

THE “INITIATIVE” PUBLIC INPUT SUMMARY As of Friday, August 24, 2007 at 12:00 Noon

Reorganization – Natural Resources

- Combine the Departments of Conservation, IF&W, Environmental Protection, Marine Resources, Forestry and Agriculture into one department of Natural Resources. Abolish LURC, contract with neighboring communities where UT development is being proposed for permitting and regulation.
From: Ryan D. Pelletier; PO Box 55, St. Agatha, ME 04772; townmanager@ainop.com; 543-7305
- Merge IF&W and DMR into one unit. These two departments have significant mission commonality with one providing oversight for freshwater and inland gaming and the other saltwater environs.
From: Sen Karl Turner
- Merge the departments of Agriculture and Conservation into a single department with a single commissioner.
- Merge departments of IFW and Marine resources.
- Merge all drinking water programs in DHHS under DEP.
- State Planning Board, DEP, IF&W and Conservation Commission should all be brought together. Often the DEP and Conservation agencies tell the State Planning Board what can and cannot be done and where. We don't need three or four different agencies all telling one what the other can or cannot do. Further, it becomes a regulatory nightmare. Just one agency should be able to do it. We don't need ten. That way you'll have one agency going in one direction and you could cut about half of the personnel.
From: LizWLane@aol.com
- If you can't outsource the activities of the following groups, why can't the Department of Conservation be combined with the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, Atlantic Salmon Commission, Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, Department of Marine Resources, Maine Port Authority and the Department of Environmental Protection. It would do a better job at protecting the environment and eliminate redundant and/or conflicting regulatory nightmares. Call it the Department of Environmental and Wildlife Conservation and show the rest of the country what environmental leadership is all about.

Reorganization – Other

- Merge the Departments of Community & Economic Development with the Department of Professional & Financial Regulation as proposed by the administration in the first session of the 123rd.
From: Sen Karl Turner
- The Maine Turnpike Authority and the Department of Transportation have many common elements as regards highway and bridge infrastructure. Merge the MTA into the

DOT.

From: Sen Karl Turner

- Eliminate the State Planning Office. Move its economic related activities under the Budget Office rename as Office of Budgeting and Planning. All other programs within SPO should be moved to the Department of Conservation or the DEP as appropriate.
- Merge DFPR under DAFS but place all consumer protection functions in the AG's office.
- Merge all of the cultural agencies under SoS.
- Department Affected - Maine Department of Labor 1) Eliminate Local Workforce Investment Boards. These Boards function as little more than "middle men" obtaining and transmitting information to and from Maine CareerCenters and the Department of Labor. CareerCenters can provide the required information directly to the Department of Labor and vice versa. Any oversight or administration mandated by the Workforce Investment Act can be provided solely by the Maine Jobs Council and/or Department of Labor. LWIB's are an unnecessary layer of administration with administrative budgets out of proportion to the work they perform.
- Move the Maine Development Foundation to the State Planning Office.
- Move the Disability Rights Center and Pine Tree Legal Assistance to the Maine Human Rights Commission.
- Merge the Board of Trustees of the Maine State Retirement System with the DOE retirement system.
- Merge the Board of Trustees of the Maine Technical College System (\$42,000,000) and the Board of Trustees of the University of Maine System (\$190,000,000). Combine the systems and use the savings to offer free Community College enrollment to all resident students who average a "B" grade or higher.
- Consolidate the system offices for UMS and MCCS, as well as Maine Maritime
- Reorganize more departments in state government and hand out bonuses and extra vacation to any state employee that comes up with an idea that streamlines and or increases efficiency and reduces state spending in their department. I also think every department should be audited by an efficiency expert.

From: Chris Russell; E5@maine.rr.com

- I strongly suggest the elimination of the Maine Geological Survey. That bureau duplicates the work of the Federal agency, the U.S. Geological Survey, and perforce fills no useful niche in State government. The entire staff could be placed within existing government structure, except for the State Geologist, who either could be given early retirement or a position with the University. If he chooses to leave, the title of State Geologist should be settled on the Head of the Geology Department at UMaine, an action in keeping with similar efforts in other states. I have no idea of the annual budget of the MGS, but expect that it is in the range of three million dollars when salaries, office rental supplies, and other expenses are included. Maine owns no energy resources to help support excess state government as states like Texas, Oklahoma, Colorado, West Virginia, and other states do, and for our state to support an unnecessary bureau such as the MGS is misdirected. Thank you!

From: John O. Maberry; 14 Crockett Cove Drive, Deer Isle 04627

- It seems to me savings could be accomplished by combining the food inspection services of DHHS and the Department of Agriculture under one Agency.

- Decrease the size of government. Align salary increases to similar positions in the private sector. Government salaries tend to increase every year. Private sector salaries often do not increase during down economic times and will often increase faster than inflation during better economic times.
- Merge the financial, personnel and other administrative support functions for the Constitutional Officers into a new Constitutional Officers services center. Options as whether it be freestanding, included with other DAFS service centers or included in Legislative offices?
- Consolidate state government in much the same way as the schools are being consolidated. With computers there should be ways to do state business more efficiently.
From: Bob Sprague; 106 Donworth Road, Stockholm, 04783; bergenne@ainop.com

Legislature

- PLEASE consider REDUCING the SIZE of the LEGISLATURE! If school districts are expected to reduce their numbers to 80 districts, there is even more reason to reduce the Legislature, perhaps also to 80. With fewer members, they might even be able to get more accomplished in a more timely fashion. LEGISLATIVE DISTRICTS MIGHT BE ALTERED TO COINCIDE WITH THE SCHOOL DISTRICTS - IT'S WORTH CONSIDERING! THINK "out of the box" but be cautious with reducing services to the poor and elderly. They need all the help they can get. Thanks for listening.
From: Gouldsboro
- I think that much could be saved by cutting the numbers of legislators in half. That would cut the numbers of staff by a similar amount and save a whole bunch of money. The number of bills should be limited as well and the session shortened.
From: George A. Fogg, Chair of North Yarmouth Taxpayers Assoc.; 56 Deer Run Road North Yarmouth, ME 04097; gafogg@verizon.net; 207-846-6333
- Move to unicameral legislature. One assembly, no senate, limit the number of bills put up by each member.
- Shrinking the legislature--we don't need 180 -plus people.
- Rid the legislature of half (actually more than that) the elected officials. We have too many people trying to make decisions.
- Cut the size of the legislature to a unicameral system - 2 reps per county, 64 total people! Use the savings to fully fund the Homestead Exemption program!
From: Robert Reed; 58 Albert Street; scoutreed@aol.com; 782-5482
- Reduce the size of the legislature.
- Not enough time or space here to lay it all out for you, but, end SPECIAL sessions. Get your work done on time and that's that. In the real world, you would get fired if your work was substandard or late or incomplete at the end of the day? Regionalize the government such as the new school admin system is being revamped. Thanks.
From: Gary Dion; 27 Nottingham Dr; catsle@metrocast.net; 651-0590
- While we're consolidating school districts, let's also cut the size of the state legislature in half. Maine has one state senator per 36,000 constituents, while 25 states have over 100,000 constituents per senator (highest is one per 846,000). For the representatives, Maine has one per 8400, 25 states have at least 37,000 per representative (highest is one

per 425,000). Let's have the legislature demonstrate a little leadership! It will reduce salaries, overhead, infrastructure, health benefits, pensions, and probably a lot more I haven't listed.

From: Judith Foster; rcfoster@suscom-maine.net

- Reduce or cut out all together raises for Maine politicians for a period of one year---I can guarantee that if the politicians are willing to tighten their belts, then the citizens of Maine will be more willing to follow suit. AND THIS DOES NOT MEAN TO DO IT RIGHT AFTER A PAY RAISE HAS BEEN VOTED IN--that would certainly be seen as a slap in the face of all Maine citizens.

From: Jill Gott; 170 Garland Street, Apt # 2, Bangor, Maine 04401; 945-5999

- Take money away from law makers!!!!!! They shouldn't be allowed to vote themselves pay raises! That would save the state a lot of money.

From: Arthur Koch Jr; Searsport ME; fireman@psouth.net

- Reduce the number of Legislators.
- Freeze the legislators pay. The legislators are not forced to run for election so why do we have to pay them such a high salary. If they don't like the pay they don't have to run. Pay them similar to New Hampshire's salary. Their salary and benefits are more than some workers are paid for 40 hours a week.

