



Maine Public Health Association Legislative Report 130th Legislature (1st Regular Session)

We are excited to share that while this past legislative session was like no other one we have experienced, and not all of our bills went the way we hoped, all in all, there were many – and some significant – wins for public health. MPHA influenced almost 90 pieces of legislation, more than four-times what we do in a typical session, across a wide range of public health issues.

All hearings and work sessions were conducted via Zoom/YouTube, which made it easier to provide the public health voice on a wide range of issues, monitor multiple hearings and work sessions at the same time, and watch recordings of sessions we had missed. It also greatly increased civic participation. In pre-pandemic times, while hearings and work sessions are recorded, and can be listened to via the Legislature's website, remote participation is not possible. I hope remote participation is an option that is carried on in future sessions.

I especially want to thank our members who reached out to their legislators. In this virtual world, it was even more important than usual for policymakers to hear from you – their constituents. So, to those of you that acted on our advocacy alerts, submitted testimony, and contacted your elected officials – thank you. You helped make good public health work happen and we are so grateful.

The all-virtual participation did make it harder to lobby bills. Legislators, understandably, were burnt out, and scheduling meetings to discuss bills was challenging. Brief check-ins and conversations that typically happen in the hallways of the State House, or in the Cross Café, weren't possible. So, while I do hope that remote participation remains an option, I am looking forward to being able to advocate for public health issues in person again.

We are proud of our work this session but know we can improve. There were missed opportunities, even with this level of engagement, and we are taking time during the off-season to meet with our partners and identify ways we can be better advocates for public health issues. If you would like to provide us with feedback or share other insights, we welcome hearing from you. Please do reach out.

Below, I've included our board-approved policy priorities, as well as the bills we engaged on this session, including those that are carried over. Most of our priority bills were carried over to the second session, which is why we contributed to so many issues you don't see on this list. Any bills that are carried over and marked with an asterisk are priorities for the Association in the Second Regular Session of the 130th Legislature.

Thank you,
Becca
MPHA Executive Director

Maine Public Health Association 2021 Policy Priorities

MPHA's policy priorities for the 2021 legislative session are focused on the intersection of Climate Change, Strengthening the Economy, Improving Public Health, and Addressing Systemic Racism. Within this intersection, we can improve Health Equity. Health equity means everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible, and requires removing obstacles to health such as poverty, discrimination, and their consequences, including powerlessness and lack of access to good jobs with fair pay, quality education and housing, and safe environments. With investments in these different areas, we will not only be addressing climate change, strengthening Maine's economy, and improving public health, we will also be tackling determinants of health, and systems of inequity, that have negatively and disproportionately affected different members of society – but that also have potential to create and sustain more resilient communities and provide better health and economic wellbeing of Maine people across the state.

Improving Public Health

- Chronic Disease Prevention – Tobacco
 - Ending the sale of flavored tobacco products
 - Increasing Cigarette Excise Tax by \$2.00
 - Program Funding (Trust for a Healthy Maine)
- Chronic Disease Prevention – Obesity
 - Update School Nutrition & Physical Activity Definitions & Standards
 - Funding for Maine CDC obesity-prevention capacity, including staffing

Systemic Racism

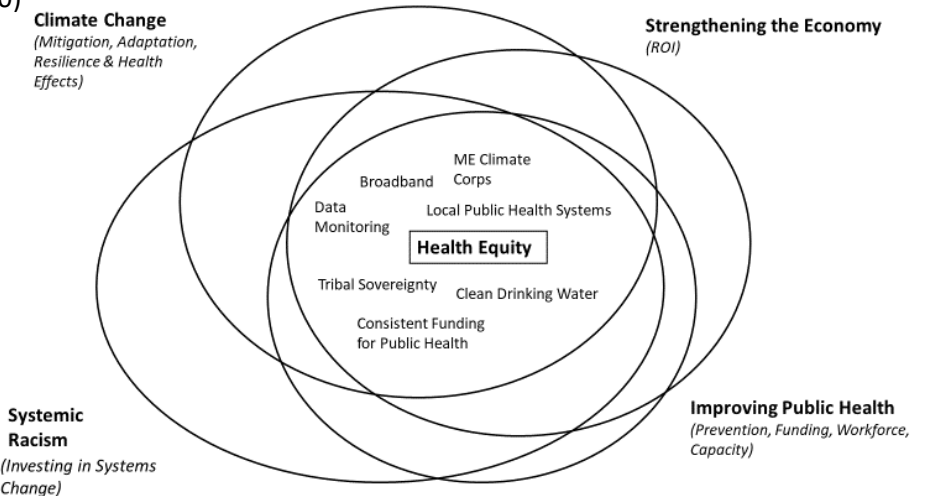
- Tribal Sovereignty
- Trust for a Healthy Maine
- Establish the Office of Health Equity within DHHS
- Chronic Disease Prevention

