/30/21 1:00 PM Rm 436 SH	Carry over approved 7/19/21	Safety	Staff support, City of Portland already does this.	
111	474	An Act To Allow Career Educators To Retire without Penalty	Tuell	LH	Bill Text		2/3/21 10:00 AM Rm 202 COB	2/22/21 1:00 PM Rm 202 COB	Carry over approved 7/19/21	School		
270	352	An Act To Amend the Regional Adjustment Index To Ensure School Districts Do Not Receive Less than the State Average for Teacher Salaries	Stewart	ECA	Bill Text	Monitor	3/8/21 10:00 AM Rm 208 COB	3/3/22 9:30 AM Rm 208 COB	Voted 3/3/22 Anticipated Divided Rpt Not rpt out	School	Check with Superintendent Xavier Botana_defer to Rep. Brennan	
773	295	An Act To Assist Public School Students and Families Who Are Homeless	Brennan	LH	Bill Text		4/2/21 10:00 AM Rm 202 COB	4/21/21 12:00 PM Rm 202 COB	Carry over approved 7/19/21	School	Review further	
211	1094	An Act To Support Emergency Shelter Access for Persons Experiencing Homelessness	Cloutier	LH	Bill Text	Monitor	2/17/21 10:00 AM Rm 202 COB	3/17/21 10:00 AM Rm 202 COB	Carry over approved 7/19/21	Shelter	Monitor/most likely support. Staff to look into GA/shelter bills; Staff supports (carryover from 129th - LD 1909)	
654	1665	An Act To Create a 24-hour Shelter Capital Project Funding Program	Arford	LH	Bill Text	Monitor	3/22/21 10:00 AM Rm 202 COB	4/21/21 12:00 PM Rm 202 COB	Carry over approved 7/19/21	Shelter	Concerned as meant to only cover hotel purchases.	
259	886	An Act To Improve Solid Waste Management	McDonald	ENR	Bill Text	Monitor	3/7/22 9:00 AM Rm 216 COB	5/24/21 10:00 AM Rm 216 COB		Solid waste		
1963	2573	An Act To Create the General Purpose Aid Stabilization Fund	LaRochelle	ECA	Bill Text		2/22/22 10:30 AM Rm 208 COB	3/10/22 11:00 AM Rm 208 COB		Stabilization Fund		

LD #	LR #	Title	Sponsor	Cmte	Bill Information	COP Position	Public Hearing	Work Session	Status	Category	Notes	Priority
197	666	Resolve, To Ensure That Community Mental Health Service Providers Can Access Pandemic Stimulus Funds	Breen	HHS	Bill Text	Support	4/15/21 1:00 PM Rm 209 COB	5/13/21 10:30 AM Rm 209 COB	Carry over approved 7/19/21	Stimulus	City staff to review Staff supports	
290	346	An Act To Stabilize Property Taxes for Individuals 65 Years of Age or Older Who Own a Homestead for at Least 10 Years	Stewart	TAX	Bill Text	Oppose	5/12/21 9:30 AM Rm 127 SH	5/25/21 9:00 AM Rm 127 SH	Carry over approved 7/19/21	Tax	The property tax amount is not a number that can just be frozen in our internal systems. The property tax for each individual parcel is a computation derived of two parts - the assessed value of the property multiplied by the tax rate for the corresponding fiscal year. In order to keep a tax amount "stabilized" there would need to be an adjustment made to one of these parts or at the very least, an abatement done to subtract the overall difference to arrive at the same "stabilized" tax amount each year. I object to the provision that someone eligible for a "stabilized" tax could move it with them to another municipality. Imagine someone living in Machias in a 1500 sq. ft., 3 bed, 1.5 bath home assessed at \$200,000 and paying \$4,000 in taxes downsizes and moves to a condo in Portland where the taxes may be \$6,000 otherwise. Let's say instead of downsizing, the eligible individual upsizes to create a larger home for extended family. Who wouldn't want to move their grandmother to an Eastern or Western Promenade property to take advantage of her "stabilized" eligibility to pay only \$4,000 in	
647	517	An Act To Expand Eligibility for the Veterans' Property Tax Exemption	Keim	TAX	Bill Text	Monitor	4/7/21 9:00 AM Rm 127 SH	4/20/21 9:00 AM Rm 127 SH	Carry over approved 7/19/21	Tax	Staff to get additional information	

