

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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STATE OF MAINE
131ST LEGISLATURE
SECOND REGULAR SESSION



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

**JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS**

June 2024

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STATE OF MAINE

131ST LEGISLATURE
SECOND REGULAR SESSION



LEGISLATIVE DIGEST OF BILLS AND SUMMARIES OF ENACTED LAWS

This *Legislative Digest of Bills and Summaries of Enacted Laws* provides the disposition of all LDs and summaries of all laws enacted or finally passed during the Second Regular Session of the 131st Maine Legislature. Please note that all LDs and proposed amendments may be found through the Legislature's webpage, and each includes a summary of what the bill or amendment proposed.

The *Legislative Digest of Bills and Summaries of Enacted Laws* is arranged alphabetically by committee. Within each committee section is a subject index of all LDs considered by that committee as well as a digest of the LDs, arranged by LD number. Also included are enacted law summaries of the LDs enacted or finally passed. Brief analyst notes on certain LDs are also included: a committee digest will indicate if additional notes are provided for an LD. These notes add information staff found useful and may provide useful information to users of this *Digest*; please note that most LDs do not have a note and lack of a note should not be interpreted as having any significance. A separate section of the *Digest* provides a digest of the relatively few LDs that were not referred to a committee or reported from a committee as a committee bill; enacted law summaries of the LDs enacted or finally passed are provided. Finally, an appendix provides a summary of relevant session statistics.

The final disposition of each LD is noted in the relevant summary digest and index. The following describes the various final actions.

CARRIED OVER..... carried over to a subsequent session of the Legislature
CON RES XXX..... chapter # of constitutional resolution passed by both houses
CONF CMTE UNABLE TO AGREE..... Committee of Conference unable to agree; legislation died
DIED BETWEEN HOUSES..... House & Senate disagreed; legislation died
DIED IN CONCURRENCE.....defeated in each house, but on different motions; legislation died
DIED ON ADJOURNMENT..... action incomplete when session ended; legislation died
EMERGENCY.....enacted law takes effect sooner than 90 days after session adjournment
FAILED, EMERGENCY ENACTMENT or FINAL PASSAGE.....emergency failed to receive required 2/3 vote
FAILED, ENACTMENT or FINAL PASSAGE..... failed to receive final majority vote
FAILED, MANDATE ENACTMENT..... legislation proposing local mandate failed required 2/3 vote
HELD BY GOVERNOR..... Governor has not signed; final disposition to be determined at subsequent session
LEAVE TO WITHDRAW.....sponsor's request to withdraw legislation granted
NOT PROPERLY BEFORE THE BODY.....ruled out of order by the presiding officer; legislation died
INDEF PP..... indefinitely postponed; legislation died
ONTP, ACCEPTED, MAJORITY, MINORITY or REPORT X.....ought-not-to-pass report accepted; legislation died
P&S XXX..... chapter # of enacted private & special law
PUBLIC XXX.....chapter # of enacted public law
RESOLVE XXX..... chapter # of finally passed resolve
VETO SUSTAINED..... Legislature failed to override Governor's veto

The effective date for non-emergency legislation enacted in the Second Regular Session of the 131st Legislature is Friday, August 9, 2024. The effective date for legislation enacted as an emergency measure may be found in the enacted law summary for that legislation.

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used by the Commission to administer the program. The provision of funds is contingent on the ratification of the bond in the November 2024 statewide election.

LD 1156 An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Promote the Design, Development and Maintenance of Trails for Outdoor Recreation and Active Transportation

ENACTED LAW SUMMARY

Public Law 2023, chapter 652 provides \$30,000,000 to the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Bureau of Parks and Lands through a General Fund bond issue to be awarded to nonprofit organizations, municipalities and State Government entities to be used for the design, development and maintenance of nonmotorized, motorized and multi-use trails statewide with a requirement that at least \$3,000,000 must be matched by contributions from public and private sources. Of the funds provided, approximately 25% must be used for nonmotorized trails, 50% for motorized trails and 50% for multi-use trails. No more than \$7,500,000 plus previously unexpended balances may be expended in any one year. The provision of funds is contingent on the ratification of the bond in the November 2024 statewide election.

LD 2214 An Act to Make Supplemental Appropriations and Allocations for the Expenditures of State Government, General Fund and Other Funds and to Change Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2024 and June 30, 2025

ENACTED LAW SUMMARY

Public Law 2023, chapter 643 does the following.

Part A makes changes to appropriations and allocations of funds for fiscal year 2024-25.

Part B makes appropriations and allocations of funds for approved reclassifications and range changes.

Part C establishes the total cost of education from kindergarten to grade 12, the state contribution and the mill expectation for the local contribution for fiscal year 2024-25.

Part D does the following.

1. It authorizes the transfer of Federal Expenditures Fund - ARP State Fiscal Recovery funds within or between departments or agencies during fiscal years 2023-24, 2024-25 and 2025-26.
2. It allows limited-period positions funded with Federal Expenditures Fund - ARP State Fiscal Recovery funds to be extended through December 31, 2026.