From: kcrcun@megalink.net

- We elect the legislators to vote for us but we have no control of their salary or benefits. The voters should have some say as to their benefits and salary.
- I recommend cutting the Legislature in half and establishing a unicameral government that meets every two years. The members' salaries are not much but the Per Diem is very high. Maine has the same size legislature as states with a population 10 or 12 times higher or more. Less people does not change the representation of constituents but it make for a more efficient government. Less people means less bills for consideration and more time to focus on real priorities.

From: RICHARD DUFFY; mengcold1@adelphia.net; 242-5944

- Since the State is taking local control away from its people by dramatically reducing local school boards and superintendents by saying we can do with far less the same government officials should also reduce the size of our legislature. I realize this will never be done because no one in the state government will allow their job to be eliminated, but sees no problem eliminating jobs in education. Maine doesn't need such a large legislature!!!

- Reduce the Legislature down to one Representative and one Senator per County.

From: Dan Vaughan; 19 Lawn Ave, Gorham, Maine 04038; sfcvaughan@gwi.net; 839-2029

- We need to cut our legislative body in HALF!! Too many representatives for our small population. Then...limit the terms to 2! That should give us a good start on cutting the budget.

From: June Cushing

- Perhaps we should cut our legislature and their hefty pay raises (they give themselves), as well as their hefty health care benefits in retirement. Why should anyone get 80% retirement benefits after working only 8 yrs(the # allowed to buy in), and only 4-6 months out of the year at that!!!! If you were a legislator before 1991 (I believe this figure is correct), you had 100% health care coverage in retirement!!! How much is this

costing the citizens of the state? Most working people don't have any of these benefits. Why should hard-working citizens have to pay for state workers health benefits and after such a short amount of service to our state? I'm a teacher and we get 40% benefit coverage in retirement. If this is good enough for teachers working more months out of the year and usually more career years, than it should be good enough for the legislature and other state workers. Let's also cut the # of legislators, much like they want to do with school administration (which I agree with). We don't need all this heft in such an unpopulated state, and a state where usually the citizens vote on referendums in the end anyway!

- Eliminate health care coverage for all elected officials.
From: Frank Rier; 9 School Bus Rd; frankrier@yahoo.com; 320-1111
- Cut by at least one half the Legislature. Not only would that save the cost of those saved positions, it would hopefully cut nearly in half the number of bills introduced by legislatures. This would be a tremendous savings directly and indirectly as less invasive and frivolous bills would be debated and considered. In fact I always feel safer when the legislature is not in session. It seems that taxpayers are always in jeopardy when the legislature is in session as they tend to create new expenses to be funded and paid for without regard to the grief that causes the citizens of Maine.
- Remove all state employees and legislators current health insurance and replace it with the Dirigo Health program.
- Reduce the number of state legislators
- I would suggest cutting the size of the legislature for a good start. After reading of the so called savings on school consolidation and seeing the reports coming from school districts and towns that are going to be adversely affected by increased costs, my suggestion is the best one I can come up with short of asking everyone that voted for the bill to resign.
- My suggestion to save the state of Maine and its taxpayer's money, is to do away with taxpayer's campaign financing for all Candidates running for State office. My reasons for this are simple: taxpayers already foot the bill for everything in the state and towns, including education, running the town, public safety, and welfare when needed. Why then should we be called upon to foot the bills for every candidate who decides to run for state office? Let the candidates raise funds the old-fashioned way, through being popular and going door to door, or giving family-style, community-minded spaghetti suppers at the Elks Clubs. What is wrong with doing things the old-fashioned way? This taxpayer financing of big elections is overblown, unnecessary waste of our good tax dollars, and I for one would like to see it STOPPED. That will save Maine 4 or 5 million every two years - I say, it is worth re-visiting this issue! Why do the politicians think they have the right to automatically be handed everything on a silver platter? For that matter, I prefer to enact "Term Limits" on legislators. Now that makes better sense!
From: Holly & Sylvia Reed; 80 Bay View Street; Camden Maine; Reedh@ctrealtor.com; 236-3167
- We don't need all the reps that we have. They vote them self a pay raise when they want one. We retirees get one each year but most of it goes Medicare so we don't gain much....
- We have too many representatives.
From: 786-3590

- I would like to see the amount of legislators cut in half. And the remaining ones be only allowed to present one bill a session. That way they would be more careful in presenting the most important ones.
From: Terry Weston; westonx2@aol.com
- Why does this State have so many Representatives in Augusta? We have many more than Some States that are much larger than ours! You're trying to streamline how many Superintendents we have,(GREAT IDEA) let's keep it going and Streamline State Reps. Why do these State Reps. not have to pay for their own lunches. You mentioned cutting some of the perks. once but nothing ever became of it, or I guess they voted it down. But every other person that works and pays taxes in this State has to buy their own lunch, Why Shouldn't They!!!
From: James W. Dunn; jwdwinggss@hotmail.com
- My suggestion is to decrease the number of legislators that serve in the House and Senate in Maine. Although I know they will never vote themselves out of a job, it is time that we streamlined our government so that the number of legislators is in line with those serving in other (more populous) states. The need for this became blatantly obvious to me the year that a law was passed regulating taking bathroom breaks at Bingo games! It is clear to me that we have too many representatives serving – with far too much time on their hands. The number of laws presented for consideration in each session seems excessive. Perhaps if there were fewer legislators they could focus a bit more on what is really needed to efficiently run the state!
- Decrease size of legislature.
- Reduce the number of legislators in Augusta. Let them vote and attend meetings via teleconference and email.
From: Chris Russell; E5@maine.rr.com
- Cut the Legislature to 75% of its current size.
From: Joe McAllister; 16 Wildwood Lane, Gray ME; kelciecoll@maine.rr.com; 657-7375
- Cut back on the number of state representatives. Go by county and not districts.
From: Julia Comeau; jacomeau63@gmail.com
- Only pay for the government officials' medical insurance while they are in office not for life or at least have them pay a fair share of for the insurance!
From: Clifford Shamrock; shammies29@hotmail.com
- Eliminate the new Legislative Office that was supposed to produce significant savings. I don't believe this office has made any recommendations that produce savings.

Position Eliminations

- The legislature should review the number of management level employees in state government and establish a goal to eliminate at least one layer of management in each state agency. Supervisory/Management level employees should have at least 5 direct reports. Flattening an organization is preferable to eliminating line level staff that interacts with the public. There also appears to be an excessive number of financial administration employees when compared to states with similar populations such as New Hampshire. This data can be found in the U.S. Census Bureau database. Can financial

administrative duties be consolidated in a manner similar to what is being requested of the School Districts?

- There are several positions that could be eliminated:
 1. State Nuclear Safety Advisor - Salary more than \$75,000 per year, total cost with benefits more than \$100,000. Maine has no nuclear facilities whatsoever, except for the low-level waste site in Wiscasset. Why do we need this position?
 2. Associate Commissioner, DAFS. Salary more than \$90,000, total cost with benefits is \$120,000.
 3. Development Program Manager in DECD Office of Innovation. Salary more than \$60,000, total cost with benefits is \$85,000. This is clerical or low-level administrative work.
- Eliminate the Office of the Public Advocate and related staff. Enhance the requirements of the public utility commission to err on the side of the rate payer while insuring the regulated entities secure the necessary rate of Return on Equity/Return on Investment.
From: Sen Karl Turner
- Outsource the Single State Audit and downsize the State Audit staff. This idea was proposed via an LD introduced in the first session of the 123rd.
From: Sen Karl Turner
- Eliminate the public affairs and legislative liaisons at the department level.
From: Sen Karl Turner
- Eliminate the collection and publishing of heating oil prices and the jobs associated with same.
From: Sen Karl Turner
- Eliminate the collection and publishing of land based and wireless telephone plans for consumer guidance and the positions associated with same.
From: Sen Karl Turner
- Get rid of political appointed positions who have no expertise in areas they are working in and are getting high salaries. Have too many departments that overlap and give conflicting decisions. Need to go back and look at all programs and eliminate ones that are no longer viable. We can not afford all the high benefit healthcare and retirement benefits in the public sector. Private sector has cut back and the public sector must do it too. We will never attract business with our unfriendly business climate and high taxes and high cost of doing business. I don't see anything being done because our State leadership will never make the hard choices unless citizen initiatives over react and cut ability of the legislature to increase expenditures above the inflation rate.
From: A concerned taxpayer and citizen.
- Get rid of the OIT group and hire some competent systems design contractors. Invest in professional development in 21st century skills at all levels while at the same time, flatten the levels and broaden span of control.
From: A concerned taxpayer and citizen.
- Consolidate all HR Back office functions to a central location.
- Implement a hiring freeze.
- Eliminating all "public relations" positions in the executive departments and give the Governor's office an extra position or two to do the PR work for the departments. Savings = about \$1 million.

