

# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

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MAINE MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION

KATE DUFOUR, DIRECTOR, ADVOCACY & COMMUNICATIONS

# 70-MEMBER LEGISLATIVE POLICY COMMITTEE

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- Two municipal officials, elected by select boards/councils in Maine's 35 Senate Districts.
  - Elected in an even-numbered year to serve a two-year term.
  - List of members posted on MMA's [website](#).
- Two important Roles
  - Adopt MMA's two-year legislative platform.
    - Normally, a dozen bills addressing issues of municipal concern or protect the core approach.
  - Establish MMA's position on all bills of municipal relevance.
    - Meet monthly during session.

# 2022-2024 MMA LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM

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- Timing of School Budget Referendum
- Sharing of Adult Use Cannabis Revenue
- 1<sup>st</sup> Responder Health – Prevention
- Shared Training Cost for EMS/Dispatch
- Non-residential LEO Training
- Affordable Housing TIF/Workforce Pine Tree Zone
- LD 2003 Implementation Delay
- Tree Growth Tax Program
- Increase GA Reimbursement
- GA Program Reform
- Property Tax Stabilization Amendment

# PROPERTY TAX STABILIZATION

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- MMA: Replace stabilization law with an enhanced senior resident homestead exemption.
  - All current homestead program regulations apply.
  - 65 years of age or older
    - Earning less than 80% regional median family income, eligible for \$25,000 increase (total of \$50,000),
    - Earning between 80% -100% regional median family income, eligible for \$15,000 increase (total of \$40,000).
  - 100% state reimbursement for the property tax loss due to senior resident homestead.
  - Reduce administration burdens, by directing Maine Revenue Services to determine eligibility.

# STABILIZATION LEGISLATION

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- **LD 37:** Eliminates the annual application requirements.
- **LD 89:** Clarifies that the widow/widower of an individual for stabilization, remains eligible for the benefit, provided they were married for at least 10 years prior to death.
- **LD 130:** As of April 1, 2024 replaces the stabilization program with a \$75,000 homestead exemption for a 65 year old plus homesteader who has resided in the homestead for at least 10 years.

# FY 2024 – FY 2025 GENERAL FUND BUDGET

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- **LD 258**

- 55% of K-12 Education (\$1.40 billion)
- Increased Homestead Exemption Reimbursement
  - FY 24 = 76% (\$103.5 Million)
  - FY 25 = 79% (\$108.5 Million)
- 100% Stabilization Act Reimbursement/Mandate Reimbursement
  - FY 24 = \$15 million & \$500K
  - FY 25 = \$31 million & \$550K
- Revenue Share @ 5%
  - FY 24 = \$252 million
  - FY 25 = \$259 million

# OTHER TAX POLICY BILLS

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- **LD 101:** Requires “excess funds” from the disposal of tax acquired property to be returned to the former owner. Property sold within 180 days of acquisition = the sales price less back taxes and related costs. Property retained by the municipality and unsold after 180 days of acquisition = fair market value less related costs.
- **LD 191:** Excludes from BETE/BETR eligibility the property owned by a person that bans, boycotts, or otherwise restricts or prevents the sale or distribution of any product that is legally produced, harvested, or grown in Maine.
- **LD 286:** Use of TIF revenue to repair or build municipal buildings, subject to a cap equal to the lesser of 10% of the districts assessed value or \$3 million.

# FOR MORE INFORMATION

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- Subscribe to...
  - Legislative Bulletin, printed each Friday during session.
  - LD List, which is posted on MMA's website each Friday and linked to the electronic Bulletin.
  - Potholes & Politics podcast for a summary of the week's legislative activities.
- Connect with...
  - Your LPC representatives.
  - MMA's advocacy staff. Kate Dufour, Rebecca Graham, Rebecca Lambert & Laura Ellis
    - 1-800-452-8786 or email, which is first initial, last name @memun.org (kdufour@memun.org)