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3. It allocates one-time funding of \$10,000,000 in fiscal year 2024-25 to complete projects initially funded with funds received through the federal American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.

Part E does the following.

1. It specifies that fees for the examination of plans or specifications for new or altered elevators and tramways are not subject to a \$500 cap applied to other fees related to elevator inspections.
2. It provides that fees for the examination of plans and specifications may not exceed 1.5% of the cost of the new or altered elevator or tramway.
3. It directs the Director of the Office of Professional and Occupational Regulation within the Department of Professional and Financial Regulation to amend rules to change fees associated with elevator inspections to cover the costs of additional Elevator Inspector positions and to allow for future reclassification or reorganization of all Elevator Inspector positions.
4. It requires the Director of the Office of Professional and Occupational Regulation to report to the joint standing committee or joint select committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over housing matters as to whether the fee changes are sufficient to add the positions at a more competitive compensation level.

Part F updates the definition of “biennial base year appropriation” for the laws governing the General Fund appropriation limitation and clarifies that when the Maine Budget Stabilization Fund is at its statutory limit, funds transferred from the General Fund to the Irrevocable Trust Funds for Other Post-employment Benefits are for the trust fund established for the state employee retiree health plan. Part F also increases the biennial base year appropriation, for fiscal year 2024-25 only, to 99% of the baseline General Fund revenue.

Part G does the following.

1. It provides that, beginning in the school year starting after June 30, 2025, the minimum hourly wage for educational technicians is 125% of the state minimum hourly wage and the minimum hourly wage for other school support staff who are paid hourly is 115% of the state minimum hourly wage.
2. It requires that, if the state minimum hourly wage is increased on January 1st of any year, the minimum hourly wage for educational technicians and other school support staff is increased beginning July 1st of the same year.
3. It provides that, beginning in fiscal year 2025-26 and for each subsequent fiscal year, the Commissioner of Education is required to update the salary matrix to reflect any increase in the minimum hourly wage of educational technicians and other school support staff.
4. It requires the Commissioner of Education to incorporate the minimum hourly wage into the essential programs and services funding model.

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5. It provides that, for the 2025-2026 school year only, the State must pay 100% of the additional funding necessary to achieve the minimum hourly wage.

Part H changes the approach to the taxation of rental property from imposing sales and use tax on the lessor upfront on the purchase price of the rental property to instead imposing tax on lease or rental payments going forward, also known as the lease stream. It also provides an exemption from the sales and use tax to nonprofit organizations that are exempt from federal income taxation pursuant to Section 501(c)(3) of the United States Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

Part I requires the State Controller to carry forward up to \$750,000 of unexpended balance in the Capital Expenditures line category in the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Bureau of Agriculture program, General Fund account the end of fiscal year 2023-24 to upgrade the Cony Road facility in Augusta.

Part J transfers \$750,000 from the unappropriated surplus of the General Fund to the Bureau of Agriculture program, Other Special Revenue Funds account within the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry to be used to renovate the office area of the Cony Road facility in Augusta.

Part K requires a one-time transfer in fiscal year 2024-25 of all funds in excess of \$200,000 of unencumbered balance forward in the Personal Services line category and in excess of \$300,000 of unencumbered balance forward in the All Other line category in the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Division of Forest Protection, General Fund account to the Capital Expenditures line category in the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Division of Forest Protection, General Fund account.

Part L establishes the Agricultural Fair Promotion Fund as a unit in the Operating Account within the Harness Racing Commission program within the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry and authorizes any residual cash balance to be transferred to the Operating Account at the close of fiscal year 2023-24.

Part M establishes five units within the Land for Maine's Future Trust Fund: the Public Access to Maine Waters Fund; the Maine Working Waterfront Access Protection Fund; the Maine Working Farmland Access and Protection Fund; the Conservation and Recreation Fund; and the Conservation Land Management Fund. Part M also requires that the proceeds from the Conservation and Recreation Fund be held in a separate interest-bearing Other Special Revenue Funds account.

Part N creates the Maine Mass Violence Care Fund in the Department of the Attorney General to provide financial support to victims of mass violence crimes and their families and household members funded by an initial transfer of \$5,000,000 from the General Fund unappropriated surplus. Disbursements from the fund are made by the Victims' Compensation Board within the Department of the Attorney General and limited to earnings on the fund or from donations to the fund.

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Part O requires the transfer of \$4,800,000 in fiscal year 2024-25 from the unappropriated surplus of the General Fund to the Department of Corrections, Administration - Corrections, Other Special Revenue Funds account for one-time implementation costs of the offender management system.

Part P requires the State Controller to carry forward up to \$900,000 appropriated in Part A for the subscription costs for the offender management system used by the Department of Corrections.

Part Q changes the maximum amount of funding that may be held in the Disaster Recovery Fund to address the existing obligations of the fund and plan for the increasing frequency of disaster declarations and removes the Consumer Price Index factor from the statute governing the fund. It also transfers \$15,000,000 from the unappropriated surplus of the General Fund to the Disaster Recovery Fund, Other Special Revenue Funds account within the Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management to fund the State's share of estimated disaster recovery costs.