Climate Change

- [Maine Climate Council Public Health Recommendations](#)
- [Environmental Priorities Coalition Platform](#)

Intersection

- Data Monitoring
 - Trust for a Healthy Maine
 - [Maine Climate Council Public Health Recommendations](#)
 - Office of Health Equity
- Local Public Health Systems
 - LD 227 – Monitoring, Report Due Back to HHS this session
 - Trust for a Healthy Maine
 - [Maine Climate Council Public Health Recommendations](#)
- Consistent Funding for Public Health
 - Trust for a Healthy Maine
 - Tobacco Tax Increase (\$2.00)



Chronic Disease Prevention

- **LD 269:** [An Act To Prohibit Smoking in Bus Shelters](#) – Sponsored by Sen. Heather Sanborn
- **LD 636:** [An Act To Encourage the Purchase of Local Foods for Public Schools](#) – Sponsored by Sen. Eloise Vitelli
- **LD 655:** [Resolve, Directing the Department of Education To Survey School Administrative Units and Review the Feasibility of a 30-minute Lunch Period for Students](#) – Sponsored by Rep. Janice Dodge
- **LD 691:** [An Act To Support Farms and Address Food Insecurity](#) – Sponsored by Rep. William Pluecker
- **LD 1150:** [An Act To Eliminate Insurance Rating Based on Age, Geographic Location or Smoking History and To Reduce Rate Variability Due to Group Size](#) – Sponsored by Rep. Heidi Brooks

Carried Over

- ***LD 1550:** [An Act To End the Sale of Flavored Tobacco Products](#) – Sponsored by Rep. Michele Meyer
- ***LD 1423:** [An Act To Prevent and Reduce Tobacco Use by Ensuring Adequate Funding for Tobacco Use Prevention and Cessation Programs and by Raising the Tax on Tobacco Products and To Provide Funding To Reduce Disparities in Health Outcomes Based on Certain Factors](#) – Sponsored by Rep. Joyce McCreight

Health Equity & Systemic Racism

- **LD 2:** [An Act To Require the Inclusion of Racial Impact Statements in the Legislative Process](#) – Sponsored by Rep. Rachel Talbot Ross
- **LD 78:** [An Act To Protect Children from Extreme Poverty by Preserving Children’s Access to Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Benefits](#) – Sponsored by Rep. Michele Meyer
- **LD 183:** [An Act To Establish Juneteenth as a Paid State Holiday](#) – Sponsored by Rep. Rachel Talbot Ross
- **LD 274:** [Resolve, Directing the Maine Health Data Organization To Determine the Best Methods and Definitions To Use in Collecting Data To Better Understand Racial and Ethnic Disparities in the Provision of Health Care in Maine](#) – Sponsored by Rep. Denise Tepler
- **LD 663:** [An Act To Make Comprehensive Substance Use Disorder Treatment Available to Maine’s Incarcerated Population](#) – Sponsored by Rep. Charlotte Warren
- **LD 705:** [Resolve: To Improve Air Quality and Ventilation in Maine’s Public Schools](#) – Sponsored by Rep. Rebecca Millett
- **LD 1034:** [An Act To Provide Funding To Support the Permanent Commission on the Status of Racial: Indigenous and Maine Tribal Populations](#) – Sponsored by Rep. Rachel Talbot Ross