LD #	LR #	Title	Sponsor	Cmte	Bill Information	COP Position	Public Hearing	Work Session	Status	Category	Notes	Priority
1771	2437	Resolve, To Establish the Advisory Panel To Better Understand and Make Recommendations Regarding the Implications of Genome-editing Technology for the Citizens of the State	Zager	HHS	Bill Text		1/12/22 10:00 AM Rm 209 COB	1/20/22 11:00 AM Rm 209 COB	OTP-AM Reported out 2/18/22	Technology	Support. Mayor testified.	
1447	1867	An Act To Require Training in Racial Issues, Racial Justice and Social Issues at the Maine Criminal Justice Academy and To Establish Additional Requirements for Law Enforcement Officers and Candidates	Gramlich	CJPS	Bill Text	Support	5/7/21 9:00 AM Rm 436 SH	2/17/22 10:15 AM Rm 436 SH	Voted 2/17/22 Anticipated Divided Rpt Not rpt out	Training	Staff support	
	1630	An Act To Increase Access To Transportation for Workforce and Other Essential Transportation Needs								Transportation		High
148	354	An Act To Establish Ongoing Absentee Voting	Fecteau	VLA	Bill Text	Monitor	2/8/21 9:00 AM Rm 437 SH	4/30/21 1:00 PM Rm 437 SH	Carry over approved 7/19/21	Voting		
	1849	An Act To Assist Maine's Working Waterfront	Sanborn			Need language				Waterfront		High
1889	2274	An Act To Amend the Whistleblowers' Protection Act To Ensure Coverage in Unionized Workplaces	Harnett	LH	Bill Text		2/2/22 9:00 AM Rm 202 COB	2/14/22 1:00 PM Rm 202 COB	Voted 2/15/22 Anticipated Divided Rpt Not rpt out	Whistleblower Protection		
1338	810	An Act To Prohibit Employers from Retaliating against the Use of Earned Paid Leave (Title change)	Millett	LH	Bill Text	Monitor	4/23/21 9:00 AM Rm 202 COB	4/26/21 12:00 PM Rm 202 COB	Carry over approved 7/19/21	Workplace rights	No testimony	

LD #	LR #	Title	Sponsor	Cmte	Bill Information	COP Position	Public Hearing	Work Session	Status	Category	Notes	Priority
552	857	Resolve, To Improve the Individualized Education Program Process (Title change)	Millett	ECA	Bill Text	Oppose	3/22/21 1:00 PM Rm 208 COB	4/5/21 10:00 AM Rm 208 COB	Carry over approved 7/19/21		From Xavier Botana: It is a special ed bill that has significant potential costs associated with it. MSMA is strongly opposed and has prepared a fact sheet. I have personally spoken to Rep. Millett about the bill and it's better than it started, but still fundamentally problematic. Anything the team can do to help get it stopped would be appreciated.	
1383	1758	Resolve, Directing the Department of Education To Study the Use of Homework in Public Schools (Title change)	Collings	ECA	Bill Text	Oppose	4/22/21 10:00 AM Rm 208 COB	5/4/21 1:00 PM Rm 208 COB	Carry over approved 7/19/21		From Xavier Botana: We oppose the portion of the bill that prohibits homework be assigned to students in PK-5. While it allows a school Board to adopt a policy to allow homework, it is overly broad to say that homework is not allowed at all unless that specific action is taken. School districts should retain the ability to empower administrators and teachers to assign homework. We support the aspect of the bill that calls for a study of homework, but would like to see it extended throughout all grades and focus in particular on ways in which homework can be used to support what students are learning but not be used as a punishment or negatively impact a student's performance.	
1929	2316	An Act To Provide Assistance to Areas Severely Infested with Browntail Moths	Hepler	ACF	Bill Text		2/1/22 11:00 AM Rm 214 COB	2/8/22 1:00 PM Rm 214 COB	OTP-AM Reported out 2/18/22			



LEGISLATIVE & NOMINATING COMMITTEE
POLICY PRIORITIES

Support Rep. Pingree's Asylum Seeker Work Authorization Act (HR 6693)

Asylum seekers are currently required to wait 365 days to apply for Work Authorization after submitting their Asylum application. This waiting period delays self-sufficiency and, in many cases, represents an additional six months of General Assistance. A wait time reduction benefits Maine's economy, helps address our workforce shortage, and enables new Mainers to be self-sufficient. This bill, introduced by Rep. Pingree in February 2022, would reduce the wait to 30 days.

