

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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**LAWS**  
**OF THE**  
**STATE OF MAINE**

**AS PASSED BY THE**

**ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE**

**SECOND SPECIAL SESSION**  
**June 19, 2018 to September 13, 2018**

**THE GENERAL EFFECTIVE DATE FOR**  
**SECOND SPECIAL SESSION**  
**NON-EMERGENCY LAWS IS**  
**DECEMBER 13, 2018**

**ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE**

**FIRST REGULAR SESSION**  
**December 5, 2018 to June 20, 2019**

**THE GENERAL EFFECTIVE DATE FOR**  
**FIRST REGULAR SESSION**  
**NON-EMERGENCY LAWS IS**  
**SEPTEMBER 19, 2019**

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**Augusta, Maine**  
**2019**

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**BUDGET ADDRESS  
OF  
GOVERNOR JANET T. MILLS  
FEBRUARY 11, 2019**

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Mr. President; Madam Speaker; Chief Justice Saufley; Chiefs Francis, Nicholas, Sabattis, and Paul; Ambassador Dana;

Secretary of State Dunlap; Treasurer Beck; Attorney General Frey; Auditor Buckley;

Honorable Members of the 129th Legislature;

Three months have passed since the general election.

Two months since the Legislature was sworn in.

Nearly all our cabinet members are confirmed, sworn and qualified. They are here tonight.

We are getting to work.

I want to take a moment to thank the people of Maine for the outpouring of warmth you have shown me in the last month.

I have felt in my heart the very best of Maine from all over Maine – the energy, the strength, the hope of Maine people.

Today we dig out from tunnels of snow, finding the light of our days to be longer, our dark nights shorter, and we sense that nature and the world are moving toward spring.

We care for our neighbors, old and new, frail or strong.

We care about those who need the most, those who work the hardest and those who pay the most.

Today we take account of the past and plan for a new, and better future.

Our unemployment rate is low. But our economy has grown more slowly than that of the United States and New England since 2010.

Our poverty rate is below the national average. Still 1/6th of our children live in poverty.

Our per capita income is growing; but it is still the lowest in New England, as is our average household income.

Maine's public high schools rank fifth in the country. But the percentage of our adult population with post-secondary degrees is well below the New England average.

The quality of our health care ranks 10th in the country. Yet the public health of our citizens is ranked 33rd in the country.

Maine has many assets.

But it also has many challenges.

We cannot afford to stand still.

This budget moves us forward.

The budget is about Health. It is about Opportunity. It is about Prosperity. It is about Education.

It is, in sum, about *HOPE*.

Health care is a major focus of this budget, and it is a vital part of moving our economy forward.

You may have heard that more than 4,000 people are newly enrolled in MaineCare since January – people from all across the state.

We intend that expanded MaineCare will help up to 70,000 people who now lack affordable health insurance, so that they can obtain preventive care, they can obtain early treatment for disease, they can remain in the workforce, and they will never again have to face the choice between medical care and bankruptcy.

These individuals are not the only ones who will be helped.

Expanding MaineCare and enabling people to have health insurance will also help our rural hospitals – which are some of the largest employers in their com-

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munities, often the only source of care, and often on the edge of financial collapse – because expansion will reduce the amount of uncompensated care they are asked to provide.

In turn, this will lower the inflation pressures on private health insurance policies.

We expect that this in turn will reduce the cost of health insurance to small businesses, self-employed individuals and employees – whose insurance rates are essentially making up the difference for hospitals' uncompensated care.

But that is not enough. We will work with the Bureau of Insurance and the small business community to find additional ways to lower the cost of health insurance for small business.

Finally, MaineCare expansion will help Maine's economy.

It will bring \$500 million in federal funds to Maine. That is like getting a new contract for a ship at Bath Iron Works every year – except that the jobs will be statewide.

This influx of funds is projected to create 6,000 additional jobs from Sanford to Calais to Fort Kent.

All of these workers will pay income and sales tax, which will in turn help the state's bottom line.

This is economic development on a large scale.

To support MaineCare expansion, we include \$147 million in the state budget over the next two years – a figure arrived at based on the independent, nonpartisan analysis of the Manatt report.