Part R continues one-time funding for environmental closure activities at the former Maine Military Authority site in Limestone.

Part S transfers \$75,000 in fiscal year 2024-25 from the unappropriated surplus of the General Fund to the Maine Military Reserve Fund to settle outstanding obligations of the Maine Military Authority. It also requires the transfer of \$460,000 in fiscal year 2024-25 from the unappropriated surplus of the General Fund to the Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management, Administration - Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management program, Other Special Revenue Funds account to fund environmental closure activities at the former Maine Military Authority site in Limestone.

Part T establishes a 2-year public safety health and wellness grant pilot program within the Department of Public Safety to provide grants to government entities for wellness visits or specialized cardiac and metabolic screenings that specifically address the physical or mental health effects experienced by public safety employees.

Part U changes the maximum period of assignment of an educator under an interchange program from 24 months to 36 months.

Part V lapses to the General Fund \$518,714 of the unencumbered balance from the Legislature, General Fund carrying account, Personal Services line category.

Part W reorganizes oversight and updates practices for serving infants, toddlers and children with disabilities from birth to six years of age.

1. It establishes the extended Part C option under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act to continue individualized family service plans until the start of the school year when the child is four years of age if the family chooses.

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2. It provides that, beginning July 1, 2028, all school administrative units are responsible for child find activities and for ensuring a free, appropriate public education for children eligible under Part B, Section 619 of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education.
3. It establishes a transition period lasting through June 30, 2028 during which:
 - A. The Commissioner of Education is required to designate responsibility for child find activities and for ensuring a free, appropriate public education for eligible children to the Child Development Services System or to school administrative units in accordance with a transition schedule;
 - B. The Commissioner may approve school administrative units to assume the responsibility for child find activities and for ensuring a free, appropriate public education with a memorandum of understanding specifying the services to be provided by the department and the regional support and service hub;
 - C. Approved school administrative units must be provided professional learning and technical support and the department must assess and approve readiness plans and must be provided funding on a quarterly basis;
 - D. The Child Development Services System must transition to serve as regional support and service hubs aligned with the nine established superintendent regions;
 - E. School administrative units that the commissioner had determined to be unable to assume responsibility for child find activities and for ensuring a free, appropriate public education by July 1, 2028 must be provided with an additional year and the necessary resources to assume the responsibility; and
 - F. The department is required to contract with a national expert to regularly monitor funding and programming and report annually in March to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over education matters.
4. It establishes the minimum requirements and guiding principles for the regional support and service hubs established by the Child Development Services System.
5. It requires the Department of Education to implement a funding formula to fully fund school administrative units for the assumption of responsibility for child find activities and for ensuring a free, appropriate public education for eligible children that:
 - A. May not be appropriated to or allocated through general purpose aid for local schools and must be provided at 100% state share;
 - B. Includes, for each school administrative unit, a per-pupil operating allocation, a per-pupil special education and related services allocation and additional allocations for high-cost placements; and

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- C. Must be provided on a quarterly basis.
6. It provides that the Child Development Services System is responsible for due process and for paying 100% of the costs for compensatory services for children who have been underserved through the Child Development Services System and establishes a review procedure for eligible children entering kindergarten or whose school administrative units are assuming responsibility for child find activities and for ensuring a free, appropriate public education.
 7. It requires the Department of Health and Human Services to amend its MaineCare Benefits Manual rules regarding school-related services.
 8. It requires the Department of Education to establish the early childhood special education pathways pilot project, establish a centralized MaineCare billing system, convene a work group to review and recommend expansion of the State's Part C eligibility criteria, develop and disseminate information on Maine Public Employees Retirement System retirement and review the Child Development Services System annual legislative reporting requirements.

Part X changes the name of the Facilities, Safety and Transportation program within the Department of Education to the School Facilities program.

Part Y removes the laws governing the Maine School for Marine Science, Technology, Transportation and Engineering.

Part Z specifies that certification hearing officers appointed by the Commissioner of Education and individualized education program due process facilitators contracted with by the State are entitled to the same immunity as state employees under the Maine Tort Claims Act while performing their duties as certification hearing officers or individualized education program due process facilitators.

Part AA authorizes the Commissioner of Education, for fiscal year 2024-25 only, to provide grant opportunities of up to \$400,000 for a regional high school construction project involving School Administrative District 4 in Guilford, School Administrative District 41 in Milo and School Administrative District 46 in Dexter and up to \$480,000 for construction projects involving an elementary school in School Administrative Unit 17 in West Paris and other schools that have experienced sudden closures for health and safety reasons. The provision of these grant opportunities is contingent on the availability of unexpended fund balances in the Department of Education, General Purpose Aid for Local Schools program, General Fund account. A grant opportunity must require matching funds.

Part BB establishes the Higher Education Administrative Fund within the Department of Education to accept State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement participation fees from institutions of higher education. The fund must be used to support the facilitation of the reciprocity agreement and for other department costs associated with the administration of higher education in the State.