Continue 100% FEMA reimbursement for the COVID-19 Major Disaster Declaration beyond April 1, 2022 and extension of Maine's non-congregate sheltering waiver

The City of Portland has been sheltering record numbers of individuals and families, and City homeless shelters are far beyond capacity. Since April 2020, the City has been using non-congregate sheltering in area hotels for individuals and families seeking shelter when the City shelters are at capacity to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission. People seeking shelter are referred to the City's General Assistance (GA) program and given a voucher for a hotel room at a nearby hotel.

Portland currently receives a 70% reimbursement for GA from Maine DHHS and is responsible for the remaining 30%. Under the current major disaster declaration, Maine has been approved for FEMA Public Assistance reimbursement for non-congregate sheltering (for the remaining 30%) through a waiver. Prior to this, Governor Mills provided CARES Act funding to ensure municipality Public Assistance eligible expenses such as these were reimbursed at 100%.

The number of families that Portland has been sheltering has been rapidly increasing - with many families seeking asylum arriving to Portland from the southern border in the past several months. The City's Finance Director estimates that if Portland is not able to be reimbursed for 100% of non-congregate sheltering expenses and the current demand for sheltering stays flat, it could add \$20M - \$40M of expenses to the City's operating budget, which would result in substantial tax increase (4.8%).

Mandate universal background checks

With larger-city crime and violence having found its way to Maine, the importance of addressing firearm violence and safety has never been greater. There is a clear nexus between firearms, the drug trade, crime and violence. The Supreme Court once noted that “Guns and drugs go hand in hand.” Universal background checks would be a valuable tool for reducing gun-related violence and deaths, by reducing avenues and options for access by prohibited persons. Criminals, severely mentally ill people, and domestic abusers remain able to exploit the private sale loophole every day, putting all of our communities at risk.

Funding Support for Adequate Emergency Shelter Space

Portland is housing approximately 1,040 clients nightly at locations throughout Portland. The majority of clients come from other towns, states, and countries. Portland has a site ready for the development of a new emergency shelter, which would provide a safe and clean space to provide shelter and resources; however, financial support is needed for its construction. The current cost estimate is \$20M.

Funding Support to Dredge Portland Harbor Berthing Resources

The City of Portland, in partnership with the City of South Portland, the Portland Harbor Commission and the State of Maine Department of Transportation, was unsuccessful in a second application for \$24 M in federal funding through the RAISE (formerly BUILD) Grant Program to dredge public and private berthing resources in Portland Harbor. While virtually all urban harbors require dredging to mitigate sedimentation caused by natural drainage and stormwater runoff, Portland Harbor’s berthing resources are challenged by legacy contaminants and have not been dredged in decades. Recent economic studies emphasize that berthing resources underpin a harbor-wide economy with a \$1B annual impact. Dredging will stabilize losses and expand the potential of the harbor for fisheries, tourism, aquaculture, and emerging opportunities in the “Blue Economy”. Active Congressional support for the Portland Dredge Project will be critical for its success.

Funding Support for Police Headquarters Relocation

Portland’s 50-year-old headquarters no longer provides the capacity needed to effectively provide the type and level of law enforcement and requests for service seen today. The current building faces maintenance issues, and houses both a regional crime lab and a regional communications center. In addition, it provides space for a federal “safe streets” task force. Federal support is needed to help the department keep pace with growth and challenges in our region.

Funding Support for Fire Stations

In 2017, a consultant determined that at least five of Portland's fire stations need to be completely replaced due to cramped quarters, small lot, age, and required environmental upgrades. As a result of these challenges, we are unable to add additional or larger apparatuses; increase staffing; conduct onsite training; meet ADA requirements; meet living quarters best practices; address potential plumbing and heating systems hazards.

Funding for Workforce Development Training

Increased federal support for training in the skilled trades to develop a more robust talent pipeline, as well as to provide new economic opportunities for minority and low-income populations.