We are also budgeting for a Medicaid Reserve Account of \$29 million to cover any contingencies.

These budget items are funded by normal income and sales tax revenues as predicted by the independent Revenue Forecasting Committee.

That means no new taxes or fees.

That \$147 million will trigger around a billion additional federal dollars for Maine.

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It is the *bargain* of a century.

As good stewards, we will continuously review and manage the MaineCare program and evaluate the effects of expansion on:

- Health outcomes for our citizens,
- Hospital finances,
- Private health insurance rates, and
- Job creation.

This budget also addresses other public health challenges facing our state.

Among the most critical of these challenges is the opioid epidemic.

This week Attorney General Frey released statistics showing 282 drug overdose deaths for the first nine months of last year. That is one overdose death per day.

But the numbers do not tell the whole story.

One of those individuals was 21-year-old Sean M. Yankowsky of Bangor.

He died ten months after his brother, his only sibling and his best friend, 25-year-old Adam Yankowsky, died from ingesting heroin laced with fentanyl.

Adam had overdosed before.

He had been revived, Narcaned twice on one occasion, and sent home without any guidance about what he could do next or where he could get help.

Adam's and Sean's father, Maine State Police Detective David Yankowsky, and their mother, Shelly Yankowsky of Glenburn, join us this evening.

They now work with the Bangor Area Recovery Network to help others battle the illness that claimed their two children.

I want to thank them for their courage — the courage to carry on, the courage to speak up, the courage to help so many others. They are saving lives.

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Oxford County Sheriff's Deputy Matt Baker also joins us.

Matt is a 30-year veteran of law enforcement.

He has told hushed audiences of how he tried to revive his own 23-year-old daughter, Ronni, after she overdosed on heroin.

Coming home at 2:30 a.m. after working the late shift one night in 2015, Deputy Baker found his daughter in the bathroom, slumped over the toilet, not moving.

Her face was blue and she was unresponsive.

"I felt her heart beat once and I started CPR," Baker said. "Basically, my daughter died when I was doing CPR on her."

"About three hours later," he said, "I watched them wheel my daughter out on a gurney. This was the daughter who used to sit on my lap and talk about fishing with me. Now she sits on my mantle."

Today he is sharing this terrible experience in the hope that others will listen and learn, as he brings up the little girl Ronni left behind.

Matt, we are listening.

Also here tonight are Robert Fickett and Sharon Fields from Bangor. Both of them are in recovery. Bob coordinates the Recovery Coaches and Sharon coordinates the volunteers for the Bangor Area Recovery Network or BARN.

They are success stories. They are giving back to their community. They are helping others and saving lives. Thank you, Bob and Sharon.

For David and Shelly, Matt, Bob and Sharon, and so many families like theirs around the state – help is on the way.

In addition to making more services available through MaineCare, and with federal monies currently available and with \$5.5 million in non-tax dollars in this budget, we will provide:

- Training of recovery coaches for our emergency rooms,

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- Treatment based on a regional "hub and spokes" model,
- Purchase and distribution of Narcan at every appropriate venue,
- Medication-assisted treatment,
- Resources for friends and families of persons with substance use disorder, and
- Robust prevention and education efforts to stem the tide of this epidemic.

I am pleased with the progress to date on these initiatives under the leadership of our Director of Opioid Response, Gordon Smith. Thank you, Gordon.

These initiatives supplement the vigorous efforts of law enforcement at all levels to stem the tide of drug trafficking into Maine.

We propose other public health measures:

- expanding access to low cost drugs for the elderly and disabled. This is only the first step of many we will take to help our seniors in the coming years;
- investing \$10 million from the Fund for Healthy Maine for tobacco and nicotine prevention measures. It is critical to address the dramatic increase in vaping and other nicotine use among our young people;
- filling the vacancies in our public health nursing corps, as the Legislature already directed us to do;
- filling the longstanding critical vacancies in the Maine Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – an agency that has seen a 25 percent reduction in staff in recent years;
- and for our veterans, we fully fund the Bureau of Veterans Services outreach program to prevent homelessness and hunger among those who served our country with distinction. To those heroes I say, we will never forget you.

