

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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STATE OF MAINE
132ND LEGISLATURE
SECOND REGULAR SESSION



Disposition of bills and summaries of all laws enacted or finally passed

**JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS**

May 2026

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**JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS**

LD 1474 An Act to Strengthen the Teaching of Wabanaki Studies in Maine Schools

Public Law 2025, chapter 762 establishes the position of Wabanaki studies specialist in the Department of Education to assist school administrative units and educators in the exploration of educational materials and resources related to Wabanaki studies and make recommendations to the department regarding Wabanaki curricula. The law also authorizes the State Board of Education to adopt rules to require a Wabanaki studies component for teacher certification and requires the board to evaluate whether to adopt such rules no later than July 1, 2027, and requires that the department begin study of the Wabanaki studies curricula at least biannually beginning July 1, 2027.

Public Law 2025, chapter 762 also requires Wabanaki studies to be included in the review of content standards and performance indicators of the Maine learning results.

LD 1558 Resolve, Establishing the Commission to Update Maine's Public Policy on Higher Education

Resolve 2025, chapter 120 establishes the Commission to Update Maine's Public Policy on Higher Education to review all related laws and rules addressing the State's public policy on higher education and make recommendations for potential legislative changes. The commission is directed to submit a report to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over education matters no later than November 4, 2026 with findings and recommendations, including suggested legislation. The joint standing committee may report out a bill related to the report to the 133rd Legislature in 2027.

Resolve 2025, chapter 120 was finally passed as an emergency measure in both the House and Senate prior to the adjournment sine die of the First Special Session in 2025 but was not signed by the Governor. Pursuant to the Constitution of Maine, Resolve 2025, chapter 120 became law without the Governor's signature and as an emergency measure effective January 11, 2026.

LD 1691 An Act to Expand Access to Justice in Rural Maine by Incentivizing Attorneys to Practice in Underserved Areas

Public Law 2025, chapter 508 establishes the Access to Justice Loan Program and Access to Justice Loan Program Revolving Fund under the Finance Authority of Maine for the purpose of awarding loans to and entering into loan repayment agreements with eligible Maine residents. Eligibility is limited to Maine residents who demonstrate an interest in or commitment to providing legal services in an underserved area of the State and who are enrolled or intend to enroll in an accredited law school and demonstrate financial need or have graduated from an accredited law school within the prior five years, are licensed or eligible to be licensed to practice law in the State and have outstanding law school loans. The maximum amount of a loan to or loan repayment agreement with a program participant is \$25,000 per year for a period of up to four years.

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Public Law 2025, chapter 508 also directs the University of Maine System, to the extent sufficient funding is available, to establish at the University of Maine School of Law a rural practice track to support the practice of law in underserved areas in the State. Among other things, the rural practice track must be designed to meet the following requirements.

1. It must provide, in each academic year, a housing stipend sufficient to cover the cost of dormitory housing at the University of Southern Maine for up to six first-year or second-year law school students who reside in underserved areas in the State or who have demonstrated a commitment to and aptitude for practicing law in those areas upon graduation.
2. It must provide, in each semester of the academic year and over the summer, internship, externship or other professional opportunities with organizations and other entities that provide legal services to individuals in underserved areas in the State for up to six second-year or third-year law school students who reside in underserved areas in the State or who have demonstrated a commitment to and aptitude for practicing law in those areas upon graduation.

Public Law 2025, chapter 508 requires that, no later than January 1, 2026, the University of Maine System is required to submit a report to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over education matters and to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over judiciary matters outlining its plan for implementation of the rural practice track at the University of Maine School of Law, including any recommendations for legislative or other action. After reviewing the report, either committee may report out legislation related to the report to the Second Regular Session of the 132nd Legislature.

Public Law 2025, chapter 508 was finally enacted in both the House and Senate prior to the adjournment sine die of the First Special Session in 2025 but was not signed by the Governor. Pursuant to the Constitution of Maine, Public Law 2025, chapter 508 became law without the Governor's signature on January 11, 2026.

Public Law 2025, chapter 508 was subsequently amended by Public Law 2025, chapter 757 to provide that the University of Maine System must submit the report to the joint standing committees of the Legislature having jurisdiction over education matters and judiciary matters by January 1, 2027, and that either joint standing committee may report out a bill based on the report to the 133rd Legislature in 2027.

LD 1705 An Act Regarding Adult Education Funding and Oversight

Public Law 2025, chapter 722 requires the Department of Education to annually assess adult education needs in the State relative to funding appropriated by the Legislature and requires the department to, by December 3, 2026 and annually thereafter, submit a report to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over education matters detailing its assessment and recommendations. The law also requires the department to submit to the Legislature a detailed written explanation for any funding for adult education that is not disbursed in accordance with the reimbursement procedures described in the laws governing adult education. The department is also required to adopt guidelines for the use of state funds for adult education programs and to