- I have been an employee of the Maine Department of Corrections (DOC) since 1978. Since that time I have seen the DOC central office staff swell from a small handful of people to the present prodigious number. But from the viewpoint of a probation officer or prison guard, the DOC central office is much less efficient and responsive than it used to be! There is no need to have several associate commissioners and a large number of collateral bureaucrats with their secretarial staff. The DOC used to be run, and run well, by a single commissioner acting alone. Pruning back the DOC central office staff would save vast amounts of money. If this is true of the DOC, a relatively small department of state government, how much more true of the large departments!
- Follow the recommendations of the Brookings Report and eliminate management personnel where they exceed the average of rural states Brookings used for comparison. *From: Jonathan Albrecht; 170 Common Rd; jalbrecht@saunders-usa.com*
- Reduce the size of the government. Fire one out of every ten managers and assistant managers (hey, it happens in the "real world," why not cut backs in gov't?)
- Eliminate the office of Professional Regulation.
- Eliminate the State Department of Education.
- Cut back the Maine Warden Service, who apparently have nothing better to do than harass the owner of that Chinese restaurant in Freeport.
- Department Affected - Maine Department of Labor 1) Please request and review the latest BES Management Survey. The survey reflects poor management and managerial attitudes at BES in Augusta. Clearly, managerial personnel and positions with BES in Augusta should be reevaluated. In addition, BES is top heavy with managerial positions.
- Several years ago the state hired 2 people, at \$50,000 each plus travel expenses, to verify that the Department of Purchases was not buying from "sweat-shops". It would have been much less expensive to have just told the buyers "don't buy from sweat-shops". This was an insult to the purchasing department and a total waste of money. Get rid of those 2 positions (I can only hope that they've already been terminated...but I doubt it).
- Eliminate the State Board of Property Tax Review and save over \$100,000 - this group certainly isn't doing its job.
- Maine Fire Protection Services Commission? I don't see a Maine Police Protection Services Commission...get rid of it and save a quick \$15 - \$20K.
- I think something that should be closely looked into is all the individual licensing and registration boards. I am sure that there could be many cuts there. If you look into for example, the massage license board, there is a secretary, another person who in-takes and processes license applications and then sitting above them is a person who only looks into applications with problems. It would appear this persons only job is to deal with complaints or massage applications with problems. How many people a year are applying for a massage license that it requires 3 people? If you multiply this by all the other type of professional license boards it adds up fast. It should be investigated to see exactly how many cases or applications a year require special attention and what this entails and how much time the person is actually spending working on these cases. It may be possible to reduce spending by looking into how many of these individual licensing boards could be condensed together. i.e. massage with acupuncture, etc.
- Did you read the KJ series on Hunger in Maine? The Governors response was to hire 20 more people. DUH!! Why not follow the recommendations of the writer and change the

rules to help more people rather than hire more STATE EMPLOYEES?

From: RICHARD DUFFY; mengcold1@adelphia.net; 242-5944

- Reduce the number of employees at DHS. They seem to create more family problems than they solve.
- When riding around and seeing state workers on the side of the road there is always someone or two standing around watching people work....put those people to work and cut a few needless jobs.

From: rodj1988@yahoo.com

- Double Dippers, Identify those individuals who have retired and were rehired in the same position and let them go.

From: Dan Vaughan; 19 Lawn Ave, Gorham, Maine 04038; sfcvaughan@zwi.net; 839-2029

- The Maine State Prison can afford to lose a few Captains in its top heavy organization, with supervisors playing liaison to other supervisors.
- Maine DOT can afford to lose a few useless supervisors, who would never make it in the real world with their lack of job knowledge.
- I work in state government. We have clerks who enter documents into a data base that should be scanned. It is a waste to pay people to do things that simple technical upgrades could do.
- Reduce all state departments by 40% by combining all administrative positions to oversee all departments that have similar fields. The education system has been able to do this by streamlining administrators. I see no reason that state government cannot follow suit and saving the taxpayers money.
- Trim state government employees by 20% (particularly middle management positions)

From: Susan; Portland, Maine

- Hire an independent efficiency expert to evaluate all management positions for cost effectiveness. The state is management top heavy, and in general the managers do not know what they or their subordinates are doing. When managers spend more time playing solitaire than working, they need to go.

From: Joe McAllister; 16 Wildwood Lane, Gray ME; kelciecoll@maine.rr.com; 657-7375

- The Maine Department of Labor located at 45 Commerce Drive in Augusta has seen a reduction in the work force (mostly clerks) by approximately 50% over the last few years, yet the management levels remain virtually the same. A few months ago, the Benefits Section and the Tax Section were combined as a cost saving measure and because of the diminishing amount of clerical workers. The amazing thing is that each Section had a highly paid Director. When the two Sections were combined BOTH Directors were kept. They are now called CO-DIRECTORS. It may be mostly Federal Dollars, but it is still my tax dollar and is absolutely foolish and wasteful.
- The department of corrections is very top heavy, I think if you cut some of the deputy wardens and administration staff you would be able to hire more officer at a lesser pay out. If it's this way in the dept of corrections it probably is in other departments as well.
- I think State of ME staffing levels should be looked at.
- Fire some state police officers.

State Employee Salaries and Benefits

- If all state employees were asked to contribute at least 25% towards the cost of their health insurance, it would cut the cost of government by millions.
- All participating state employees should contribute to their group health insurance with a payroll deduction. The group coverage is a bargain itself; the taxpaying public should not be expected to pay the entire cost. All participating MSRS retirees should also contribute to their health insurance from their payouts.

From: Margie Rosenbaum; nmrosey@earthlink.net

- Allow all new state employees (educators too) to enroll in Social Security.
- One standardize union contract for all union employees.
- Have state employees pay for healthcare.
- The State's cost for state employee basic group life insurance was increased this year from 14 cents per \$1000 to 26 cents per \$1000. This was done after an internal actuarial review by the Retirement Board. This increase in premiums will cost the General Fund between \$3-\$10 million over the biennium, depending on what class of employee you include in the analysis. My recommendation is to require the Maine State Retirement board to solicit competitive bids from group life insurance providers for basic life insurance coverage. The large increase implemented by the board is inconsistent with the national downward trend in premiums in the group life insurance market, and deserves review. The federal government, for example, provides basic group life insurance to federal employees for 15 cents per \$1000. A competitive bidding process, I believe, could potentially achieve significant General Fund (and Highway Fund) savings if the bids come in closer to the market average (which is around 16 cents per thousand).
- Have the state government employees pay their share of health care. I know if the only person on the health and dental insurance is the employee the insurance is free. That really isn't fair to the rest of the state people that are paying their full share and more.
- I think that it's time for State employees to start footing their share on Medical Insurance. I think that the standard 80-20 policy (80 state 20 employee) would save the state millions.

From: Keith Ouellette; Keith.Ouellette@cariboumaine.org

- All state employees should be joining Dirigo Health and pay premiums toward the coverage to reduce this all-too-generous benefit cost to the taxpayer and state budget.

From: sas@zwi.net

- Health care benefits costs to our state employees needs to be examined closely and these costs need to be reported to the citizens of the state. I have a feeling this is where a lot of savings could be had, either by having folks have a larger co-pay or making them pay some of the costs themselves.
- Make all state employees pay 20% of their health care costs.

From: Frank Rier; 9 School Bus Rd; frankrier@yahoo.com; 320-1111

- Remove all state employees and legislators current health insurance and replace it with the Dirigo Health program.
- I think any perks given to state/ Gov employees should be removed such as meal allowances, Packing a brown bag is good enough for the average working Joe.

