

To: MMA's Legislative Policy Committee  
Justin Poirier, Chair

Fr: Kate Dufour, Director, Advocacy & Communications

Re: Updated LD List, Poll Results & Another Survey

Date: April 4, 2025

**LD List Preview.** Attached [here](#) are the bills of municipal interest printed during the week of March 30, all of which will be discussed at the April 16 policy committee meeting.

**March 28 Survey Results.** The LPC will also have the opportunity to revisit bills that were subject to impromptu survey. The results from the March 28 survey can be viewed [here](#).

**New Survey & Apologies for Confusion.** Per the norm, a handful of bills have been scheduled for hearings in advance of your next policy committee meeting and therefore we are seeking your feedback on the bills listed in the following survey. Your responses are due by **noon on Tuesday, April 8.** Please do take the time to either complete the survey or participate in the related Zoom meeting. The more feedback you provide, the stronger our position is on the initiative. Additionally, please remember that 24 members constitutes a quorum.

Additionally, my apologies for the confusion regarding the location of the survey. All surveys appear at the end of each of these update memos. LPC members can participate by hitting "reply" and using the body of the email to let us know how you would like your vote recorded (e.g., support, oppose, neither for nor against, track, or no position) or by embedding responses directly into the survey questions. Either approach works, please feel free to use the method that works best for you.

**Zoom Option.** MMA staff will also host a Zoom meeting at **noon on Tuesday (4/8)** for policy committee members who are available to meet. You can join that meeting here:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81073047570?pwd=ncflTPqGU56ifGerKaQVAPYyTkiedv.1>

Thank you.

### April 4 Survey

**LD 1278** *An Act to Change the Property Tax Appeal Process* (Sponsored by Rep. Underwood of Presque Isle)

This bill prevents an applicant for a property tax abatement from applying to the county commissioners to appeal a decision of the assessors or the municipal officers with respect to nonresidential property having an equalized municipal valuation having an equalized municipal valuation of \$1 million or greater. Instead, an applicant must appeal the decision to the State Board of Property Tax Review.

On LD 1278, MMA should:

- Support the bill.
- Oppose the bill.
- Take a “neither for nor against” stand on the bill.
- Downgrade to a track position.
- Take no position on the bill.

*Please provide the reasons why you support the selected position.*

LD 1282 *An Act Regarding Eligibility for Historic Preservation Bond Proceeds* (Sponsored by Sen. Hickman of Kennebec Cty.)

This bill amends the eligibility requirements for grants through the Maine Historic Preservation Commission for the preservation and restoration of historic properties to allow eligibility for properties designated as historic by municipal historic preservation ordinances.

On LD 1282, MMA should:

- Support the bill.
- Oppose the bill.
- Take a “neither for nor against” stand on the bill.
- Downgrade to a track position.
- Take no position on the bill.

*Please provide the reasons why you support the selected position.*

LD 1347 *An Act to Increase the Cap on Liability for Governmental Entities Under the Maine Tort Claims Act* (Sponsored by Sen. Lawrence of York Cty.)

This bill increases the limitation on the award of damages against a governmental entity or its employees, or both, under the Maine Tort Claims Act from \$400,000 to \$1.25 million per occurrence.

On LD 1347, MMA should:

- Support the bill.
- Oppose the bill.
- Take a “neither for nor against” stand on the bill.
- Downgrade to a track position.
- Take no position on the bill.

*Please provide the reasons why you support the selected position.*

LD 1348 *An Act to Increase the Limit on Damages Under the Maine Tort Claims Act for Negligence Involving School Field Trips* (Sponsored by Sen. Lawrence of York Cty.)

This bill increases the limit for damages under the Maine Tort Claims Act from \$400,000 to \$5 million for a negligent act or omission by a governmental entity in the planning,

transportation, administration, supervision or execution of a school field trip. The bill also defines a “field trip” as an elementary or secondary school excursion to a location away from the school for educational or recreational purposes, but does not include a sporting, extracurricular, club or other event or activity in which there is an inherent risk of physical injury.

On LD 1348, MMA should:

- Support the bill.
- Oppose the bill.
- Take a “neither for nor against” stand on the bill.
- Downgrade to a track position.
- Take no position on the bill.