Part CC provides funding for the payments of the daily tuition rate for special purpose private preschools or for intermediate payments if the funding formula to provide appropriate daily tuition

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rates pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A, section 7302, subsection 2, paragraph G has not been implemented. Part CC transfers \$11,000,000 from the unappropriated surplus of the General Fund to the Department of Education, Child Development Services program, Other Special Revenue Funds account to fund the payment of the daily tuition rate or the intermediate payment. Part CC also requires the Department of Education to submit a report no later than September 30, 2024 to the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs and the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs on the development of the funding formula for daily tuition rates.

Part DD creates the Maine Office of Community Affairs and establishes a director for the office. The office is established to foster communication and partnerships between the State and communities in this State. The office is required to engage with municipalities, tribal governments and regional councils to provide coordinated and efficient planning, technical assistance and financial support to better plan for challenges, pursue solutions and create stronger, more resilient communities.

Part EE transfers \$5,000,000 from the unappropriated surplus of the General Fund to the Executive Department, GOPIF - Community Resilience Partnership program, Other Special Revenue Funds account to support grants and provide technical assistance to municipalities and federally recognized Indian tribes in the State for climate planning and actions, including adaptation and resilience projects and emissions reduction initiatives, including clean energy and energy efficiency projects.

Part FF establishes the Office of New Americans within the Office of Policy Innovation and the Future and an advisory council to the Office of New Americans.

Part GG transfers \$10,000,000 from the unappropriated surplus of the General Fund to the Maine State Housing Authority, Housing Authority - State, Other Special Revenue Funds account to provide funds for new housing units through the affordable homeownership program to expand affordable, energy-efficient housing options that are affordable to workers and support state workforce needs.

Part HH transfers \$13,500,000 from the unappropriated surplus of the General Fund to the Maine State Housing Authority, Emergency Housing Relief Fund Program, Other Special Revenue Funds account to supplement or establish programs addressing the needs of persons experiencing homelessness or facing other immediate housing needs and support other uses that address housing emergencies in the State, such as through winter warming shelters, legal services and other wraparound settlement supports intended to help individuals integrate into Maine's workforce and communities. Part HH also requires the transfer of \$7,500,000 from the unappropriated surplus of the General Fund to the Maine State Housing Authority, Emergency Housing Relief Fund Program, Other Special Revenue Funds account to support privately operated low-barrier shelters.

Part II prohibits municipalities from exceeding maximum levels of assistance under the General Assistance program for a household for more than 30 days in a 12-month period when assistance is granted for housing in a hotel, motel, inn or other lodging place.

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Part JJ makes the following changes to the laws governing the hospital tax beginning January 1, 2025, applying to the tax payment due on May 15, 2025.

1. It removes critical access hospitals from the definition of “hospital.”
2. It changes the tax imposed on hospitals from 2.23% to 3.25%.
3. It specifies that the tax no longer applies to critical access hospitals.

Part JJ also requires revenues received in each fiscal year from the hospital tax to be credited to the Medical Care - Payments to Providers Other Special Revenue Funds account to be used for MaineCare hospital payments.

Part KK requires an applicant seeking to convert a hospital into a critical access hospital to provide to the Department of Health and Human Services a copy of the applicant’s most recent community health needs assessment, an estimate of the financial impact of converting to a critical access hospital and a utilization plan that includes the amount of total anticipated revenues that will be used and how they will be used to address the community health needs that are not being fully met at that time. It also requires an approved critical access hospital to provide an annual report to the department for a period of five years demonstrating its use of revenues to support the health care needs of the community.

Part LL terminates the requirement that the Department of Health and Human Services allocate payments at least \$1,000,000 from hospital tax revenues collected under Title 36, chapter 377 and \$1,000,000 from hospital tax revenues collected under Title 36, chapter 375 to critical access hospitals to be used for staff enhancement. It also changes the reimbursement percentage to critical access hospitals from 109% to 104.5% of MaineCare allowable costs.

Part MM requires the Department of Health and Human Services to ensure that aggregate MaineCare payments made to a group of hospitals comply with the upper payment limit applicable to that group as required under federal regulations. It also requires the department to share its calculations and data related to the upper payment limit with affected hospitals at least 60 days prior to taking any action to limit payments and to increase payments to that group if the Federal Government determines that the payments made were below the applicable upper payment limit.

Part NN delays the requirement that the Department of Health and Human Services establish income disregards for determining eligibility in the Medicare savings program until July 1, 2024.

Part OO transfers \$10,000,000 from the unappropriated surplus of the General Fund to the Department of Health and Human Services, General Assistance - Reimbursement to Cities and Towns program, Other Special Revenue Funds account for funding general assistance payments to cities and towns.

Part PP transfers \$6,000,000 from the unappropriated surplus of the General Fund to the Department of Health and Human Services, Purchased Social Services, Other Special Revenue Funds account to provide one-time funding to replace reductions in grants to the department under

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the federal victim assistance formula grant program administered by the United States Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office for Victims of Crime pursuant to the federal Victims of Crime Act of 1984.