In these ways and many others, we are rebuilding our public health infrastructure.

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We are also rebuilding our education infrastructure.

The Department of Education has suffered from years of neglect.

As of last December, it took up to six months for the understaffed Department to simply certify new teachers who were waiting to start work or to recertify those already working.

That is unacceptable.

With staffing adjustments this past month we have already reduced that wait time to less than six weeks.

And we will not stop there.

The Maine Department of Education will once again be a place that leads, inspires and fully supports our schools, teachers, and students.

This budget begins making pre-kindergarten programs available to every 4-year-old in Maine.

This is a voluntary, four-year program, the initial phases are included in this budget.

We also provide \$18.5 million to Child Development Services to support the needs of our youngest and neediest children.

For kindergarten through high school, we provide an additional \$126 million over the biennium.

This brings the state's share of public education funding to nearly 51 percent of Essential Programs and Services (EPS).

When you include the state's payments toward the teacher pension fund, the state's share of K-12 education is 55 percent.

This budget invests in recruitment and retention to ensure that teachers in Maine will not be forced to leave the state for a living wage.

It is time to treat our teachers with the respect and dignity they deserve.

This budget ensures that no teacher in Maine will make less than \$40,000 a year.

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Tonight, we are delighted that Maine's 2019 teacher of the year could join us – Joseph Hennessey from Piscataquis Community High School in Guilford.

Joe teaches English and has created imaginative curricula, literature-based, active reading, analytical writing, and public speaking.

Thank you for your service, Joe.

The budget also increases funding for adult education and career technical high schools so that every Mainer can compete for skilled jobs in an ever-changing economy.

Tonight, we also welcome the 2018 Career Technical Education teacher of the year in the gallery – Russell Clark from the Sanford Regional Technical Center.

Russ teaches engineering and architectural design and exposes his students to the exciting things you can do with computer-aided-design (CAD) tools, 3D printers, and a laser cutter and engraver.

Thank you, Russ, for inspiring Maine's next generation of architects and engineers.

Maine will not succeed if our graduates are burdened by debt and if adults cannot access continuing education.

The budget therefore increases funding for the University of Maine System, for the Community Colleges, and for the Maine Maritime Academy.

And it provides \$3 million more for scholarships through the Maine State Grant Program to prevent students from going into debt.

Our investments in K-12 education are intended to help local schools and to help local property taxpayers.

But we propose to do more for taxpayers.

The budget increases revenue sharing each year of the biennium.

It also increases reimbursements to municipalities for the homestead tax relief program and for disaster assistance.

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It provides more money for county jails.

Taken together – more local school aid, more revenue sharing, more homestead reimbursements, more disaster assistance, more money for the jails – the net result is relief for property taxpayers.

We are also investing in infrastructure.

Over the next two years, we will pave about 2,000 miles of roadway, fix or replace about 135 bridges, and invest in rail, public transit, and seaports.

This will be supported by about \$531 million of dedicated state Highway Fund revenue, leveraged federal revenues, and \$200 million of state bonds.

To expand the economy, the budget:

- Invests \$2 million in broadband, designed to draw down much larger amounts of federal money to Maine;
- Funds \$5 million for rural development; and
- Directs funding to market all parts of Maine not just as a tourist destination, but as places to live and work and raise a family.

Our Department of Economic and Community Development looks forward to leading in the creation of a long range economic plan for our state.

The world is changing. We need to define Maine's place in the new world.

We will work with the private sector and with groups like the Maine Development Foundation to identify our state's many assets and build upon them to foster and attract:

- Sustainable farming, diversified fisheries and innovative forest products businesses
- Clean energy producers
- High tech industries
- Data centers
- Places for people to work remotely, and

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- A quality of life that will attract young working families back to our state.

The budget also allows for bonding for such things as broadband and Land for Maine's Future, and other appropriate investments, and we look forward to working with the Legislature on a bond package that fully meets the state's needs.

Climate change is a priority issue. Our Office of Policy Innovation and the Future is preparing a climate agenda which I will announce in the coming weeks.

