

**LPC Poll – March 11, 2025**  
(N=24)

	<b>LD 785 Indian Claims</b>	<b>LD 907 Zoning Variance</b>	<b>LD 934 Vet/Senior Homestead</b>	<b>LD 948 Cannabis Growth</b>
<b>Support</b>	26%	29%	42%	17%
<b>Oppose</b>	9%	43%	42%	52%
<b>NFNA</b>	43%	29%	17%	17%
<b>Track</b>	4%	0%	0%	13%
<b>No Position</b>	17%	0%	0%	0%

**Comments**

[LD 785](#) *An Act to Enact the Remaining Recommendations of the Task Force on Changes to the Maine Indian Claims Settlement Implementing Act* (Sponsored by Sen. Talbot Ross of Cumberland Cty.)

**Support**

- The land needs to go back to the tribes. My understanding that the land is held in trust for the tribes, and these were the recommendations of the task force.
- It aligns Maine statutes with other federally recognized tribes in the U.S.
- Although my first inclination was to stay out of this, I would SUPPORT this bill. I hope this will tie up all the loose ends that have been dragging us down for too many years. This seems to me like a legitimate attempt to codify the same type of home rule that towns want to preserve—but the tribes are sovereign nations by treaty and there seems to be enough recognition of state interests to make this a fair compromise.
- There is no point in establishing a Blue-Ribbon Commission to make recommendations if the Legislature cannot support the two-year non-partisan report and its recommendations. This legislation benefits all people who interact with other human beings under federal law. State law can only supersede federal law when state law is more stringent or compliments federal laws.
- As long as all 10 subsections remain in the bill, and it is not amended. This brings the tribes in line with all federally recognized tribes in the U.S. and consistency is established.
- This is a long-overdue bill regarding the fair and just treatment of indigenous people in Maine. (Little chance our Governor will support but we shouldn't stop trying).

## **Oppose**

- This is one that I am not very familiar with. One item jumped out at me – the bit about tribal land within a municipality. Not sure what the impact of that is, but my Spidey sense is tingling. Recommend oppose until we learn more.

## **NFNA**

- It's past time to recognize tribal rights. I support the sentiment of the bill. However, it's so far reaching in scope that it would be prudent to see how the debate plays out in order fully to understand which Maine municipalities are most directly affected and in what ways. MMA's final position on the bill might require an approach that is more nuanced than unqualified support or opposition. It would be great if MMA could play a positive role in ushering the bill forward.
- I'm concerned here with the drinking water issues, which I think overlap with Rick Bronson's concerns about the water in LD 395. If the water in Indian territory is regulated differently than water in the rest of the state, it could cause unintended problems.
- One set of rules for everybody, if federal law isn't impeded.
- In general, I support legislation that supports tribal independence, but I don't know what's in the immunity clause(s) of federal Indian law. I recall discussion about water use and pollution issues and would be concerned if the tribes are immune from suit under federal Indian law to protect waters that flow through or originate in tribal lands. I chose NFNA to leave this decision to people who understand this better than I do.
- Not familiar with the whole thing so do not really have a side.

## **Track**

- Not municipal business, unless land uses on their land cause negative impacts to the region.

## **No Position**

- What a mess; I guess I get it, but why can't these communities be treated like other towns and cities? It's a higher-level discussion, I know. I'd oppose it, but that would be highly insensitive and create unnecessary controversy. I'd suggest we just stay out of it.
- This is for the state, not us.

[LD 907](#) *An Act to Amend the Law Governing Zoning Ordinance Variances for Persons with Permanent Disabilities* (Sponsored by Sen. Libby of Cumberland Cty.)

## **Support**

- This makes the law less restrictive on the permanently disabled. I'm not sure why there were restrictions on the types of vehicles a person may own in order to get a variance for construction of storage and parking of the vehicle.

- Appeal process in Maine is untenable - current law intrusive, outdated, and indifferent to landowner needs.
- With a caveat the structure's size should be large enough to reasonably accommodate the vehicle but not unrestricted.
- No taxpayer costs involved, while accommodating people with disabilities. I also support more flexible and permissive zoning laws across our State to enable property owners to have more options for the best use of their land.