Part QQ directs the Department of Health and Human Services to provide support for federally qualified health centers to develop or expand the centers' capacity to provide access to affordably priced prescription drugs to patients by increasing the centers' ability to deliver pharmacy services to those patients. It also requires that initial awards to be made no later than 120 days after the deadline for applications for pharmacy services support and that the selection process must be performed by an evaluation team, some of whose members must be persons experienced in the operation and management of federally qualified health centers.

Part RR requires the State Controller to carry forward to fiscal year 2024-25 any unexpended balance of the \$1,500,000 appropriated in Part A for fiscal year 2023-24 in the Department of Health and Human Services, Child Care Services program, General Fund account for technology enhancements necessary to implement the increase in eligibility for child care subsidies from 85% to 125% of the State's median income.

Part SS changes the beginning date of the increase of eligibility for child care subsidies from January 1, 2024 to July 1, 2024.

Part TT establishes a two-year child care staff scholarship pilot program, beginning in fiscal year 2024-25, to help child care staff working in a licensed child care program in Maine pay for their own child to attend a licensed child care program. The program is capped at \$2,500,000 per year.

Part UU outlines the distribution of funding approved in Public Law 2023, chapter 412 to support nursing facilities.

Part VV authorizes the Department of Health and Human Services to adopt emergency rules to implement any provision of this law over which the department has specific authority that has not been addressed by some other Part of this law without the necessity of demonstrating that immediate adoption is necessary to avoid a threat to public health, safety or welfare.

Part WW renames the Maine Commission on Indigent Legal Services program the Maine Commission on Public Defense Services and authorizes the commission, for fiscal year 2024-25 only, to transfer up to \$2,500,000 in available General Fund balances in the Personal Services line category to the All Other line category to fund costs associated with assigned legal counsel.

Part XX authorizes one-time transfers in fiscal year 2023-24 of up to \$493,603 and in fiscal year 2024-25 of up to \$575,000 of available balances of appropriations in the Personal Services line category to the All Other line category in the Judicial Department, Courts - Supreme, Superior and District program to fund temporary clerk services and marshal services contracts.

Part YY transfers funding from the Department of Labor, Paid Family and Medical Leave Insurance Fund program, Other Special Revenue Funds account to the Department of Labor, Paid Family and Medical Leave Insurance Fund program, Paid Family and Medical Leave Insurance

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Fund account at the end of fiscal year 2023-24 to accurately reflect the expenditures associated with implementing and administering the paid family and medical leave benefits program.

Part ZZ establishes the Wage Recovery Fund within the Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Standards to facilitate payments related to unpaid wages, unpaid health benefits, liquidated damages or interest owed to employees or former employees of an employer when the department receives payments from an employer in accordance with a settlement agreement or a judgment on behalf of affected individuals.

Part AAA directs the State Controller to carry forward in the Maine State Library, Maine State Library program, General Fund account up to \$300,000 in the All Other line category for space planning purposes in the public space of the Maine State Library and up to \$1,500,000 in the Capital Expenditures line category authorized for purchase of shelving for the Cultural Building.

Part BBB requires a one-time transfer of \$168,030 from the unappropriated surplus of the General Fund to the Maine State Library, Imagination Library of Maine Program, Other Special Revenue Funds account to support the Imagination Library of Maine Program.

Part CCC transfers \$4,000,000 from the unappropriated surplus of the General Fund to the School Revolving Renovation Fund under the Maine Municipal Bond Bank to support the renovation needs of school administrative units that have voluntarily assumed the free, appropriate public education for children three years of age to five years of age.

Part DDD amends the effective date of Public Law 2023, chapter 329 to allow the funding for a Comprehensive Health Planner II position to take effect on January 1, 2025. Other provisions of the Public Law 2023, chapter 329 will take effect on January 1, 2026 as originally enacted.

Part EEE transfers \$100,000 from the unappropriated surplus of the General Fund to the Department of Public Safety, Safe Homes Program Fund, Other Special Revenue Funds account to provide one-time funding to support the safe storage of prescription drugs, firearms and dangerous weapons in homes or public spaces.

Part FFF authorizes immediate promotion of an employee in a Fire Investigator position to a Senior Fire Investigator position if that employee becomes certified as a Certified Fire Investigator by the International Association of Arson Investigators or equivalent certification body.

Part GGG directs the State Controller to carry forward up to \$1,500,000 appropriated for high-density shelving at the former Eastside Wellness Center and in the Cultural Building in the Maine State Archives as authorized in Public Law 2023, chapter 3 to fiscal year 2024-25 in the Department of Secretary of State, Administration - Archives program, General Fund account, Capital Expenditures line category.

Part HHH transfers \$3,000,000 from the unappropriated surplus of the General Fund to the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Milk Commission program, Other Special Revenue Funds account to provide one-time payments to address escalating production costs to Maine milk producers.