Carried Over

- **LD 343:** [An Act To Set Aside Funds from Federal Block Grants for Certain Communities](#) – Sponsored by Rep. Rachel Talbot Ross
- **LD 702:** [An Act To Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue To Recapitalize the School Revolving Renovation Fund](#) – Sponsored by Rep. Rebecca Millett (*Funding provided for in State budget*)
- **LD 979:** [An Act To Expand Maine’s School-Based Health Centers](#) – Sponsored by Rep. Melanie Sachs
- ***LD 1523:** [An Act To Establish the Trust for a Healthy Maine](#) – Sponsored by Rep. Rebecca Millett
- **LD 1555:** [An Act To Fund Broadband Internet Infrastructure for Marginalized Groups in the State](#) – Sponsored by Rep. Rachel Talbot Ross
- ***LD 1626:** [An Act Implementing the Recommendations of the Task Force on Changes to the Maine Indian Claims Settlement Implementing Act](#) – Sponsored by Rep. Rachel Talbot Ross
- ***LD 1693:** [An Act To Advance Health Equity, Improve the Well-being of All Maine People and Create a Health Trust](#) – Sponsored by Rep. Rachel Talbot Ross

Criminal Justice

- **LD 994:** [An Act To Promote Public Health by Eliminating Criminal Penalties for Possession of Hypodermic Apparatuses](#) – Sponsored by Rep. Genevieve McDonald

Carried Over

- **LD 1068:** [An Act To Restrict Access to Weapons Pursuant to Court Order in Cases of Harassment](#) – Sponsored by Sen. Anne Carney

Health Care

- **LD 1:** [An Act To Establish the COVID-19 Patient Bill of Rights](#) – Sponsored by President Troy Jackson
- **LD 686:** [An Act To Increase Prescription Drug Pricing Transparency](#) – Sponsored by Sen. Eloise Vitelli
- **LD 745:** [An Act To Strengthen Maine’s Public Health by Expanding Access to Certain Health Programs and Services](#) – Sponsored by Rep. Rebecca Millett
- **LD 1009:** [Resolve: To Create a Health Care Ombudsman Position To Serve in Maine’s County Jail](#) – Rep. Colleen Madigan

Carried Over

- **LD 718:** [An Act To Improve the Health of Maine Residents by Closing Coverage Gaps in the MaineCare Program and the Children’s Health Insurance Program](#) – Sponsored by Rep. Rachel Talbot Ross

Maternal & Child Health

- **LD 265:** [An Act To Provide Women Access to Affordable Postpartum Care](#) – Sponsored by Sen. Anne Carney
- **LD 1559:** [Resolve: To Create the Commission To Develop a Paid Family and Medical Leave Benefits Program](#) – Sponsored by Sen. Matthea Daughtry

Carried Over

- **LD 1357:** [An Act to Require Private Insurance Coverage for Postpartum Care](#) – Sponsored by Sen. Anne Carney

Environmental Health

Climate Change

These are MPHA-supported bills that align with Maine’s Climate Action Plan, *Maine Won’t Wait*. To see all the climate-related legislation that passed this session, visit the [Maine Climate Council’s website](#).

- **LD 226:** [An Act To Limit the Use of Hydrofluorocarbons To Fight Climate Change](#) – Sponsored by Rep. Ralph Tucker
- **LD 1484:** [An Act To Enhance the ConnectMaine Authority’s Capacity To Provide World-class Internet](#) – Sponsored by Sen. Richard Bennett
- **LD 1682:** [An Act To Require Consideration of Climate and Equity Impacts by the Public Utilities Commission](#) – Sponsored by Rep. Doudera (*MPHA did not submit testimony on this bill, however, we are engaged in work on the legislation through the Maine Climate Council’s Equity Subcommittee*)