From: Terry Weston; westonx2@aol.com

- I am currently a State Employee. Instead of risking taking away the benefits that we are currently getting, as there are MANY of us that work very, very hard for the benefits that we do receive, I believe that someone should take a look at how many people are inefficient at their jobs. Where I work, there is a fellow employee that literally does NOTHING most of the day. They put aside what very little work they have to do, in order to shuffle paperwork and appear that they are doing something. They are off the books all the time because they don't feel like coming in. The section that they work in is currently a 3 person section. With what very little is done with their work, I believe that this section would be MUCH more suitable as a 2 person position as the other two people in the section already pick up the slack and do all the work. I believe that this happens a great deal in state government. If someone could come in and audit the amount of work that is done and what positions could be eliminated just by making sure that employee worthy people are currently in the positions and making sure that they know their job very well, we could save a TON of money and there wouldn't be a risk of losing the benefits for everyone else. Just something to consider I guess....
- Decrease amounts paid into state employee retirement plans.
- State employees are wasteful, overpaid, and a burden on our system. So many feel protected because they work for the state and their seniority is so great, but realistically they should be managed the way "for-profit" employees are managed. Protection, salary increases, and the like should be based on MERIT. If I performed in corporate America the way most state employees perform, I'd have been out of a job. Tighten up that ship, you'll be able to improve efficiency and service while saving big \$\$.
- Eliminate allowing workers to go to school on company time. And then get paid for both. Yes, I have seen it.
From: Joe McAllister; 16 Wildwood Lane, Gray ME; kelciecoll@maine.rr.com; 657-7375
- State employees should pay a portion of their healthcare coverage.
- Try cutting the payroll and bennes.
- We think they should cut the raises from the employees who work for the state of Maine.
From: David; 26 Jewell Street; djperry78@yahoo.com; 897-4012
- Have all state employees and retirees pay at least 5% of their health benefits costs. People need to know what medical insurance costs are.
From: Bob Sprague; 106 Donworth Road, Stockholm, 04783; bergenne@ainop.com

DHHS Issues

- The largest savings could be realized, I believe, in the DHHS. I perceive that department as chaos incorporated. I lived in Massachusetts for nearly 20 years and what I see here for welfare waste and fraud is worse. To waste \$50 million on the DHHS MECMS systems computer debacle is a prime example of why the public is so frustrated with state government. I have been told that people were let go for this mess but if the public doesn't know it they will think the worst. I am also aware that Maine's welfare requirements are more generous than that of the Feds. I am told that because of that we lose some federal funding. This is ludicrous. We are too poor a state to be that generous. If people on welfare are able to work than they should not be eligible for welfare. Either

get a job or starve. Certainly Maine should not be looked to as an easier state to get on welfare than others. That needs to be fixed, now!

From: George A. Fogg, Chair of North Yarmouth Taxpayers Assoc.; 56 Deer Run Road North Yarmouth, ME 04097; gafogg@verizon.net; 207-846-6333

- I just read that the Governor is spending \$1 million this year to hire 20 temporary employees to help process and update food stamp requests because our current system allowed people to remain eligible for food stamps when their income levels changed. Why don't we save the \$1 million+++ by cutting out food stamps? Most of us have experienced being behind a person in the grocery store using food stamps. They eat better than I do! Like many others, I'm tired of my taxes supporting those that could very well work for their daily bread. Why can't the Governor sign in a new law that states everyone will work for their food? There are plenty of jobs available and these people will stop being a drain on the community, not to mention they'll get their self-worth back. The problem is that government has allowed these recipients to become dependent upon the system rather than dependent upon their own skills to support themselves. For those that are currently on food stamps, how can they continue to get these benefits with a change in income levels without the government knowing? To receive food stamps the household should be showing you a current pay stub. No current pay stub, no food stamps! Put the responsibility on them to prove that they are eligible. That would solve the immediate problem until the Governor signs in a bill that makes "everyone" work for their keep. Just because President Lyndon Johnson placed all these social crutches out to be used doesn't mean we have to continue to lean on them. The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again, and expecting different results.

From: Nancy Gaudet, ngaudet1@maine.rr.com

- Clean out DHHS. Remove the director. Call in a private auditor to survey the accounts. DHHS is spending us into the poor house.
- Everyone who receives an SSI check also qualifies for a Food Stamps EBT Card. There is a section on the EBT card for a cash benefit as well as a food stamp benefit. Everyone that receives an SSI check also receives a \$10.00 state supplemental check. This state paper check can be eliminated as mailing fees by putting the state supplemental check on the cash section of the EBT card. The state DHHS oversees both programs: the supplemental \$10 check and the EBT card.

From: Jim Dow, a constituent of Sen Hastings; 933-2061

- For the state to save money at least 10,000,000 anyone getting welfare should have to take a urine test for drugs. That alone would free up welfare money for people who really need it and get the bums off. It would save the tax payers loads of money. I know this will never happen but I have to say it.

From: Brian Reny; Albion Maine; chinawoodworks@roadrunner.com; 207-437-2697

- I am always outraged that so many working fathers (who pay child support) are not required to pay any health insurance for their children. I know quite a few myself. I was talking with a friend from work today who said he had to insure his boy until the age of 18. Why are fathers of children not required to pay for their children and why should the taxpayers? I also think (know) putting even a small co-pay on low income mothers they would cut emergency room visits I bet 70% over the course of a year. Many rush their child to the hospital for care for the sniffles and it costs the taxpayers a ton.

From: Dirk Emery; Central Maine; emery3435@midmaine.com 207-487-2464

- The State of Maine should hold whoever is responsible for the mismanagement at DHS, particularly the fiasco with the computer system. If that same happened in private business, heads would roll. Why should the State allow sloppy work?
- Child Support Enforcement for Non-TANF recipients - There should be an income eligibility test in order to receive child support enforcement services. Why should all taxpayers be paying to enforce court orders for individuals that can very well afford their own lawyers to enforce the court orders. Or have employers that are withholding child support submit payments directly to the third party. We are wasting millions of dollars to have the state be a middle man for non-welfare cases. The state needs to be involved when someone is receiving other State services, but not in non-welfare cases.
From: Amy Babb; P.O. Box 186, Richmond, Maine 04357; ababb@suscom-maine.net; 737-0936
- Eliminate Dirigo Health Insurance - to most of us, it's just another tax!
From: Robert Reed; 58 Albert Street; scoutreed@aol.com; 782-5482
- If the Department of Human Services would reevaluate the food stamp program I feel they would probably find that there are quite a few recipients that receive benefits and are NOT qualified. This would be quite a savings for the Maine people who work hard to make ends meet and then experience others able to get benefits when they know they are playing the system!!!
- To invest in infrastructure and the economy within this state, why not cut back on Welfare spending in order to provide more funding for education (which is the foundation of a solid economy), and transportation? If transportation funding could be used to make I-95 statewide (that is to say, central and northern Aroostook County), then infrastructure would literally pave the way for the economy to grow statewide, providing more jobs and better wages for all.
- It is absolutely positively time to start restricted access to welfare programs to only those in the most desperate of needs and children. Specifically MaineCare. I am all for covering children who need care, but absolutely not their parents who should be working. It's time to start getting tough and the reforms needs to start and end with DHHS.
- There are several problems with our welfare programs that could be addressed by consolidating the various programs into one. All assistance should be given through one source, regardless of the reason for the need or the source of the funding. The overhaul of the Career Centers is a good model to emulate. It might make sense to tie this program to school units, which are well-known buildings distributed throughout the communities of the state. It might make it easier for schools to help identified students' families to get the support they need, if the assistance office is physically (but not administratively) located within the school system's buildings. Localized overseers could be personally in touch with each person requesting aid. Funding for TANF, WIC, housing assistance, heat assistance, Mainecare benefits, and any other financial support could be funneled through a single point, avoiding duplication and reducing gaps. There are too many people whose situations demand welfare, but who are living miserably on the fringe, while some who are quite capable of supporting themselves make a comfortable living off playing the welfare system. Restructuring will not make dishonest people honest, but forcing them to go to a single office for every type of assistance might make it harder to cheat.
- Some form of residency requirement for Medicaid - especially in mental health services - and some residency requirements for special ed. services in schools 6 months 1 year?

- One thing that I am consistently seeing is that people on welfare will get a job here and be very good employees but have to quit or cut their hours down because they lose Cub Care for their children or other benefits. The system should encourage people to work or get an education so that the State is paying out less. The Emergency rooms are used by people on welfare when their child has a cold and people are in stores using Food Stamps to buy Milk but have cash to buy cigarettes. Who is paying for that? I also see people getting unemployment after being fired for not showing up to work. It's all too easy. No one who runs these departments want to be criticized but either the system is wrong or the job isn't getting done. Maybe more people on staff in each area will save money in the end. Create a committee of people (with no ulterior motive-like keeping their job) and revamp the system.