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Part III transfers \$3,000,000 from the unappropriated surplus of the General Fund to the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Parks - General Operations program, Other Special Revenue Funds account to address damage incurred to state parks, historic sites and public lands during the December 2023 and January 2024 storms. It also directs the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry to seek reimbursement of costs, and any reimbursement received must be transferred to the reserve account established by the State Controller to reserve General Fund resources for future funding needs or transferred to the unappropriated surplus of the General Fund.

Part JJJ requires the State Controller, at the end of fiscal year 2023-24, to carry forward any unexpended balance remaining of the \$550,000 appropriated in Public Law 2021, chapter 635 in the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Bureau of Agriculture program, General Fund account, All Other line category to the next fiscal year to be used to replace the feed, seed and fertilizer database. It also requires the State Controller, at the end of fiscal year 2023-24, to carry forward any unexpended balance remaining of the \$1,500,000 appropriated in Public Law 2023, chapter 412 in the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Bureau of Agriculture program, General Fund account, Capital Expenditures line category to the next fiscal year to be used for replacement of the licensing and inspection database.

Part KKK requires the Department of Health and Human Services to plan for and assist a statewide network of crisis receiving centers across the State that supports both rural and urban communities to provide short-term mental health and substance use disorder crisis stabilization services.

Part LLL authorizes the State Controller to keep open the official system of general accounts of State Government for fiscal year 2023-24 to make post-closing entries and adjustments to carry out the provisions of this law.

Part MMM requires the State Controller to carry forward to fiscal year 2024-25 any unexpended balance at the end of fiscal year 2023-24 in the All Other line category in the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, Information Services program, General Fund account.

Part NNN authorizes the adjustment of appropriations and allocations within the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Parks - General Operations accounts to maximize the use of the ARP - State Fiscal Recovery Funds and respond to damage from the December 2023 and January 2024 storms.

Part OOO transfers \$180,000 from the unappropriated surplus of the General Fund to the Military Training and Operations program, Other Special Revenue Funds account within the Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management to fund costs associated with providing paid leave pending completion of sexual harassment investigation or sexual assault investigation as required under Title 37-B, section 390-D.

Part PPP implements the cost items in the collective bargaining agreements reached between the State and specified executive branch bargaining unit and provides for equitable treatment for

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confidential employees and certain other employees excluded from collective bargaining. Part PPP also does the following.

1. It provides for the adjustment of certain salary schedules in fiscal year 2023-24 and in fiscal year 2024-25 consistent with any collective bargaining agreements made between January 31, 2024 and June 30, 2025.
2. It specifies the costs from the General Fund and Highway Fund to fund salary increases and authorizes the transfer by financial order of available General Fund and Highway Fund balances as necessary.
3. It requires the Department of Administrative and Financial Services to convene a task force to review and make recommendations regarding the criteria required for a recruitment and retention adjustment.

Part QQQ amends the provision of law that requires the Department of Health and Human Services to establish a substance use disorder treatment center in Kennebec County or Washington County.

1. It specifies that the treatment center must be established in Kennebec County.
2. It requires that services offered by the center must be available to all individuals regardless of insurance.
3. It makes optional certain conditions that are required under the current law.
4. It retroactively changes the date by which the department must award a contract for the development of the treatment center from the original deadline of December 1, 2023 to 90 days after the effective date of Part QQQ.

Part RRR establishes a one-time Child Care Stability Grant program in the Department of Health and Human Services to provide additional support to licensed child care providers in the State. Expenses eligible for funding under the grant program include stipends to support staff recruitment and retention and funding to allow child care providers to offer financial assistance to families. Part RRR also does the following.

1. It requires the department to use all funds available in the Child Care Services program, Other Special Revenue Funds account and the Head Start program, Other Special Revenue Funds account for the following purposes:
 - A. Up to \$5,400,000 for the Child Care Stability Grant program established in this Part;
 - B. Up to \$3,500,000 for one-time technology improvements in the Maine Child Care Affordability Program; and
 - C. The remainder for general funding to support child care access for families, particularly low-income families, consistent with the Maine Child Care Affordability Program.

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2. It requires the State Controller, after making several priority transfers from the unappropriated surplus of the General Fund at the close of fiscal year 2023-24 as required by statute, to make additional priority transfers first to the Child Care Services program, Other Special Revenue Funds account in an amount up to \$11,772,649 and then to the Head Start program, Other Special Revenue Funds account in the amount of up to \$1,134,000 for the Maine Child Care Affordability Program.
3. It requires that the department maximize federal funding for child care and specifies that federal funding may not be replaced with general funds.

Part SSS establishes the Nursing Facility Reform Transition Fund as a Department of Health and Human Services, Nursing Facilities program, Other Special Revenue Funds account to fund components of nursing facility rates starting January 1, 2025 that assist in transitioning toward the fully implemented rates under the MaineCare program's comprehensive rate system reform pursuant to Public Law 2021, chapter 639 by calendar year 2028. It also transfers \$23,247,780 from the unappropriated surplus of the General Fund to provide funding for this purpose and an immediate distribution from the Nursing Facility Reform Transition Fund as a one-time payment to nursing facilities.