### **Oppose**

- I'm leaning towards opposing, but I'd appreciate hearing from / likely defer to places that actually have zoning. My question is what problem is this bill trying to solve? Are there lots of permanently disabled individuals who have vehicles weighing more than 6,000 pounds that can't store them indoors because of zoning restrictions? This seems to me like it should really be a local issue rather than state law. But, since we have no zoning around here, not an issue.
- There are a lot of questions (and holes) remaining. I do appreciate that many people own vehicles that have a registered weight of more than 6,000 lbs., but where does the line get drawn? I believe that a reasonable variance would be for a noncommercial vehicle/under 6,000 lbs. Unless there are ADA implications, I'd oppose.
- Existing limitations appear reasonable. The proposal removes all size restrictions, lends itself to unintended consequences, removes the possibility of enforcement. For example, grossly oversized "carport" (effectively a covered porch) extending into shoreland protection. With the amended language, how do you argue against that at a planning board meeting?
- I agree with the concept of this bill, but it leaves too much open to take advantage of as there is no size restriction on the structure.
- It gives too much leeway for an ordinance variance. There needs to be some limit on the size of the structure.
- Zoning is a local issue. The State should stay out of it. Determining the size of the structure to house this vehicle should be a local, not State decision.
- Though in theory it sounds all good for those that may need the accommodations, I find in the long run you will see issues. Individuals move on and that structure is there and then it becomes more than it's intended use. I feel it's opening up future issues.
- Opposed because zoning ordinances were put in place to protect shoreland. Other structures regardless of purpose should not be allowed because of runoff from

impenetrable surfaces. It is more important to protect the finite resources than to weather a protected class of citizens.

- This creates another exception for a variance. The variance requirement is in place for a reason, so that anybody that doesn't meet the requirements of the zoning ordinance, can seek a variance to receive an exception if reviewed and approved and the variance is granted. This should remain and not be altered.

## **NFNA**

- This one-size fits all legislation merits further discussion. Are such non-conforming buildings deemed to be permanent? Will they be around after the person with a permanent disability sells or passes away? We need to learn more about the bill and the reasons for proposing it. I'm concerned about the long-term impacts such special purpose buildings could have on the communities and neighborhoods that host them.
- Concerned about removal of home rule authority, but I understand what they are trying to accomplish.
- As an appeals board chairman, I think we already have the power to grant variances for hardships and I don't see the need for this.

## **Comment**

- Not sure what the bill is trying to get at - is it that the vehicles are now exceeding the current weight limit? Think the size of the structure limits are fine but concerned about the unintended consequences of no size limits and a zoning waiver.

[LD 934](#) *An Act to Provide 100 Percent of the Maine Resident Homestead Property Tax Exemption Amount to Seniors and Veterans* (Sponsored by Rep. Wood of Greene)

## **Support**

- Many towns can't improve their assessment ratio because they are waiting for revaluations of properties to be done. We are going down again this year and can't find someone to do our town until summer of 2026 for the 2027-2028 tax period.
- With 100% state reimbursement.
- With 100% state reimbursement.
- We should be doing this for everyone though.
- The legislature is unlikely to pass this given the budget situation, but we may as well do what we can.

## Oppose

- Leaning towards opposing. I'm not sure that these blanket exemptions based on age are a good idea / help the people who need it the most. Also, why is this reimbursement 100% - why not have *\*all\** homestead reimbursements be 100%? As I read this bill, some residents but not others would essentially be punished because a town has not done a revaluation lately; that doesn't seem fair. I'm not opposed to property tax relief for seniors and vets, but I don't think that this is the best way to do it.
- Given the benefit of the doubt, this proposal seems to be offered up by some poorly informed, yet well-intended people. This seems to be a logistical nightmare for municipalities. Forget about it being another measure aimed at certain groups without any means testing.
- Let them adjust tax relief through the "state tax filing process."
- Would this mean that a veteran could apply for a 100% exemption AND the veteran's exemption? That would seem a bit like double dipping. Also, it seems unlikely that the state would ever reimburse the municipalities 100% for this exemption. I think it would also be confusing to have some properties based on the municipality's assessment ratio while these properties may not be.
- There are two demographics here, elderly and veterans. This should be two separate bills. The major issue we face is the aging population, so it makes sense to allow exemption standards **for the aging population** until we restabilize population distributions.
- Oppose, Oppose, also Oppose – End run on certified ratios. This would destroy the equitable value of exemptions not only from one community to another, but also within the community itself. Residents within a community below 100% ratio who are not veterans or over 65 will still get a reduced homestead, shifting more tax burden onto them. Lastly, this is a huge administrative burden which would require reviewing all existing Homesteads to see if they qualify, potentially annually.
- This would be difficult to administer.
- Again, this just puts the burden on others, the difference will need to be made up and even if the state paid the full amount, now the residents of Maine are not only having to pay more of their own property tax to make up for it but they are paying across the state to cover all towns. It is a shell game with no pebble under any...we all lose.
- This creates another disparity and exemption that doesn't apply to all resident taxpayers. I am not sure that the State will reimburse 100% of this at all of for a period of time and then stop the reimbursement, as they have with other types of exemptions. Then it will be on the remaining taxpayers to pick up the difference.

