

# Securing Access to Clean Drinking Water



## LD 906: An Act To Provide Passamaquoddy Tribal Members Access to Clean Drinking Water

*Sponsored by Rep. Rena Newell*

LD 906 improves access to safe drinking water for the Passamaquoddy Tribe at Sipayik and surrounding communities. For decades, the public water supply delivered by the state-regulated Passamaquoddy Water District has often been discolored, odorous, and tainted with high levels of carcinogens – and systemic barriers have blocked efforts to address the unsafe and deteriorating water system. LD 906 is a victory in the fight for clean drinking water for all communities. It assigns jurisdiction over Passamaquoddy drinking water to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, not the State of Maine, enabling the tribe to regulate its own drinking water under the federal Safe Drinking Water Act. It also opens the door to new federal funding opportunities and gives the Passamaquoddy Water District critically needed financial support.

### YES IS THE PRO ENVIRONMENT VOTE

House Roll Call #586 April 19, 2022	Senate Roll Call #749 April 13, 2022
✓ 104	✓ 21
✗ 33	✗ 11
A 10	A 0
E 0	E 2



*“Having access to clean, clear, odorless drinking water is a basic human need and is vital to healthy living and survival.”*

—Rep. Rena Newell



**148 REGISTRANTS**

for MCV's Lunch & Learn featuring

**Rep. Rena Newell**  
and **Attorney and Passamaquoddy Tribal Citizen Corey Hinton**



**105 EMAILS**  
to legislators



**75 PHONE CALLS**  
on Wabanaki Alliance Lobby Day

### BEHIND THE ROLL CALL:



Hundreds of Maine people gathered for the Rally for Clean Drinking Water in April.

LD 906 was heard in the Maine Legislature's Judiciary Committee, which voted on the bill along party lines—the Democrats supporting it and the Republicans opposing. When the bill reached the full legislature, the House had a protracted debate. Three Republican members of the Judiciary Committee argued against the bill's passage while 14 Representatives rose in support, from both sides of the aisle. In the Senate, seven members rose to speak on the bill; only two Republican Senators—**Sens. Rick Bennett** and **Scott Cyrway**—voted for the legislation along with all of the Democrats in the Senate. In the House, 24 Republicans cast supportive votes alongside all of the Democrats and Independents, and the powerful House vote (104-33) on the heels of the rally at the State House, persuaded **Governor Mills** to negotiate with the Passamaquoddy Tribe at Sipayik on bill specifics. An agreement was reached and the Governor signed the bill into law.



# Closing the Out-of-State Waste Loophole



## LD 1639: An Act To Protect the Health and Welfare of Maine Communities and Reduce Harmful Solid Waste

*Sponsored by Sen. Anne Carney*

LD 1639 closes the loophole in Maine’s waste management laws that allowed Massachusetts and other New England states to truck their construction and demolition waste to the state-owned Juniper Ridge Landfill in Old Town. The loophole classified waste as “in-state” once it entered a solid waste processing facility in Maine, no matter where it originated, and allowed nearly 40 tons of out-of-state waste to be dumped at Juniper Ridge nearly every day. Rapidly filling landfills require expansions and lead to increased pollution, which disproportionately impacts the Penobscot Nation, residents living near the landfill, and the Penobscot River and Bay. This legislation will help protect Maine’s environment and public health.

### YES IS THE PRO ENVIRONMENT VOTE

House Roll Call #549 April 11, 2022	Senate Roll Call #714 April 7, 2022
✓ 102	✓ 32
✗ 25	✗ 0
A 20	A 0
E 0	E 2



**182 REGISTRANTS**  
for MCV's 2021  
Lunch & Learn  
featuring Don't Waste ME

**207 REGISTRANTS**  
for MCV's 2022  
Lunch & Learn

**289 EMAILS**  
to legislators

## BEHIND THE ROLL CALL:



Don't Waste ME, a citizen action group supporting waste policies that strengthen communities and protect the environment, organized around this issue of environmental justice, and their tenacity and determination led to this victory. Efforts of Maine's Environmental Priorities Coalition were led by the Natural Resources Council of Maine and Community Action Works, with Conservation Law Foundation playing a key supporting role.