Part TTT authorizes the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to carry forward to fiscal year 2024-25 any unexpended balance remaining at the end of fiscal year 2023-24 of the \$1,000,000 appropriated in Public Law 2023, chapter 412, Part A, section 25 for the repair of three department-owned dams.

Part VVV transfers \$3,000,000 from the unappropriated surplus of the General Fund to the Department of Public Safety, Administration - Public Safety program, Other Special Revenue Funds account to fund certain first responder overtime costs associated with the Lewiston mass casualty event on October 25, 2023.

Part WWW clarifies that the duties of the interconnection ombudsman also include technical or regulatory work involving public utilities, that this work is to be funded by the Public Utilities Commission Regulatory Fund and that the interconnection ombudsman fund is to be used to offset costs for interconnection-related activities undertaken by the interconnection ombudsman.

Part XXX requires the Department of Health and Human Services to work with any hospital that is reimbursed by the federal Medicare program as a “prospective payment system hospital” and that was reimbursed by the MaineCare program as a critical access hospital for outpatient services on or before January 1, 2024 to determine a plan for transitioning to reimbursement by the MaineCare program as a prospective payment system hospital while maintaining financial solvency. It also requires the department to provide a report on the transition plan to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over health and human services matters by March 31, 2029.

Part YYY does the following.

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1. It establishes within the Department of Environmental Protection the Coastal Sand Dune Restoration and Protection Fund, from which the department may pay up to 50% of the eligible costs incurred in a project to restore, protect, conserve, nourish or revegetate a coastal sand dune system and up to 100% of eligible costs for projects relating to coastal sand dune systems and addressing technical assistance and public education.
2. It transfers \$1,000,000 from the unappropriated surplus of the General Fund to the Coastal Sand Dune Restoration and Protection Fund to fund eligible sand dune projects.
3. It authorizes the Department of Environmental Protection to consider and potentially grant a permit for construction of an offshore wind terminal on Sears Island in the Town of Searsport to be located on or that will otherwise impact a coastal sand dune system on the island, under certain specified conditions.
4. It directs the Department of Transportation, in collaboration with the Maine Coast Heritage Trust, to take all reasonable steps to ensure the conservation and protection of a specified parcel of land in the northwest portion of Sears Island.

Part ZZZ amends the law governing paid family and medical leave.

1. It amends the definition of “base period” to reflect calendar quarters for which wage information would be available and amends the definition of “benefit year” to consider the date that leave begins in order to ensure parity between family and medical leave.
2. It repeals a provision of the paid family and medical leave benefit program that establishes criteria for evaluating bids to contract with a 3rd party for claims administration allowing the procurement of a 3rd-party claims administrator to be governed by the remaining relevant provisions of the paid family and medical leave benefits program and state procurement laws.
3. It amends intermittent leave requirements to reflect an individual's actual work day instead of a set eight hours and clarifies that an employee and employer may not agree to a reduced leave schedule that permits leave increments of less than one hour.
4. It increases the cap on the cost of administering the paid family and medical leave benefits program from 5% to 10% of the amount deposited to the Paid Family and Medical Leave Insurance Fund for each fiscal year.

Part AAAA transfers \$20,000,000 from the unappropriated surplus of the General Fund to the Maine State Housing Authority, Housing Authority - State, Other Special Revenue Funds account to provide funds for the Rural Affordable Rental Housing Program and the federal Low-income Housing Tax Credit Program to expand affordable rental and ownership housing options.

Part BBBB transfers \$5,000,000 from the unappropriated surplus of the General Fund to the Maine State Housing Authority, Housing Authority - State, Other Special Revenue Funds account to establish a manufactured home and mobile home park preservation and assistance program.

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Part CCCC transfers \$4,000,000 from the unappropriated surplus of the General Fund to the Department of Corrections, County Jails Operation Fund program, Other Special Revenue Funds account.

Part DDDD does the following.

1. It provides funding for mental health crisis intervention mobile response services to provide services 24 hours per day, seven days per week.
2. It requires the Department of Health and Human Services to provide for the incorporation of specific types of mental health and crisis intervention experts into the existing crisis services response system.
3. It provides funding for ancillary services for mental health crisis intervention mobile response services, including necessary travel and telephone conferences with clients.
4. It requires the department to ensure the coordination of services under the State's E-9-1-1 system and the State's 9-8-8 mobile crisis services system and submit a status report to the joint standing committees of the Legislature having jurisdiction over health and human services matters and utilities matters by January 30, 2026.

Part EEEE directs the Department of Health and Human Services to establish two crisis receiving centers, one in Aroostook County and one in Penobscot County, to support individuals dealing with behavioral health, mental health or substance use issues and provides funding for that purpose. It also directs the department to develop a plan to expand crisis receiving centers statewide, with at least one center located in each county.

Part FFFF establishes the Office of Violence Prevention within the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention, provides related funding and directs the office to engage in the following activities.