- Cost to the municipality to track and qualify covered categories of residents; lowers the municipal revenue which then requires a higher tax burden on the rest of the community. Shifting costs away from seniors is placing an undue burden on young families and young people just getting started in life.

#### **NFNA**

- Sounds great in theory, but there's no provision for mean testing. All people over the age of 65 do not enjoy the same standard of living and should not, therefore, be treated the same or lumped into the same basket.
- I think it is a good idea, especially the 100% reimbursement to the municipality. I would like to see a separate Homestead Exemption form created or additions to the current one to track eligibility and I do not see anything about that mentioned. If not, would municipalities be required to track this down and make the changes accordingly?
- I do like that we get 100% reimbursement but the homestead for 65 and over will mean a new form to be filled out by everyone with the birth dates of all property owners. Better just a straight 100% reimbursement on all of it.
- Keep an eye on this one. I can appreciate the 100% reimbursement rate but am concerned with the cost to other taxpayers in the state. Our population is getting older, but the younger labor force may be saddled with a greater tax burden.

[LD 948](#) *An Act to Reduce Administrative Burdens and Expand Access in the Laws Governing Cannabis* (Sponsored by Rep. Pluecker of Warren)

#### **Support**

- Less regulatory "red-tape" and a more sustainable business model allowance is needed for the MMJ industry here, for it to survive.
- The changes seem reasonable to me.
- Support the expansion and access because this should be able to generate more revenue to help pay for other property tax exemptions like LD 934.

#### **Oppose**

- The whole nightmare with cannabis is a problem for towns. They keep giving both medical and adult growers more leeway but especially on the medical side of the house. Need to rope the whole operation in with stricter guidelines and monitoring for compliance.
- Health risks from cannabis are becoming more concerning. Any legislation that makes it more widespread or allows those benefiting from it economically to increase either their revenues or their customer base must be defeated.

- Too few regulations already.
- Don't need additional cannabis expansion.
- The expansion of plant limits for caregivers should not be given. The canopy expansion changes it from a Tier 1 Facility to a Tier 2 Facility. If they want to become a 2 Tier facility they need to apply for and pay for that license. The caregiver licenses should continue to be for one year so they can be reviewed annually for compliance.
- Extending the license period to two years would deprive municipalities of one year of license revenue. If municipalities can still collect annual license fees, then we could support it. However, this doubles the number of plants and canopy allowed. Nearby residents may be adversely impacted by the smell.
- I feel until they get a handle on all the illegal grow houses, tax restrictions and monopolies that are happening, it doesn't make sense to just allow more and more.
- Do not feel we should increase the number of plants allowed or the amount of square footage of plant canopy. Also, keep registration and licensing periods to one year.
- This industry was meant to be highly lucrative to the State and the growers. I'm not interested in helping them reduce the administrative costs - it was touted as self-supporting. Also, increasing the limits for growers is a slippery slope towards highly commercialized/industrial scale cultivation. We don't need this industry to mushroom in Maine.

#### **NFNA**

- I like the automatic renewal function, as long as there is something similar for liquor licenses. I know that a selectboard can waive renewal public hearings for licensees with a five-year clean record, but I don't think that renewing a cannabis license should be easier than a liquor license.
- Not only are they doubling capacity, but they're loosening other regulations. Have I moved from where I live? Am I still in Maine? Is this really the top priority sector for deregulation? I understand that two years aligns with many levels of liquor licenses, but with all of the safety concerns surrounding safe cultivation, do we really think this is in the best interest of public health?
- I don't see us having a dog in this fight.

#### **Track**

- There is more than enough access to marijuana.

- Not sure on this one. The statute appears to leave the municipality authorization in place for these types of establishments. The municipality still has home rule authority to allow or not allow. It is unclear to me if the license and registration fees would be adjusted for those with no violations? Do they pay more for a 2-year license vs the 1-year license?