



2017 Environmental Priorities Overview

Proactive Priorities



Healthy Furniture Bill – LD 182

This bill bans all flame retardants in upholstered furniture. Maine firefighters risk their lives to protect our families and our homes – their biggest danger shouldn't be from toxic “flame retardants” in household furniture that do not effectively stop fires. Cancer is the leading cause of job-related death for a firefighter; peer-reviewed scientific studies shows that many “flame retardants” are linked to cancer, reproductive harm, and harm to the developing brain.

*Sponsored by Rep. Kumiega. RESOLUTION: **SUCCESS! BILL ENACTED INTO LAW***



Ensure Safe Drinking Water for All Maine Families –LD 454

We all have a right to clean, safe drinking water – it is essential to our health. But for many Mainers who get their water from a well, every sip contains hidden toxic chemicals like arsenic. Current education efforts around well water safety are woefully under-resourced. The Safe Drinking Water Bill will raise awareness about the need to test for arsenic, create a Private Well Safe Drinking Water Fund, and help keep Maine families healthy and safe.

*Sponsored by Rep. Vachon. RESOLUTION: **SUCCESS! VETO OVERRIDDEN AND BILL BECAME LAW***



Maintain the High Quality of Maine's Public Forests as a Resource for All Maine People – LD 586

Protecting our public forests is an investment in Maine people and our way of life. We owe it to future generations to preserve and enhance the value of Maine's public forests. The Public Reserved Lands Bill advances the unanimous recommendations of the bipartisan study commission by requiring regular reporting on forest inventory, growth and harvest levels; creating a grant program to educate new loggers; bolstering recreation opportunities; and improving access to state forests, including for Maine people with disabilities.

*Sponsored by Sen. Saviello. RESOLUTION: **SUCCESS! VETO OVERRIDDEN AND BILL BECAME LAW***



Protect Clean Water and Taxpayers from Mining Pollution – LD 820

Maine's clean water is one of our most valuable assets and mining poses a serious threat to our rivers, lakes, coastal waters, and groundwater. Maine needs strong laws and rules to prevent mining companies from polluting our water and leaving taxpayers to pay for clean-up costs. This bill bans mining in or under floodplains, public lands, rivers, lakes, and coastal waters. It also set limits on groundwater pollution and requires mining companies to pay for major environmental disasters.

*Sponsored by Sen. Carson. RESOLUTION: **SUCCESS! VETO OVERRIDDEN AND BILL BECAME LAW***



An Act to Establish Energy Policy in Maine – LD 1313

The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) has successfully reduced pollution, strengthened our economy, and reduced energy costs—largely as a result of energy efficiency. LD 1313 would have made a simple, fair change: to calculate cash payments for these large businesses based on their fair share of RGGI funds, as determined by the PUC, and use the rest to help homes and businesses all over the state reduce energy costs through energy efficiency. By protecting and stabilizing energy efficiency initiatives, LD 1313 would have saved Maine homes and businesses \$20-\$40 million on energy bills, compared to the status quo over the next five years. *Sponsored by Rep. Sanborn. RESOLUTION: **NEUTRAL OUTCOME. BILL WAS AMENDED TO PROVIDE LESS \$ TO ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROGRAMS THAN DESIRED***



An Act To Modernize Rates for Small-scale Distributed Generation- LD 1504

Maine families, businesses, and communities should have the opportunity to generate their own power and increase their energy security with solar. But years of solar market uncertainty and legislative inaction are keeping Maine in last place for solar. And the Public Utilities Commission made things worse with a rule that will charge solar users for the power they generate to use in their own homes and will require a new meter on all solar homes, paid for by all ratepayers. LD 1504 would have prevented the rule from taking effect; required the PUC to conduct a cost benefit analysis and an alternative to net metering; and increased the number of participants in solar farms to 100.

*Sponsored by Sen. Saviello. RESOLUTION: **FAILED. GOVERNOR'S VETO SUSTAINED BY HOUSE***



An Act To Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue To Fund Wastewater Infrastructure Projects for Ratification by Voters in the June 2017 Election – LD 1510

This \$50 million bond will be put toward grants to towns to help replace malfunctioning septic systems that are polluting coastal watersheds or causing a public nuisance, wastewater treatment facility planning, construction grants and hydrographic modeling in coastal watersheds, and assisting homeowners whose homes are served by substandard or malfunctioning wastewater treatment systems.

*Governor's Bill. RESOLUTION: **STILL PENDING; CARRIED OVER TO 2018***



Support Maine Farmers and Reduce Food Waste – LD 1534

Reducing food waste brings financial and health benefits to our families and communities. Too much food is being wasted in Maine, putting a burden on local landfills, adding to disposal costs, harming our air quality, and leaving too many children without enough to eat every day. The Maine Food Recovery Act will help Maine farmers, taxpayers, and municipalities save money while addressing food insecurity and boosting innovative small business.

*Sponsored by Rep. Hickman. RESOLUTION: **STILL PENDING; CARRIED OVER TO 2018***

Defensive Priorities



Defend Municipal Rights to Limit the Use of Pesticides – Reject LD 1505

Maine communities should be able to decide whether to limit the use of harmful pesticides to protect the public's health. LD 1543 attacked "home rule," and would have prevented towns from taking steps to reduce citizen exposure to harmful pesticides, invalidated current local ordinances, and required the creation of costly new boards to oversee local ordinances.

*Governor's Bill. RESOLUTION: **SUCCESS! BILL DIED BY UNANIMOUS COMMITTEE VOTE***



An Act To Reduce Electric Rates for Maine Businesses by Amending the Laws Governing Spending from the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative Trust Fund – Reject LD 1515

This bill will undermine current efforts to decrease energy costs by putting business subsidies for electricity ahead of cost-effective energy efficiency investments. In fact, LD 1515 will cost Maine homes and businesses an extra \$25-\$155 million on their energy bills compared to the status quo. Using an extremely complex new funding formula, LD 1515 will reduce energy efficiency investments under RGGI by 10-40%, over the next five years. We need to continue investing RGGI funds in energy efficiency because it helps businesses be more competitive, create more jobs, and stay in Maine.

*Sponsored by Rep. Wadsworth. RESOLUTION: **STILL PENDING; CARRIED OVER TO 2018***



An Act Regarding Permitting under the Natural Resources Protection Act- LD 1040

This bill proposed eviscerating the Natural Resources Protection Act, Maine's keystone law that protects waters, wetlands, mountain tops and significant wildlife habitat.

*Sponsored by Rep. Picchiotti. RESOLUTION: **SUCCESS! BILL DIED BY UNANIMOUS COMMITTEE VOTE***