*From: Laurie Sirois; 14 Albert Crossroad, St. Agatha, Maine 04772;
laurie@evergreen99.com; 728-4900*

- The amount of money going into this Maine care program is absurd. They are getting free health care with no job, and I just had to pay for all of my employees' health insurance on a credit card, or they were going to cancel our policy. This is ridiculous.
- I recommend establishing a Maine residency requirement of six months for any person applying for welfare. This is not a mean-spirited "end welfare" idea, but a common-sense way to change the incentives of those people who would move to Maine primarily because of our rather generous benefits.

From: Kenneth Goudreau; 73 Bass Harbor; kgnemo@msn.com; 244-7577

- \$25 million dollars a year is spent by Maine Care for people in Methadone programs. This is an absurd amount of money for the state to have to pay. Note that most of these programs are "For Profit" and have no intention of ever getting these folks off the stuff. Why should they as long as the state pays for it. My suggestion is to cut this benefit altogether. Why should honest taxpayers have to support junkies to stay on methadone for the rest of their lives. Just pay for detoxing them and if they choose to continue drugs after that then that's on them. One time detox will save this state potentially hundreds of millions of dollars over time.
- Cut waste at DHS, by enforcing fraud and tighten loopholes.
- A program should be implemented to oversee the sale of seafood caught and sold within the State of Maine by people who currently receive Food stamps and MaineCare and all other public assistance programs. Each fisherman (clam digger, etc.) should be issued an ID number that must accompany everything they catch and sell. This ID number should be turned over to their buyer who then must be required to keep a journal of everything they purchased and sold throughout the year to include the ID numbers. This journal should then be turned over to Revenue Services each year with their income tax records. If the buyer does not turn in the ID numbers then they should be required to pay the income taxes on the products they bought but have not indicated the ID number of the seller in their journal. There must be a way to cross reference the names of town licenses issued compared to the State licenses issued each year and also the court records of persons who have been arrested for digging, or fishing without a license.
- Spend the extra monies to investigate the waste and fraud in the Human services Dept and their cases. There are cases here in Princeton where couples are getting divorced to pick up on State services only to move back in with each other once the programs start.

- From my experience it seems that the State of Maine spends a lot of money on welfare. I have been told to my face, when I asked why some individuals moved here from a southern state, that Maine has the best welfare, they can live here and not work. People are moving here for this, sounds like the southern U.S. border issues. I think that those who are truly infirm and cannot fend for themselves are being well taken care of; there is in my opinion a lot of pork that can be cut from the DHS budget. In my workplace we have several workers who receive healthcare benefits under Mainecare. These same employees, who are full time and entitled to health insurance, are allowed to keep Mainecare and receive a declination bonus from the employer. A little double dipping there I think. Recipients of Mainecare who have another option should be mandated to use that, not the tax dollars of the citizens of Maine. A program that provides incentives to local businesses that hire current aid recipients and gets them off of the dole may also achieve two goals, remove many from the welfare roles and pump much needed money into small businesses who are struggling to stay afloat. I also feel that the program that provides section 8 housing is being misused. I can recall several instances in the small community of Presque Isle when this has happened and can give you names.
- Cut back welfare, put a time limit on its collections. We wouldn't have so much to balance if there were more income earning citizens, and less untrained subsidized individuals eating away at this income.
From: George J Venturelli; 113 Yankee Ave Bangor, ME; gventure@verizon.net; 270-0246
- The State Auditor has recently issued several audit summaries showing spending problems in DHHS, including the MR Waiver program - if you can provide me with an email address, I will forward those reports - they are quite enlightening.
From: Thom Watson; Rep. House District 62 (Bath); trwatson@street-law.com; 443-1606
- I believe it would save Maine millions of dollars a year if the state would take the position that they are going to reimburse hospitals for direct patient care costs only. That is, the state should reimburse hospitals only for the salaries and benefits of the providers/care givers that are assigned to the patient, and the value of any medicines or other medical/therapeutic materials used in the care of the patient. This should include also the percentage of time the nursing aids, housekeeping, etc. spend per day per patient. In other words, Mainecare should not be used to pay administrative costs. Alternatively, some small overhead could be charged (say no more than 10% of total costs). Furthermore, the state should audit any hospitals receiving state aid for medical services, and the % of every dollar going to direct patient care vs. administrative costs should be published each year. Incentives should be provided to those entities that reduce their administrative costs. Let me know what you think?
From: Robert Wood; 90 Jillian Way; woodr@husson.edu; 941-7059
- In the D.H.H.S. Area - Look at and CUT UPPER & MIDDLE MANAGEMENT JOBS! (Too many Chiefs and not enough Indians.). Suggestions in that area: D.S.E.R.:
 - 1) There are Three Regional Managers: CUT THEM! They coast the taxpayers between \$50,000 and \$60,000 in salary and benefits and just take up space and O2 being just another layer between the public and the Commissioner. The one I know can't handle Financials, has to request a Tech to do an operation dealing with money. In offices that have more than one Region Coverage, look to see if

the need for both Supervisors is warranted. Lay odds there is at least one where one could be cut.

- 2) Start using the Fee Structure for Non Welfare Clients. It's in the Statues at present it's all FREE and they waste a lot of agents' time with unnecessary questions and demands. (That may cut down on the need for the Case Review Unit who gets paid a Range 22 doing what a Tech who it's believed to be a Range 18 does out in the field.) By the way the Tech does most of the taking of the concerns anyway according to the e-mails I get over the course of the week.

Suggestion for the TANF Area:

- 1) Residence requirement of min. of 6 months!
- 2) Hold at 5 years and then that is it. (Not Happening in Maine, as after 5 years we the taxpayer pays the freight as no reimbursement from the Feds.
- 3) As with other states, take the National Average of a family, believe it's 2.5 children, and pay only that in Benefits. (Can have more children just get the amount up to 2.5).
- 4) Person getting benefits has to have legal or in our state, primary residency of the child(ren) which prevents splitting families with 2 or more children between each parent, preventing collection of Child Support. Also prevents granny grants.
- 5) Get rid of the Gap Pass through as the State loses money here.

ASPIRE PROGRAM: Really needs a good look at! Period!

From: Phil Getchell; P.O. Box 361 Corinth, Maine; towncrier1@yahoo.com

- Let's try reducing spending on social programs. I believe the old adage "Give a man a fish and he will eat for a day, teach him how to fish and he'll feed himself forever" is true. I noticed that over the past decade the homeless population, for instance, has been on the increase. Other states, such as NH, have actually dropped off people in need of assistance in Maine. The news is out - if you need assistance, Maine has the program for you. If Maine is serious about being part of the global economy, it needs to help small and large business create jobs. I recently heard that 1 in 4 citizens of Maine are on welfare and that 60% of all Mainers receive some sort of assistance. It's about time the state stands up, as JFK did, and "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country." Mainers are a hardy bunch. They'll take a hand out but they'd rather a leg up or a kick start to fend for themselves. Money saved on these reductions could be used on R&D to create jobs or perhaps go back to the over taxed citizen who may actually start a business. Thank you for your consideration

From: Alex

- I find it very upsetting that people can go into a store and use their food stamp card, and under the cash part, use it to buy alcohol and tobacco. Isn't this money to help them make it through the month. Why can't the cards not allow these items to be purchased. They are not an necessity. Also why is it that people who are on section 8 or government help not have to work, I have seen it time and time again that a woman just quits her job, so that the ex or ex boyfriend has to pay more or they can just have another baby so they don't have to work, why not at least they don't have to do anything. and more times than not they are awful parents. They get help for food, lodging, lights and heat, and phone. How come need more help to get these people working?

From: vperruzzi

- Welfare reform.

- Make clients of the TANF / ASPIRE program accountable. They don't work, they are placed in volunteer positions only to last 2-3 weeks at the most if they show up at all. They are given in cash, money for glasses, clothing, car repair, daycare, food, living expenses, and other misc. monies with probably 80% of them not following through on work. CASH, how many daycares are going to start not accepting kids of parents who don't work because they blow the cash given for the daycare. Yep we pay for daycare for people who don't work. We pay for people to go to college to do nothing with the degree. This program seriously needs some looking into. How come Maine is the only state that lets its people live 18+ years on TANF? All other states only allow 5 years. Out of 250 clients that I deal with only 40 are originally from Maine...hmmmm makes ya think!!! If they didn't move here for the welfare their parents did. They lie about living arrangements, working under the table, some get arrested for drug possession with thousands in cash on them, nothing is done about that as far as payment back to the state. When these welfare people are told to go to work, they run to Maine Equal Justice who says...nooooo don't make them go to work they have rights, they can sit home on welfare and the State of Maine says ok, and they are never forced to work and provide for them selves. Another thing to look into is the waste of help in each office, there are some that are so clerk happy and they waste so much time. A lot of offices are top heavy in employees in the wrong areas, re evaluate, send someone in to watch what goes on, don't talk to people there, everyone thinks they are over worked. Then discuss the findings. The biggest area costing people money is in welfare bottom line. Have people just come and sit in the lobby at 35 Anthony Ave and listen...you have young people who believe they are entitled to everything under the sun, then you have the older couple, man or woman in their 80's looking for just \$30 a month in food stamps because they cannot afford food because of rising rx costs, taxes etc...those older people are the saddest to watch because their pride exudes them.