In the Environmental and Natural Resources (ENR) Committee, the Democrats were joined by Republican **Sen. Rick Bennett** in voting for LD 1639. Bill sponsor **Sen. Anne Carney** agreed to offer an amendment to push the effective date of the legislation to February 2023 and called on the ENR Committee, with support from Maine’s Department of Environmental Protection, to consider ways to recycle in-state demolition and construction waste. These changes solidified bipartisan support and the Senate vote was unanimous, 34-0. There was no debate in the House, where the Democrats were joined by 25 Republicans in voting in favor of the legislation. **Governor Mills** signed the bill into law.

# Planning for the Electric Grid of the Future



## LD 1959: An Act Regarding Utility Accountability and Grid Planning for Maine's Clean Energy Future

Governor's Bill reported by Sen. Stacy Brenner

LD 1959 holds Maine's large electric utilities accountable to ratepayers and our climate future. It requires Central Maine Power (CMP) and Versant to develop integrated grid plans to improve electric system reliability and resiliency; enable the cost-effective achievement of the greenhouse gas reduction obligations and climate policies in Maine's Climate Action Plan; and assist in the transition to a clean, affordable, and reliable electric grid. LD 1959 also requires separate climate change protection plans including specific actions for addressing the expected impacts of climate change. Crucially, the legislation mandates that the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) publish quarterly report cards on utility performance and impose administrative penalties for a utility's poor performance, and provides for a process to divest an underperforming investor-owned utility of its utility assets to a qualified buyer. The PUC must also report back to lawmakers how it can best support this work, including an assessment of staffing and resource needs and its potential use of competitive procurement of goods and services by the utilities and the resource.

### YES IS THE PRO ENVIRONMENT VOTE

House Roll Call #604 April 20, 2022	Senate Roll Call #806 April 25, 2022
✓ 77	✓ 19
✗ 56	✗ 10
A 14	A 0
E 0	E 5



149 REGISTRANTS  
for MCV's Lunch  
& Learn featuring

Sen. Stacy Brenner and  
Public Advocate Bill  
Harwood



130 EMAILS  
to legislators

### BEHIND THE ROLL CALL:

One of the last bills to be worked on this session, LD 1959 nearly did not pass. Democrats on the Energy, Utilities and Technology (EUT) Committee were divided, with five supporting one version of the bill and four (joined by Republican **Rep. Nathan Carlow**) supporting another. The remaining Republicans on the committee supported a version of the bill preferred by CMP.

Initially, none of the versions or "reports" received a majority vote in the House.



*"Stabilizing rates for customers and setting up a framework to achieve our climate goals is so crucial. The sooner we head in the direction where oil and natural gas are not things that Mainers need to depend on in order to drive, heat their homes, and do the work that they need to do, the better off we're all going to be in terms of price volatility." —Sen. Stacy Brenner*

Bill sponsor **Sen. Stacy Brenner**; EUT Chair **Sen. Mark Lawrence** and Committee members **Sen. Eloise Vitelli**, **Rep. Melanie Sachs**, **Rep. Paige Zeigler**, and **Rep. Scott Cuddy**, along with **Rep. Lydia Blume**, spent hours advocating for the bill, and the Democratic caucus ultimately reached a compromise on a report that allowed for the competitive procurement of goods and services. The bill passed along strict party lines in the House with the Republicans opposing, 77-56 (with one exception: Democrat **Rep. Kevin O'Connell** voted against). In the Senate, only one Republican supported the bill. **Governor Mills** signed her bill into law.

# Upgrading Water Quality Standards for Rivers and Streams



## LD 1964: An Act To Update Certain Water Quality Standards and Reclassify Certain Waters of the State

*Environment and Natural Resources Committee bill reported by Sen. Stacy Brenner*

Every three years, the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) makes recommendations to upgrade the water quality classification on Maine's rivers and streams, according to the federal Clean Water Act. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Clean Water Act and DEP recommended upgrading the water quality classification on 800 miles of rivers and streams. In a fitting tribute, the Legislature unanimously approved the recommendations.