*Please provide the reasons why you support the selected position.*

LD 1355 *Resolve, to Require the Office of Tax Policy to Study Taxation of Renewable Energy Infrastructure* (Sponsored by Rep. Hasenfus of Readfield)

This resolve directs the Maine Revenue Services to examine and evaluate the current system of taxation of renewable energy infrastructure, including the history of municipal taxation in Maine and in other states, and possible adoption of a uniform capacity tax for renewable energy infrastructure. The office is required to consult with the Governor's Energy Office, representatives from the renewable energy industry, and municipal and county officials, and to solicit public comments on the study. By December 3, MRS is directed to submit a report to the Joint Standing Committee on Taxation, which is authorized to submit legislation in 2026.

On LD 1355, MMA should:

- Support the bill.
- Oppose the bill.
- Take a “neither for nor against” stand on the bill.
- Downgrade to a track position.
- Take no position on the bill.

*Please provide the reasons why you support the selected position.*

LD 1368 *An Act to Provide a Property Tax Exemption for Allowing Shellfish Harvester Access to the Intertidal Zone* (Sponsored by Rep. Rielly of Westbrook)

This bill provides a \$500 reduction in property taxes to an owner of property adjacent to the intertidal zone who allows access for harvesting shellfish. To qualify, the owner must complete and file an application and proof of entitlement on or before April 1 with the municipal assessor who is further authorized to require the applicant to provide a copy of a plan describing the allowed spatial and temporal use of, including any limitations on, the access to the intertidal zone. The bill also provides that an application and proof of entitlement is confidential and not available for public inspection but must be provided to the State Tax Assessor upon request.

On LD 1368, MMA should:

- Support the bill.
- Oppose the bill.
- Take a “neither for nor against” stand on the bill.
- Downgrade to a track position.
- Take no position on the bill.

*Please provide the reasons why you support the selected position.*

LD 1388 *An Act to Replace the Participation Threshold in Votes to Adopt or Alter a Municipal Charter with a Lower Approval Threshold* (Sponsored by Rep. Bridgeo of Augusta)

This bill provides that for a new municipal charter, revision, modification or amendment to become effective, the number of votes cast in favor of the question must equal or exceed 15% of the total votes cast in the municipality at the last gubernatorial election. Currently, the threshold requires that the total number of votes cast equals or exceeds 30% of the total votes cast in the municipality at the last gubernatorial election.

On LD 1388, MMA should:

- Support the bill.
- Oppose the bill.
- Take a “neither for nor against” stand on the bill.
- Downgrade to a track position.
- Take no position on the bill.

*Please provide the reasons why you support the selected position.*

LD 1399 *An Act to Allow Action Against a Person Violating the Confidentiality of an Executive Session of a Public Body or Agency* (Sponsored by Rep. Carlow of Buxton)

This bill provides that if a member of a body regulated under the state’s executive session laws discloses a matter discussed while in the session, the body is authorized to: (1) initiate and form an ethics committee to conduct an investigation of an alleged violation; (2) conduct a hearing in executive session; and (3) if based on a preponderance of evidence and a recorded supermajority vote finds that the member violated confidentiality requirements, bar the member from participating in future executive sessions and from having access to confidential information. The board or agency’s decision may be appealed within 30 days. The bill also provides that the prohibition from participating in executive sessions may be for a definite or indefinite period.

On LD 1399, MMA should:

- Support the bill.
- Oppose the bill.
- Take a “neither for nor against” stand on the bill.
- Downgrade to a track position.

- Take no position on the bill.

*Please provide the reasons why you support the selected position.*

LD 1417 *An Act to Strengthen the Authority of Local Officials to Enforce Provisions Regarding Dangerous and Nuisance Properties that Constitute a Threat to Public Health and Safety*  
(Sponsored by Sen. Libby of Cumberland Cty.)

This bill expands the authority of local municipal health and code enforcement officials to enforce laws pertaining to properties that are dangerous, nuisance or abandoned and that constitute a threat to public health or safety.

On LD 1478, MMA should:

- Support the bill.
- Oppose the bill.
- Take a “neither for nor against” stand on the bill.
- Downgrade to a track position.
- Take no position on the bill.

*Please provide the reasons why you support the selected position.*