From: nikal_50@hotmail.com

- Health and Human Services. Far too many people receiving benefits and too much fraud, waste and abuse. cut programs by 50%. Why is the responsibility of hard working tax payers to support the able bodied slackers.
From: Dan Vaughan; 19 Lawn Ave, Gorham, Maine 04038; sfcvaughan@gwi.net; 839-2029
- Why are you spending my tax money on cable TV for welfare recipients? Food, shelter, and clothing are the three life necessities. I can accept electricity and hot running water, but nobody NEEDS cable TV. People can go to the library and rent free videos or get a book.
- The State needs to conduct an audit on DHHS and evaluate the wasteful spending on Illegal Immigrants receiving benefits, methadone addicts, Alcoholics receiving stipends for a treatable problem, free automobiles being given to Somalian's with a pile of food stamps and free educations, when Maine natives can't even afford college. I Thank Catholic Charities of Maine for dumping this on us all. DHHS can afford to lose 10 Million with its wasteful polices on programs and its enormous administration. Every time I take a road trip in Maine I find a new DHHS branch office.
- The state of Maine needs to decrease social services until they are ready to embrace a business friendly attitude to provide better paying jobs which in turn would provide a better tax base to supply such services.

From: David Burchill; PO Box 1007 Alfred, Me 04002; burchill@roadrunner.com; 651-7905

- I believe that it is time to take a good, long, hard look at the benefits that are given to people that call themselves disabled, or collect state aide for their families. I know of many people (within a mile radius, even) who collect a check every month as well as food stamps, and medical care that are very capable of working. It is taking a big portion of my paycheck to provide health care to my wife because they say, "You make to much money!" These are the people who seem proud that they can stay home, and get all of these services with out doing anything to earn them. When the average worker is laid off, or their hours are cut that they are given a complete run around to get help (sometimes even being denied because they made a few dollars over the guide line), but, yet, some people on disability, as well as some who collect state help (or, the old system called A.F.D.C.) have very little problems getting assistance if their food stamps run out before the end of the month, or need extra money to pay the rent because they used the money for a night on the town, or even worst, for drugs. I think it is time to review all these cases, create a stricter set of guide lines for those who apply, and especially those who are currently receiving these benefits. I know that there are individuals with (true) mental illness, as well as those who have (True)developmental disabilities (None of these individuals who are in these groups ever asked to be born with the disabilities they have, but yet their services are being cut to ribbons to pay for all those individuals who truly do not need the assistance. But if you are receiving assistance for your families (Again, the old A.F.D.C.)this help should be limited to a strict time guide line to get off the assistance. This should be 1 year, but no longer then 2. And this should be strictly enforced, not just written on a piece of paper to look good.) I know that you can not deny families who want children, but you sure can give them the ultimatum that if they choose to have children while receiving assistance then it's up to them to find a way to support them. I know this sounds mean, (Especially for the children who never asked to be put in this position), but what else can you do, but make the parents take a responsible role in providing for the children they bring into the world. It is also a joke when some women, who are on assistance, can receive college tuition, and have her books paid for as well. Some of these women I know said they would be stupid to work, and lose that benefit. I also think that the excuse of not having child care so that they can go to work is a joke as well. I had to work, pay child support, and help pay for my child's day care. So don't tell me it can't be done.) I am tired of seeing the cuts to the people who truly need it the most. (Some that have developmental disabilities only get anywhere from \$10.00 to \$30.00 a month to spend if they are unable to work, and are not eligible for other services that someone on the system may be eligible for.) I know it would be a difficult thing to weed out those who should, and should not receive benefits, but it can't be any harder then balancing a state budget that is totally out of whack. You want to make a dent in the states budget, chop into this area, and you might be surprised at how much you can save... You might also see a drop in the frustrations in many of us Mainer's who work very hard to support these services, and yet, make just a little too much money to receive them ourselves.
- Increase the average qualifying income rate for Medicare.
- A few years back, the Federal Government revamped the old AFDC program (aid to families with dependant children) and replaced it with the current TANF program

(Temporary Aid to Needy Families). At that time, the rules were changed to limit benefits to participants to 5 years. The Federal Government picks up the tab for the 5 year period. Individual states are allowed to continue these benefits after the 5 years, but at their own expense. MAINE is one of the VERY FEW STATES that continue paying out TANF beyond the 5 year period. What is temporary about a program that has no end????? It certainly doesn't help motivate able bodied individuals to go out and get a job!! Why is a state with extremely high taxes and a very low median income providing this type of top notch entitlement program, particularly when the Federal Government and majority of the rest of the country have limited it to 5 years. We are attracting people from all over the country with this type of system. People who are not necessarily interested in becoming productive citizens and working for a living are coming in droves. No incentive to have a planned family, as more children equal a higher TANF check. With the influx of people living off the system come many more expenses. Maine Care, school systems, etc all need more money --- for people who are NOT paying into the system. If we don't do something about this problem soon, you can count on more deficits and higher deficits. WE NEED TO LIMIT THE TANF PROGRAM TO 5 YEARS.....PERIOD

*From: Bruce R. Merrill; 118 Stonewall Road, Sabattus, Maine 04280;
rcmerrill@yahoo.com ; 375-8376*

- Having reviewed the financial statistics for the past 6 years (provided by my local Senator), I realized how desperately we need to reform the Welfare program at the State level. There's a perfectly simple solution. Establish a residency minimum at 12 months. So if people move into Maine expecting to jump on the welfare bandwagon, they will need to wait 12 months before they collect one thin dime. NO EXCEPTIONS, except people 65 or older. No immigrants. No one who lived in another state. NO EXCEPTIONS! If people move into Maine, they're either going to work to eat, or they're going to starve. NO EXCEPTIONS! No illegal aliens here should qualify. No immigrants should qualify...I don't care WHO moves there here...The Catholic Charities of Maine or whoever. (Yup, that will include all the African Nations who have been coming in droves) No person who hasn't had a 12 month residency should expect to qualify for special rental options. They shouldn't qualify any medical programs. And any person expecting to qualify for welfare programs of any kind MUST be able to fill out the application in their own hand. That means that anyone who doesn't know ENGLISH or has made any attempt to learn ENGLISH does not qualify. That'll shake the wheat from the chaff in a hurry.

From: Nancy; Farmington

- Here is an idea...you have how many people on welfare???? Thousands upon thousands right...ok, Hiring freeze going on, everyone complaining that they are over worked and under paid. Give these people on welfare an opportunity to earn some skills by volunteering for the state while earning their welfare, Typing, mail sorting, filing, data entry, computer/networking, carpentry, electrical, laborers, landscaping, painting, on and on, put these people to work for the state, you save money on high end contractors while many people on welfare already have some skills and just cannot find work or enough work or high enough paying work. A lot don't have any skills, work ethic etc. Impose the sanctions that other states impose when they don't follow up, no work no welfare. You save on salaries, insurance, workers comp, while helping those people. I have

contacted many many many many state offices trying to place some of these exact people in an office only to hear "we don't really have the need for ASPIRE volunteers"....you need to look into that program and these state run offices that refuse to help out. You need to look into that program and see why Maine is the only state that lets people be on welfare for longer than 5 years. The legislature needs to take a look at all the money that leaves that program and not talk to Brenda Harvey, you need to go lower and lower until you get to the people working with these clients. How can people with felony convictions that are impossible to place in employment allowed to live on welfare for 120 months because they use that as an excuse? Build a vocational program with that aspire money that teaches skills, they don't complete the program then they loose their welfare....LOOK INTO WELFARE NOW!!