1. To coordinate and promote effective efforts to reduce violence in the State, including gun violence, and related trauma.
2. To promote research regarding causes of and evidence-based responses to violence.
3. To create and maintain a data hub of regularly updated and accurate materials and resources as a repository for data, research and statistical information regarding violence in the State.

Part FFFF authorizes the office to establish and administer a program to award grants for community-based violence intervention initiatives that are primarily focused on interrupting cycles of violence, trauma and retaliation by providing culturally competent intervention services.

Part GGGG provides ongoing funding to the Department of Health and Human Services for employee recruitment and retention incentives to the staff who provide medication management services provided by the Office of Behavioral Health within the department.

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Part HHHH requires the Department of Public Safety to contract with a statewide organization with expertise in mental health to develop written and online suicide prevention educational materials. It also requires the department to submit a report on the project to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over public safety matters by December 1, 2026.

Part IIII requires the Commissioner of Public Safety to develop and implement procedures to notify the public, including the deaf and hard-of-hearing community, of active shooter situations and provides funding for that purpose.

Part JJJJ transfers \$30,000,000 from the unappropriated surplus of the General Fund to the Education Stabilization Fund.

Part KKKK does the following.

1. It directs the Maine State Housing Authority to establish a pilot program designed to provide eligible persons with up to \$800 per month in rental assistance paid directly to the person's landlord for a period of up to 24 months with the stipulation that such assistance provided is not considered income or an asset for the purposes of determining eligibility for or a benefit amount from a public assistance program administered by the State or a municipality.
2. It establishes a subsidy program under the Maine State Housing Authority in coordination with the Department of Education and the Department of Health and Human Services for students experiencing homelessness who have not yet attained 18 years of age and directs the authority to consider ways in which the services provided by school-based housing navigators established by the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act could benefit the administration of the program.
3. It transfers \$18,000,000 from the unappropriated surplus of the General Fund to the Maine State Housing Authority for a pilot program to provide support for eviction prevention.
4. It transfers \$2,000,000 from the unappropriated surplus of the General Fund to the Maine State Housing Authority to be used for housing subsidies for homeless students in elementary school and secondary school.

Part MMMM transfers \$23,535,428 from the unappropriated surplus of the General Fund to the MaineCare Stabilization Fund. It also requires the State Controller at the close of fiscal year 2023-24, after making several priority transfers from the unappropriated surplus of the General Fund required by statute and after the transfer required in Part RRR of this law, to make an additional priority transfer up to \$6,464,572 to the Department of Health and Human Services, MaineCare Stabilization Fund program, Other Special Revenue Funds account.

Part NNNN requires the Department of Health and Human Services to issue a request for proposals to develop one or more psychiatric residential treatment facilities in the State to meet the residential care needs of adolescents who have high levels of behavioral health needs that cannot be met by existing behavioral health services in the State.

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Part OOOO transfers \$11,000,000 from the unallocated balance of the Highway Fund to the unappropriated surplus of the General Fund on or before June 30, 2025.

Part PPPP transfers \$8,747,622 from the unappropriated surplus of the General Fund to the Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services for emergency one-time assistance to St. Mary's Regional Medical Center and for other emergency needs of the City of Lewiston associated with the mass casualty event on October 25, 2023.

Part QQQQ continues those limited-period positions that are proposed to continue in fiscal year 2024-25 but for which funding ends at the end of fiscal year 2023-24. These same limited-period positions are continued through August 1, 2024 in Part B of Public Law 2023, chapter 645, which was enacted as an emergency measure effective April 17, 2024.

Part RRRR requires the Department of Health and Human Services to offer grants and incentives to providers to expand into rural areas to provide services to children and adults in families involved in the child welfare system. An appropriation of \$500,000 in each year of the biennium is provided in Part A for this purpose.

Part SSSS requires the Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Behavioral Health to provide training to clinicians in the so-called assertive continuing care protocol to facilitate the delivery of the evidence-based practice for potential expansion of services for the acute mental health needs of adolescents with co-occurring disorders.

Part TTTT requires the Department of Health and Human Services to extend supplemental payments to the Maine Veterans' Homes with funds provided in Resolve 2023, chapter 117 in fiscal year 2023-24 and provide one-time supplemental payments to the Maine Veterans' Homes in fiscal year 2024-25.

Part UUUU transfers \$50,000,000 from the Maine Budget Stabilization Fund to the Department of Transportation, Infrastructure Adaptation Fund, Other Special Revenue Funds account for municipal, state or regionally significant infrastructure adaptation, repair and improvements that support public safety, protection of essential community assets, regional economic needs and long-term infrastructure resiliency. Project types may include working waterfront infrastructure, culverts, storm water systems, water system upgrades and other interventions that support reducing or eliminating climate impacts, especially coastal and inland flooding. It also creates the Business Recovery and Resilience Fund program within the Department of Economic and Community Development and transfers \$10,000,000 from the Maine Budget Stabilization Fund for economic recovery and resilience grants for businesses and nonprofit organizations.