PFAS

- **LD 129:** [Resolve, To Protect Consumers of Public Drinking Water by Establishing Maximum Contaminant Levels for Certain Substances and Contaminants](#) – Sponsored by Sen. Harold Stewart
- **LD 264:** [Resolve, Directing the Board of Pesticides Control To Gather Information Relating to Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances in the State](#) – Sponsored by Rep. William Pluecker
- **LD 519:** [An Act To Protect Children from Exposure to Toxic Chemicals](#) – Sponsored by Rep. Lori Gramlich
- **LD 1503:** [An Act To Stop Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances Pollution](#) – Sponsored by Rep. Lori Gramlich

Other Environmental Health Issues

- **LD 8:** [An Act To Support Collection and Proper Disposal of Unwanted Drugs](#) – Sponsored by Sen. Anne Carney
- **LD 155:** [Resolve, Directing the Board of Pesticides Control To Prohibit the Use of Certain Neonicotinoids for Outdoor Residential Use](#) – Sponsored by Rep. Nicole Grohoski

- **LD 1541:** [An Act To Support and Improve Municipal Recycling Programs and Save Taxpayer Money](#) – Sponsored by Rep. Nicole Grohoski
- **LD 1702:** [An Act To Authorize General Fund Bond Issues To Improve Transportation and National Guard Infrastructure and To Promote the Conservation of Land, Working Waterfronts, Water Access and Outdoor Recreation](#) – Sponsored by Rep. Teresa Pierce

Carried Over

- **LD 687:** [An Act To Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue To Promote the Conservation of Land, Working Waterfronts, Water Access and Outdoor Recreation](#) – Sponsored by Rep. Patrick Corey (*Note: Funding for Land for Maine's Future was provided for in the State budget and LD 1702*)
- **LD 983:** [An Act To Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue To Promote Land Conservation, Working Waterfronts, Water Access and Outdoor Recreation](#) – Sponsored by Sen. Cathy Breen (*Note: Funding for Land for Maine's Future was provided for in the State budget, and LD 1702*)
- **LD 1532:** [An Act To Protect Maine's Air Quality by Strengthening Requirements for Air Emissions Licensing](#) – Sponsored by Rep. Victoria Morales
- **LD 1639:** [An Act To Protect the Health and Welfare of Maine Communities and Reduce Harmful Solid Waste](#) – Sponsored by Sen. Anne Carney

Housing & Homelessness

- **LD 81:** [An Act To Ensure the Safety of Children Experiencing Homelessness by Extending Shelter Placement Periods](#) – Sponsored by Rep. Michele Meyer
- **LD 609:** [Resolve: To Establish a Commission To Increase Housing Opportunities in Maine by Studying Zoning and Land Use Restrictions](#) – Sponsored by Speaker Ryan Fecteau

Carried Over

- **LD 1076:** [An Act To Support the Operations of Youth Shelters in Maine](#) – Sponsored by Sen. Nathan Libby

Marijuana

- **LD 605:** [An Act To Amend the Marijuana Legalization Act](#) – Sponsored by Rep. Teresa Pierce
- **LD 1434:** [An Act Regarding Controlled Entry Areas within Retail Marijuana Stores](#) – Sponsored by Rep. Joe Perry (*MPHA opposed this bill, however it was signed into law*)

Public Health Workforce

- **LD 722:** [Resolve, To Study the Establishment of the Maine Climate Corps](#) – Sponsored by Rep. Morgan Rielly (*Recommendation of the Maine Climate Council's Community Resilience Planning, Public Health, and Emergency Management Working Group, which MPHA co-chairs*)
- **LD 1010:** [An Act To Establish the Maine Service Fellows Program](#) – Sponsored by Rep. Morgan Rielly
- **LD 1573:** [An Act To Implement the Recommendations of the Commission To Study Long-term Care Workforce Issues](#) – Sponsored by Rep. Jessica Fay

Oral Health

- **LD 1344:** [An Act To Clarify the Authority of the Department of Health and Human Services during a Public Health Emergency](#) – Sponsored by Rep. Michele Meyer

Carried Over

- **LD 996:** [An Act To Improve Dental Health Access for Maine Children and Adults with Low Incomes](#) – Sponsored by Speaker Ryan Fecteau
- **LD 1501:** [An Act to Protect Oral Health for Children in Maine](#) – Sponsored by Rep. Lori Gramlich