### YES IS THE PRO ENVIRONMENT VOTE

House Roll Call <b>#483</b> March 24, 2022	Senate Roll Call <b>#654</b> March 29, 2022
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✓ 129	✓ 33
✗ 0	✗ 0
A 19	A 0
E 0	E 1



*“Human talent and ingenuity can tackle seemingly impossible tasks, and this success can give us hope as we face new challenges. This is a tribute to Senator Muskie, and the success of the Clean Water Act.”*

—Rep. Ralph Tucker

## BEHIND THE ROLL CALL:

LD 1964 was part of the Environmental Priorities Coalition's common agenda. The Natural Resources Council of Maine (NRCM) led the coalition efforts, with Friends of Casco Bay playing a key supporting role.



In this time of intense partisanship and polarization, the Legislature was unified in protecting Maine waters. On the House floor, **Committee Chair Rep. Ralph Tucker** gave a moving speech about the bill and the Clean Water Act, and thanked all who worked to get us where we are today. He was followed by many of his colleagues, including Republican **Rep. Jeff Hanley**, who spoke about how dirty the rivers were when he was a boy and the transformation that has occurred because of Maine's water quality laws, and Democrat **Rep. John Martin**, who recalled serving as an aide for Maine Senator Ed Muskie when the United States Congress passed the Clean Water Act, overriding a veto from President Richard Nixon. Senators from both sides of the aisle spoke eloquently as well, and **Governor Mills** signed the bill into law.



On March 29, the Maine Senate voted unanimously in support of LD 1964.

# Preventing PFAS Contamination of Farmland



## LD 1911: An Act To Prohibit the Contamination of Clean Soils with So-called Forever Chemicals

*Sponsored by Rep. Bill Pluecker*

LD 1911 makes Maine the first state in the nation to ban the application of PFAS-contaminated sludge and sludge-derived compost. PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) are persistent, toxic chemicals used in products like nonstick pans, food packaging, waterproof jackets, and carpets to repel water, grease, and stains. Even personal care products like sunscreen and shampoo can contain PFAS. Called “forever chemicals” because they build up in our bodies and environment, PFAS can lead to serious health impacts including fertility issues, immunotoxicity, and certain types of cancer. These dangerous chemicals have been so widespread for so long that they contaminate our wastewater — and PFAS-contaminated wastewater sludge has been spread on farmland as fertilizer for decades. This legislation will protect Maine’s farmland from further contamination.

### YES IS THE PRO ENVIRONMENT VOTE

House Roll Call #574 April 15, 2022	Senate Roll Call #754 April 14, 2022
✓ 85	✓ 34
✗ 50	✗ 0
A 12	A 0
E 0	E 0



### BEHIND THE ROLL CALL:



On March 9, we joined our partners, legislative champions, and farmers across Maine for Gov. Mills’ ceremonial signing of LD 1911 into law.

In recent years, Maine lawmakers have enacted precedent-setting and strongly bipartisan policies to address PFAS pollution, and with the strong leadership of Defend Our Health, Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association, this session was no different.

LD 1911 was strengthened and championed in the Environment and Natural Resources Committee by Chairs **Sen. Stacy Brenner** and **Rep. Ralph Tucker**. Though the Committee vote was largely partisan, Republican **Sen. Rick Bennett** served as lead Senate sponsor, contributed the sole Republican vote on the Committee, and fostered bipartisan support in the Senate, where the chamber vote was unanimous. It was a different story in the House, where the legislation received the support of only four Republicans: **Reps. MaryAnne Kinney, Dan Newman, Wayne Parry, and Jen Poirier**. **Governor Mills** signed the bill into law.



*“We cannot afford to ignore this contamination in the vain hope it will just go away. We cannot pass along the mistakes of past generations to our children for them to deal with.”*

—Rep. Bill Pluecker

# Securing Election Transparency and Audits



## LD 1155: An Act To Require Election Transparency and Audits

*Sponsored by Rep. Nicole Grohoski*

LD 1155 establishes post-election audits to ensure that Maine’s elections remain secure and accessible. Though the bill itself did not become law, key provisions and language were incorporated into the supplemental budget, making Maine the 45th state to require post-election audits. These audits, different from the “sham” audits used as political tools in other states, provide an additional level of control to ensure that Maine continues to administer high-quality, secure elections. Other provisions adopted include a requirement that the Secretary of State develop a streamlined election complaint process and produce and publicly disseminate a guide to election procedures, a request often heard from voters and voting rights advocates, including MCV.