PROGRAMMATIC FUNDING PRIORITIES

- **The HOME Investment Partnerships Program**: This is a vital resource to ensure the continued creation and maintenance of affordable housing. When construction is completed on recent HOME-funded projects, 275 new units of affordable rental housing will be added to the Portland market.
- **The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program**: This is often the only resource available to fund public infrastructure in lower-income neighborhoods and provide social services to the most vulnerable residents in our community. Recent CDBG projects include road and lighting improvements in the Bayside neighborhood, community policing, and the provision of homeless case workers and housing specialists.
- **Certified Local Government Funding**: The City relies on this funding to support staffing levels in its Historic Preservation Program; we also anticipate applying for a CLG grant to help fund the restoration of historic Lincoln Park's cast iron fence and granite piers. Local private nonprofit organizations, such as the Tate House and Mechanics Hall, also rely on this vital funding source.
- **Byrne Justice Assistance Grant, COPS and Project Safe Neighborhoods** (all via Department of Justice): These programs are critical to enhancing the safety and quality of life in our communities, as well as the safety and wellness of the officers protecting them.

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 3157

To require the Secretary of Labor to conduct a study of the factors affecting employment opportunities for immigrants and refugees with professional credentials obtained in foreign countries.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

NOVEMBER 3, 2021

Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. COONS, and Ms. MURKOWSKI) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

A BILL

To require the Secretary of Labor to conduct a study of the factors affecting employment opportunities for immigrants and refugees with professional credentials obtained in foreign countries.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Bridging the Gap for
5 New Americans Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

7 In this Act:

1 (1) APPLICABLE IMMIGRANTS AND REFU-
2 GEES.—The term “applicable immigrants and refu-
3 gees”—

4 (A) means individuals who—

5 (i)(I) are not citizens or nationals of
6 the United States; and

7 (II) are lawfully present in the United
8 States and authorized to be employed in
9 the United States; or

10 (ii) are naturalized citizens of the
11 United States who were born outside of the
12 United States and its outlying possessions;
13 and

14 (B) includes individuals described in sec-
15 tion 602(b)(2) of the Afghan Allies Protection
16 Act of 2009 (title VI of division F of Public
17 Law 111–8; 8 U.S.C. 1101 note).

18 (2) OTHER TERMS.—Except as otherwise de-
19 fined in this section, terms used in this Act have the
20 definitions given such terms under section 101(a) of
21 the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C.
22 1101(a)).

1 **SEC. 3. STUDY ON FACTORS AFFECTING EMPLOYMENT OP-**
 2 **PORTUNITIES FOR IMMIGRANTS AND REFU-**
 3 **GEES WITH PROFESSIONAL CREDENTIALS**
 4 **OBTAINED IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES.**

5 (a) STUDY REQUIRED.—

6 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Labor, in
 7 coordination with the Secretary of State, the Sec-
 8 retary of Education, the Secretary of Health and
 9 Human Services, the Secretary of Commerce, the
 10 Secretary of Homeland Security, the Administrator
 11 of the Internal Revenue Service, and the Commis-
 12 sioner of the Social Security Administration, shall
 13 conduct a study of the factors affecting employment
 14 opportunities in the United States for applicable im-
 15 migrants and refugees who have professional creden-
 16 tials that were obtained in a country other than the
 17 United States.

18 (2) WORK WITH OTHER ENTITIES.—The Sec-
 19 retary of Labor shall seek to work with relevant non-
 20 profit organizations and State agencies to use the
 21 existing data and resources of such entities to con-
 22 duct the study required under paragraph (1).

23 (3) LIMITATIONS ON DISCLOSURE.—Any infor-
 24 mation provided to the Secretary of Labor in con-
 25 nection with the study required under paragraph
 26 (1)—

1 (A) may only be used for the purposes of,
 2 and to the extent necessary to ensure the effi-
 3 cient operation of, such study; and

4 (B) may not be disclosed to any other per-
 5 son or entity except as provided under this sub-
 6 section.