- Welfare... isn't about time for some reform there. In Connecticut I believe it is, that you only get welfare once for a period of 6 months and then your cut off. Yes that is plain and simple and I am sure there are many mitigating factors that would possibly extend that in strenuous situations. However since we live in a liberal state we all know that welfare will never be cut. It's sad though because we are only enabling these people to live off the state. Besides that do we not have a welfare to work program? Is this not working? I mean if these people are completing the program, shouldn't they all have jobs by now? I am sure that a lot more of them could be at jobs making at least 10 dollars per hour....but wait the cry will be they can't live off of 10 dollars per hour..... so how do the majority of the people like me live off of 10 dollars per hour, and I am even college educated. The answer is very poorly. So if the welfare to work program is not working and is not viable for people to make a wage that they can actually live off... then cut the program out entirely.

*From: Alan Smith; 4 Lazy Brook Lane, North Waterboro ME 04061;
amsj02@hotmail.com; 247-5548*

- One thing I would take a serious look at is our welfare department, it is amazing to me the number of people who are on welfare and don't need it. Perhaps creating more jobs and attracting more businesses to Maine may help reduce the tax problems we have. The way things are going this state is going to be in big time trouble in the next ten years, no wonder our young people don't stay here. There is nothing here for them to build on! Trees and forests are nice but soon that is all that will be here. Please get with the times and make Maine a state of the future not of the past.
- Review all the people that are on welfare. ID those that receive Maine entitlements but are able to work and there is no reason why they cannot not seek employment. Of course jobs in most areas of Maine are scarce but that is the end result of 30 plus years of poor leadership from Augusta. Give notice to these able bodied people that they have 30 days more of entitlements and must seek employment. That may mean moving but that is what most of us had to do to make a living. I think it is time they did the same. If the figure of 23% of Mainers on welfare is correct then I am sure there are many that are using the system at the workers expense. Of course some will leave Maine to seek employment or entitlements elsewhere and that sounds like a very positive step to me.

From: Chuck Hamilton

- There is no need of this state paying all bills & food for all the welfare recipients of this state, why should our hard earned money be spent on luxuries for these people. I have to pay my own cable bills yet here we are paying for these, WHY? This is not a necessity.

Also, internet services, again if I can't afford it I don't have it , yet we pay for their access. Do a subsidized way that our town does that gives access to the community, but not full services as we all pay for them?

- Reduce spending on Welfare related programs. There are many areas where the system is totally flawed anyway, but we should be reducing that significantly in order to get people to work and off the system.
- Welfare and public assistance programs must be cut back. Tax rates in Maine reflect the huge burden that non-working people are having on the working people of Maine. Many of the functions of the "public assistance" programs should be handled by private organizations on a voluntary basis. The galloping tide of entitlements must be held at bay now. We prospered as a state before these programs existed and we can prosper again without them.

From: Stan Carson; n1ham@yahoo.com

- I believe the State of Maine could save a lot of money by carefully reviewing the files of all recipients of Maine Care, food stamps and any other welfare benefits. I feel that we make it too easy to receive such benefits. Why not have them do community service for these benefits? At least some of them are more than capable to perform some task. I know of a particular person who just is not ambitious enough to work and does not want to work because he owes student loans and they will attach his wages. He receives Maine Care and food stamps. I believe that our social workers are too quick in referring people for these benefits. I feel we would save money in the long run if you had more personal to investigate each recipient. I don't believe FDR would go along with the State of Maine DHS policies.
- Obviously, the two economic drivers in our State budget are the costs of education and health care. Since the message is recent and clear on expectations regarding education, the significant policy choices are DHHS related. Starving every other State agency in order to avoid these choices is irresponsible. We simply cannot afford to perpetuate a welfare class in this State. I completely appreciate the generosity that this and previous Legislatures have provided to people in need of economic assistance, but maintenance and expansion of these programs is the driving force behind our need to generate tax revenue. It is common knowledge that many capable people collect subsidies from the State, at least in part because they can and will not be challenged to prove their need (beyond a cursory evaluation) or otherwise contribute to the betterment of our State. It's an age old issue, but collecting a check from the State and being required to sweep the streets for a couple hours under the supervision of a municipal work crew is a hell of a lot more productive for society as a whole than collecting a check and sitting home watching TV. Reform the health care and welfare systems and Maine will be in a strong position for stabilizing future budgets.
- Stop feeding the welfare system. There are those who really need assistance and others who just don't want to work. Doesn't the government of Maine have the power to enforce the unemployed to earn an honest living in some way?

From: signore_05@yahoo.com

- A suggestion would be to cut back on Social Services.

From: Julia Comeau; jacomeau63@gmail.com

- After reading the following email I decided to send it to the people that may be able to change things...passing the email to my friends and family would only be complaining. I

am in hopes of getting some attention to the welfare problem and feel that if all recipients of welfare were to be tested for drugs before they could receive any help, it would save an immense amount of money for the State of Maine. Social Security will take care of the really disabled people. It would also tend to get a lot of drug users back into society as working class people. What a solution. I know that the doctors make their drug user patients take spot drug test before they can receive their methadone or ciboxin (heroine addict medications) so why couldn't this be instituted in the welfare system. The cost is not great yet the results could be tremendous. Thank you for your time. I hope that you find this email as enlightening as I did. (See below.)

Like a lot of folks in this country...I have a job. I work, they pay me. I pay my taxes and the government distributes my taxes as it sees fit. In order to get that paycheck, I am required to pass a random urine test, with which I have no problem. What I do have a problem with is the distribution of my taxes to people who don't have to pass a urine test. Shouldn't one have to pass a urine test to get a welfare check because I have to pass one to earn it for them? Please understand, I have no problem with helping people get back on their feet. I do on the other hand have a problem with helping someone sitting on their butt and using drugs. Could you imagine how much money the state would save if people had to pass a urine test to get a public assistance check?

From: Rhonda Nilson; PO Box 558, Belgrade Lakes, ME 04918; riknrho@msn.com; 495-7747

- Want to save money. Put your DHHS workers to work!!! I live in the Ellsworth area, and anytime you call their local number, there is no answer. They have claimed to not receive paperwork, even though we have documents such as fax proofs and mail receipts from their office. I am so tired of the way they treat you it is not even funny. They are rude over the phone and seem to be chatting on the phone if you go in the office. And if they claim to be work calls, it's funny how they are discussing weekend plans and calling the person on the other end of the call as mom etc. Come on... this state would save tons of money if you did some housekeeping at DHHS!!!!
- I am a Maine native grew up in a small town descended from hard working parents who valued education but did not expect a free ride. I graduated from college and left the state because of job opportunities to return in 1979. I have lived in 3 different states including Mass. I work in out patient health care and am appalled at Maine's welfare and disability/welfare benefits. I hope to be able to retire in 2-5 years and have worked and paid in the system since age 18 and I can not wait to stop funding the abuse of taxpayer money for things like the best health care with no limits. My educated working children have school loans and very expensive copays and Maine care provides breast reductions and cosmetic weight loss surgery and the best and most frequent counseling available- not that the patients recover because nothing is linked to outcome. I am told we are listed on the internet as no waiting Maine care so drug users come and sign up. I see all these "disabled" population and they simply have found it more cost effective to stay home and get "their" check. Someone needs to have the courage to change this before it totally collapses when my generation retires. Cut way back on the Maine care and tie it to prevention, less medication and outcome. Revamp disability to those who absolutely can not work not those who are difficult to employ or lazy.

From: Carol; Waterville

- LOOK AT THE WHOLE DHS SITUATION. HIRE MORE PEOPLE TO DO THE JOB RIGHT AND IN THE LONG RUN YOU WILL BE SAVING ALOT OF MONEY...THE PUBLIC IS CHEATING DHS OUT OF THOUSANDS. PEOPLE KNOW HOW TO PLAY THE SYSTEM. GIVE A LITTLE EXTRA HELP TO THE PEOPLE THAT DO WORK BUT MAY NEED HEALTH INSURANCE OR A COUPLE HUNDRED IN FOOD STAMPS TO GET THROUGH THE MONTH, AT LEAST THEY ARE TRYING. THE WHOLE DHS NEEDS A GOOD HOUSECLEANING AND UPDATED RULES. THERE ARE THOUSANDS THAT COULD BE SAVED...TAKE A HARD LOOK....