Suffice it to say, we will make every effort, without additional general fund dollars:

- to assist the University of Maine in the research and development of offshore wind power;
- to provide incentives for community and residential solar power;
- to promote energy efficiency and weatherization;
- to increase the use of heat pumps;
- to build charging stations and incentives for electric vehicles;
- and to help local and state government become "green."

Right now, Hannah Pingree, who leads the Office of Policy Innovation and the Future, is working with Efficiency Maine to develop a program to promote the installation of 100,000 heat pumps in businesses and houses by 2025.

That alone would save \$30 to \$60 million annually in heating bills, and lower carbon emissions by 100,000 to 200,000 metric tons a year and wean our state off fossil fuels. We look forward to unveiling the details of this effort shortly.

Our budget bolsters public safety:

By beefing up security in courtrooms to ensure the safety of those seeking access to justice.

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By authorizing fifteen additional state troopers and sergeants to ensure a 24-hour police presence statewide, including in all rural areas.

By adding seven positions to the Maine State Police Computer Crimes Unit. There can be no more important purpose of government than to protect our children from violent predators, whoever they are, wherever they are, whatever their evil techniques.

By adding a new position in the Attorney General's Office to train investigators to detect and pursue those who prey upon our seniors and steal their hard-earned savings.

And we fulfill our promise to the good people of Washington County to fund a correctional facility there.

We will continue to work with community groups to combat the scourge of domestic violence.

We will no longer reject valuable federal resources for vital services — including funds for substance use disorder treatment, life-saving cancer screenings and Alzheimer's treatment, nutrition assistance for hungry families, children's health insurance, the forest legacy program, and transportation funding.

By some estimates, Maine has turned down almost \$2 billion in federal money in recent years. This is money that Maine people have paid in federal taxes that is not being returned to them, but is going to other states instead.

My Administration will work with the Congressional delegation to identify every source of benefits to which the Maine people are entitled and make sure our people get their fair share.

So this is our budget.

There will be those who say this budget is government spending run amuck, and there will be those who say we ought to spend more and more. I respectfully disagree.

Here is what I heard on the campaign trail last year.

- Maine people want better health care.
- Maine people want better schools.

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- Maine people want better jobs and greater economic opportunity.
- Maine people do not want higher taxes.

This is a pragmatic, common-sense budget that lives within our means and delivers what Maine people want.

It is based on the projections of independent experts on the Revenue Forecasting Committee of the previous administration who also say that revenue beyond this biennium is expected to be \$8.3 billion.

That is hundreds of millions of dollars more than what this budget proposes. When taken in combination with the robust Rainy Day fund that we have protected, Maine is well-positioned in the years to come.

In short, *this budget is sustainable*.

This budget is balanced, as the Constitution requires; it makes responsible investments to tackle serious challenges facing our state; and it honors the will of the people.

For you, the members of the 129th Maine Legislature, I welcome your thoughts, concerns, and suggestions in the coming months.

Having sat in these chairs, I know that you will bring the concerns of your constituents to bear on this budget, and I look forward to that productive discussion.

But keep in mind:

- In this budget there are no tax increases.
- In this budget there are no gimmicks.
- In this budget there are no negative balances.

This budget is pro-growth. It is pro-jobs. It is pro-people.

This budget is for the small business struggling with health care costs and for employers seeking a skilled workforce.

This budget is for the parents who have lost their children to overdose and who are now raising their grandchildren.



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This budget is for the families, children and seniors living without basic health care.

This budget is for state workers who need the resources to get things done for Maine people.

This budget is for the teachers who are paying for school supplies and food for their students out of their own pockets, while earning salaries that are not commensurate to the value of their work.

This budget is for Maine's towns and for the property taxpayers who have had to pick up the tab for things state government should have been paying for.

This budget is about health, opportunity, prosperity, and education.

It is about *HOPE*.

It is about help for those who have been left behind.

For teachers like you, Russ and Joe, it is about help for your schools, your students and your colleagues across the state.

And for you, Shelly and David, for Matt, Bob and Sharon, and for thousands of other families, loved ones and unsung survivors, there is HOPE. I promise you. There is hope.

Finally, thank you to all the people of Maine whom I love with all my heart.

Thank you.