7 (b) INCLUSIONS.—The study required under sub-
 8 section (a)(1) shall include—

9 (1) an analysis of the employment history of
 10 applicable immigrants and refugees admitted to the
 11 United States during the 5-year period immediately
 12 preceding the date of the enactment of this Act,
 13 which shall include, to the extent practicable—

14 (A) a comparison of the employment appli-
 15 cable immigrants and refugees held before im-
 16 migrating to the United States with the employ-
 17 ment they obtained in the United States, if any,
 18 since their arrival; and

19 (B) the occupational and professional cre-
 20 dentials and academic degrees held by applica-
 21 ble immigrants and refugees before immigrating
 22 to the United States;

23 (2) an assessment of any barriers that prevent
 24 applicable immigrants and refugees from using occu-

1 pational experience obtained outside the United
2 States to obtain employment in the United States;

3 (3) an analysis of available public and private
4 resources assisting applicable immigrants and refu-
5 gees who have professional experience and qualifica-
6 tions obtained outside of the United States to obtain
7 skill-appropriate employment in the United States;
8 and

9 (4) policy recommendations for better enabling
10 applicable immigrants and refugees who have profes-
11 sional experience and qualifications obtained outside
12 of the United States to obtain skill-appropriate em-
13 ployment in the United States.

14 (c) REPORT.—Not later than 18 months after the
15 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Labor
16 shall—

17 (1) submit a report to Congress that describes
18 the results of the study conducted pursuant to sub-
19 section (a); and

20 (2) make such report publicly available on the
21 website of the Department of Labor.

○



Show your organization's support for immigrants and refugees who hold international credentials

Dear Members of Congress,

On behalf of more than _____ national, state, and local organizations, we write to express our support for the Bridging the Gap for New Americans Act. This bipartisan legislation calls upon the United States Department of Labor (DOL) to study the factors that impact the employment opportunities of immigrants and refugees who hold international credentials and to issue recommendations for reform.

As the U.S. workforce faces growing demands and employment gaps deepen in critical sectors, an estimated two million college-educated immigrants and refugees are unemployed or underemployed, according to the Migration Policy Institute. At least 60 percent of these individuals hold international credentials—165,000 in health-related fields.

The stakes are considerable. This skill underutilization impacts the economy through forgone earnings and unrealized tax revenue; it deprives communities and employers of valuable training and experience; and it limits the economic mobility of immigrant and refugee workers.

As communities across the U.S. welcome Afghans seeking refuge, there is a renewed opportunity to ensure access to career opportunities for all.

Internationally trained immigrants and refugees are ready to contribute their skills in careers that are commensurate with their experience. Read some of their stories:

- A physician with 25 years' experience as head of a government clinic in Afghanistan's Herat province came to the U.S. in 2019. He holds a degree from an Afghan medical college and nearly 30 health-related trainings and certifications. However, to support his family, he has taken a job stocking shelves, earning \$11 an hour.
- A non-profit executive earned a political science degree in Nigeria and developed a successful career working on wide-ranging social issues with international NGOs. But when she moved to the U.S. in 2018, her international experience and credentials were not recognized. She took a job as a personal shopper with an online service to pay her bills.
- A physician from Iraq worked as a licensed pathologist for more than 18 years in Baghdad before being resettled in the U.S. as a refugee in 2014. Barriers to licensure, including time-consuming and costly medical exams and clinical training, prevented her from re-establishing her medical career in the U.S. To support her family, she took a job at a restaurant.

The Bridging the Gap for New Americans Act marks an important step toward ensuring equitable opportunities for economic mobility, fostering an inclusive workforce, and driving a robust economy. We urge all members of Congress to co-sponsor this bill.

Thanks to our partners:



Support the Bridging the Gap for New Americans Act

* Organization:

* Staff Contact First Name:

* Staff Contact Last Name:

* Email Address:

* Title:

Are you authorized to sign onto this letter
* on behalf of your organization?

☐ Yes ☐ No

* National Organization or State/Local
Organization:

☐ National ☐ State/Local

Submit

By clicking "Submit," you agree to the **WES Privacy Policy** (<https://www.wes.org/privacy-policy/>).

The Bridge newsletter features relevant developments and highlights innovative programs, policies, and practices to advance the economic mobility of immigrants and refugees who hold international credentials.

Subscribe here. (<https://knowledge.wes.org/global-talent-bridge-subscribe.html>)

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