Public Health Infrastructure

- **LD 1733:** [An Act To Provide Allocations for the Distribution of State Fiscal Recovery Funds](#) – Sponsored by Sen. Cathy Breen. *This bill includes landmark investments in public health infrastructure:*
 - \$21 million to expand broadband access

- \$5 million for rural transportation pilot projects
- \$50 million for energy efficiency for homes, municipalities, and businesses
- \$50 million for affordable housing
- \$8 million to support clean energy workforce and innovation
- \$20 million for an “Infrastructure Adaptation Fund” to support local, regional, and state infrastructure projects that address climate change risks (*Recommendation of the Maine Climate Council’s Community Resilience Planning, Public Health, and Emergency Management Working Group, which MPHA co-chairs*)
- An overview of all the allocations can be found [here](#).
- **LD 221: [An Act Making Unified Appropriations and Allocations for the Expenditures of State Government, General Fund and Other Funds and Changing Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2021, June 30, 2022 and June 30, 2023](#)** – Sponsored by Rep. Teresa Pierce
 - \$5 million for municipal planning grants for emissions reduction and climate resilience
 - \$3 million for research and staff to support power sector transformation and grid modernization
 - [Read MPHA’s press statement here](#).

Public Health Defense (Bills MPHA Opposed That Did Not Pass)

- Prevented Rollbacks of Maine’s new vaccination law (LD’s [96](#), [156](#), [833](#), [1082](#))
- Prevented Rollbacks of Maine’s strong voter accessibility laws (LD’s [253](#), [557](#), [1083](#), [1099](#))
- Prevented Rollbacks of Maine’s smoking laws (LD’s [624](#), [1282](#))
- Prevented Rollbacks of Maine’s Certificate of Need laws (LD’s [931](#), [932](#), [935](#), [1004](#))
- Prevented Rollbacks of Maine’s marijuana regulations (LD’s [1249](#) & [1452](#))
- **LD 287: [An Act To Require Electronic Benefits Transfer Cards To Be Printed with the Beneficiary’s Photograph](#)** – Sponsored by Rep. Jonathan Connor
- **LD 926: [An Act To Ban Biological Males from Participating in Women’s Sports](#)** – Sponsored by Representative Beth O’Connor

Public Health Bills MPHA Supported That Did Not Pass:

- **LD 62: [An Act To Promote Cost-effectiveness in the MaineCare Program and Improve the Oral Health of Maine Adults and Children](#)** – Sponsored by Rep. Heidi Brooks
- **LD 72: [An Act To Improve Dental Health for Maine Children and Adults with Low Incomes](#)** – Sponsored by Rep. Heidi Brooks
- **LD 125: [An Act To Prohibit the Aerial Spraying of Glyphosate and Other Synthetic Herbicides for the Purpose of Silviculture](#)** – Sponsored by President Troy Jackson (*Enacted by the Legislature but vetoed by Gov. Mills. She signed an [Executive Order](#) directing the Maine Forest Service and the Board of Pesticides Control to review rules related to the aerial application of synthetic herbicides and to recommend changes to further protect rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, brooks, wetlands, wildlife and human habitat and other natural resources.*)
- **LD 164: [An Act To Establish Maximum Contaminant Levels under the State’s Drinking Water Rules for Certain Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances](#)** – Sponsored by Rep. Ralph Tucker
- **LD 675: [An Act To Protect Maine Consumers from Unsupported Price Increases on Prescription Medicines by Creating an Independent Review Process](#)** – Sponsored by Sen. Ned Claxton
- **LD 1388: [An Act To Require Testing of Public Drinking Water Supplies for Toxic Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances and To Establish Maximum Contaminant Levels](#)** – Sponsored by Rep. William Pluecker
- **LD 1437: [An Act To Reduce Poisoning from Radon: Arsenic and Other Air or Water Pollutants by Expanding Education: Testing and Mitigation Regarding Those Pollutants](#)** – Sponsored by Rep. Chris Kessler
- **LD 1445: [An Act To Require the Testing of Marijuana for Medical Use](#)** – Sponsored by Rep. Patty Hymanson