YES IS THE  
PRO ENVIRONMENT VOTE

No House  
Roll Call

Senate Roll Call  
#364  
June 15, 2022

✓ 32

✗ 0

A 0

E 3



### BEHIND THE ROLL CALL:



Team MCV with Secretary of State Shenna Bellows at the State House in Augusta.

**Secretary of State Shenna Bellows** was a force behind this legislation and has worked on this issue since 2019, when she served in the Legislature. During the bill’s public hearing, there were six supportive testimonies and no testimonies in opposition to LD 1155. Strong leadership from bill sponsor **Rep. Nicole Grohoski** and bipartisan support in the Appropriations Committee – including from Republican **Rep. Patrick Corey** – facilitated this legislation being funded. The Senate unanimously passed the legislation but the House did not take a roll call vote on the bill. Funding for an audit division within the Secretary of State’s office was incorporated into the state’s supplemental budget, which **Governor Mills** signed into law.



LD 1155 was a key priority of Mainers for Modern Elections (MME), a pro-democracy coalition committed to ensuring that our right to vote safely transcends politics and partisanship by advocating for safe, secure, and modern elections. The League of Women Voters of Maine led coalition efforts, supported by MME members.

# Expanding Opportunities for Climate Education in Schools



## LD 1902: Resolve, To Establish a Pilot Program To Encourage Climate Education in Maine Public Schools

Sponsored by Rep. Lydia Blume

LD 1902 establishes the Climate Education Professional Development Pilot Program in direct response to the needs of Maine teachers. Recognizing that Maine students must be prepared to respond to the climate crisis, the state's climate action plan recommends increasing public education offerings related to climate and energy – and in the 2019 Census for Community-Based Environmental Learning in Maine, teachers identified climate education as the area they most need help. LD 1902 establishes a three-year pilot program within the Department of Education to provide grants for professional development for K-12 educators on climate science, encourage partnerships between schools and community organizations, and support the preparation of courses on interdisciplinary climate education. The state budget allocates \$2 million to the pilot and the Department of Education may supplement that with outside funding.

### YES IS THE PRO ENVIRONMENT VOTE

House Roll Call #454 February 23, 2022	Senate Roll Call #591 March 9, 2022
✓ 82	✓ 18
✗ 54	✗ 12
A 12	A 0
E 0	E 4




### BEHIND THE ROLL CALL:

The bill's creation was driven by hundreds of teachers, students, and organizational partners during the 2021 Maine Climate Education Summit. Organized by the Maine Environmental Education Association (MEEA), the Summit connected youth and adult leaders around a common vision to advance equitable access to climate change education and created space for those on the front lines of climate education to collaborate with the Department of Education and Maine lawmakers. Many participants were already collaborating through the Climate Education Advocacy working group convened by the Nature Based Education Consortium (NBEC), which successfully advocated for the inclusion of climate education in *Maine Won't Wait*.



 **111 REGISTRANTS**  
for MCV's  
Lunch & Learn

 **284 PETITION SIGNATURES**

 *"It's critical and timely that we give young Mainers, no matter their economic status, ZIP code or race, the tools to live, work and succeed on a rapidly warming planet."*

—Rep. Lydia Blume

Maine's Environmental Priorities Coalition rallied around LD 1911. Maine Audubon, Sierra Club Maine, and The Climate Initiative led these efforts, in close collaboration with MEEA and NBEC. Many other organizations provided leadership and support through the NBEC network, including:

*Coastal Youth Climate Coalition, The Ecology School, Gateway Community Services, Maine Science Teachers Association, Maine Youth for Climate Justice, The Nature Conservancy in Maine, and Norway Youth Climate Action.*

Given the swell of community support, it was disappointing to see LD 1902 divided along party lines in the Education Committee and in the Senate, with the Democrats in favor and Republicans opposing. Sponsor **Rep. Lydia Blume** was the champion of this legislation, and Appropriations Committee Chairs **Sen. Cathy Breen** and **Rep. Teresa Pierce** were instrumental in funding the pilot program. **Governor Mills** signed the bill into law.