From: KAREN ANDERSON; 93 SPRING STREET, YARMOUTH, ME 04096

- Eliminate DHHS completely - what a waste of taxpayers dollars.
- Reform welfare at every level including the administration! There is no reason for the existing system that is either all or nothing. The current system has created a entitlement mentality. The intent of any system should be a temporary system. Offer partial financial support for partial employment. If someone can not find a job, give them one. I would rather see folks keeping our streets and highways clean than sitting home getting money for nothing. All programs should have a deadline or termination. There is no valid reason for anybody not to succeed in this state. If they want to or have an incentive to that is! I have heard that upwards of 1/3 of Maine people are on some form of welfare. That is sad sad sad. The ones that are capable should HAVE to do something for it.
- At DHHS there are many programs that are unable to communicate with one another because they use different computer programs. This creates a formidable barrier to communication between various programs that serve the same people, e.g. OIAS, DSER and OCFS. By either combining programs or utilizing a single integrated program, communication would be simplified and the various programs between this large and complex department would greatly enhanced. This might have the potential to greatly improve the efficiency of our service delivery system resulting in both a cost savings to taxpayers and better services to our clients. I realize that there are considerations such as client confidentiality that have to be taken into account. Access to information could be controlled on a need to know basis. That is done already within programs on a case by case basis. I am proud to be a state employee for 25 years. I believe that we have already made many improvements in the way we provide public services to the people of Maine. I would like to contribute to this effort and hope this suggestion is useful to you. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

From: Kevin Murphy; 14 Merriam St., Portland ME 04103; kmurphy4@maine.rr.com; 879-0551

- My issue is with the large amount of money spent on health care in this state, and the glut of people enrolled in mainecare. So I guess this falls under the realm of DHHS. I worked for three years as an office nurse in a family practice center in Bangor. It is the only provider in the Bangor area that accepts ALL mainecare patients for maternity care. during the time I was there I saw numerous young pregnant women who moved to Maine from out of state in order to get mainecare. I also saw many girls who deliberately got pregnant in order to qualify for mainecare and also to become eligible for the methadone treatment program at Acadia hospital. Similarly, I also saw non-pregnant patients from out of state (and even a whole family from Puerto Rico)who moved to Maine to get insurance through mainecare. What astonished me is that they would literally get off the

bus, go apply for local and state aid and get it. I don't know what type of screening process is in place for mainecare eligibility, but it would seem to me that "new" residents should have to live in this state for a period of time, and CONTRIBUTE TO OUR ECONOMY before being allowed to join the welfare rolls. I also feel that senator Martin is on the right track with his proposal to limit mainecare money paid out for "self-induced" health issues like smoking. I feel this should be extended to other health problems such as diabetes or hypertension or high cholesterol that are also to some extent "self-induced". People who are not following a diet or exercise program advised by their physician should be held responsible for the choices they make and the rest of us should not have to pay for their poor decisions.

From: sherry.delcourt@umit.maine.edu

Education – K-12

- Another example is the school system. If politicians are open to working with parents and other community members, then money can often be raised to assist with the costs of school programs. If we work together, then there may be a possibility of fewer schools having to be closed. I went to grammar school in a small town, and the women of the community with assistance from the men, had a wonderfully strong PTA group. This group worked together to raise money for various scholarships and other programs. We need to go back to simple ideas and simple ways to survive or else we will be totally run over by state debt.

From: Jill Gott; 170 Garland Street, Apt # 2, Bangor, Maine 04401; 945-5999

- The state should drop this school consolidation idea. I believe that this will be the biggest tax savings you could do for the citizen's of the state. The cost that the municipalities in the state will have to incur will be put as an addition to Property taxes and according to the governor and Susan Gendron this is supposed to be a tax relief. Our town of Cranberry Isles, a very small town off the coast of Maine, will see an increase of over \$100,000 per year in school budget. This is going to cause our Property Taxes to increase not decrease, as promised by Ms. Gendron and Governor Baldacci. Please consider another option to "save" tax dollars!!!!
- Department of Education: The State of Maine Department of Education would realize a very large cost savings by setting up a purchase department for all school districts. If the state purchased oil, buses, gas, electricity rates, laptops, paper, copiers, etc., for every school in the state, the savings would be huge and thereby decrease each individual school district's current budget for said items.
- What with the changes in education, and the formation of regional school units, I would suggest - strongly - in cutting staff at the Department of Education, and I don't mean just secretaries. You have several deputy commissioners and other staff that could be cut. Since a lot of people will be losing their jobs due to redistricting, this would also send a strong message that they are NOT alone. I feel if the commissioner can not do her job with maybe one assistant, then the call should go out for someone that can. Maybe the people at the DOE who lose their jobs could go to work for the DMV. That place is a joke; especially the office in Rockland. Maybe make it easier for people to get plates/tabs/license renewals at city offices rather than go to one central location. I waited

over 2 hours just to get my new vehicle registered. Thank you for providing this service to the citizens of Maine. Something has to be done to provide property tax relief. I am a single homeowner and my taxes for my small house in Rockland are "over the top".

From: Sharon Spaulding; 158 Talbot Avenue - P.O. Box 665, Rockland, ME 04841; sspaulding@msad5.org

- I would suggest greatly reducing the size of the Department of Education, especially that part dealing with curriculum and assessment. As a teacher with over 20 years experience, I have seen tremendous waste over the years. The function of the department seems lately to create largely unfunded and experimental mandates that funnel down to the classroom teacher and students. For example, Learning Results were created and now, they discover, must be drastically revised. An immense and convoluted Local Assessment System was mandated and, after much time and effort and frustration by teachers, was deemed to be flawed. A moratorium was established for the "experts" to come up with something new. There seems to be an awful lot of trial-and-error and "let's try this" in a department that costs the taxpayers so much to fund.
- Schools -- Pay for Play. Not everyone plays and the interest level is so varying between schools and towns. Let the "teams" themselves along with their neighbors support those endeavors through means of yard sales, bake sales, boosters, fundraisers, 50/50, etc etc

From: pschools@necomm.com

- DOE has got to centralize and standardize curricular. It would save having a coordinator in every school. Maybe the graduate or doctoral programs at Orono could design the standards for entering the University, and that would become the standard.

From: Margaret Craven; mcraven@midmaine.com; 7893-1897

- Decrease the per-pupil cost in education. It's gone up 48% from 1995 to 2003. This defies logic as a justifiable expense.
- To save money on education spending in Maine, the state should consider providing a notarized letter option for persons who successfully complete a high school or general equivalency education in Maine validating their completion instead of giving them a diploma stating so. I am willing to bet that it could cost the state less money per student to produce a letter of high school or GED completion than it would to have a diploma produced instead.
- The laptop program is nice but it is too expensive.

From: Tom Palmer; 24 Pine Trail, Dedham 04429; thpalmer3@aol.com

- Eliminate the "free" laptop program in the middle schools and the "free" laptop program for high school teachers. There is NO evidence aside from "anecdotal" that supports the DOE's claims about improved student performance, and is a HUGE waste of precious taxpayer dollars.

From: Bruce LaValee-Davison; bruceld@hughes.net

- The state should only help pay for new schools that meet a certain level of energy efficiency and have solar panels.

From: Chris Russell; E5@maine.rr.com

- Implementation of a 4-day school week for smaller districts may be a financial advantage to the state. The verdict is still out on larger districts receiving the same kind of benefits. The biggest hurdle (for parents) seems to be childcare services on Friday. Though, most parents found that it was much easier to find a full-day position, rather than an after-

school position, for their child(ren) than anticipated. Catching buses earlier in the morning or returning home later in the day, may be an issue, as well. Though, our daylight savings time was changed last year. Click on this link for the pros and cons:

<http://www.bcsd101.com/4day.htm>

AND this link:

<http://www.ncsl.org/programs/educ/4DaySchWeek.htm>

* As gas prices rise, the transportation savings would certainly be greater.

* Increased teacher and student contact would certainly be a huge advantage, leaving Friday's as an alternate day for additional contact.

From: Marylisa York; P.O. Box 643, Livermore, Maine 04253;

maryyork2003@yahoo.com; 897-2003

- To save more on schools why not do what other states do for the K run.... buses bring them to school and parents/sitters pick them up at time of discharge and if the K go in the afternoon the parents/sitters take them and the bus brings them back. Also IF STATE schools started at the same time as the rest of the schools in the same area and have workshops the same time it would also save. As the EUT school in Edmunds goes on the 28 and the rest of the schools don't go until after Labor day, the State waste wages and fuel for going before other schools as at the end of the year we go longer.. All schools should start the same days with the same days off for workshops and school vacations... Thank you for reading this now hope some of it works.

From: Brenda

Education – Higher Education

- Eliminate funding for the Maine Maritime Academy - It is an excellent facility and probably the best education in Maine...but they typically educate folks to work at (excellent paying) jobs out of the state.
- Close the print shops that are being run by the University.
- Offering space for events at the University hurts existing conference centers and has been one of the big reasons that we still don't have a modern, successful Convention Center in Maine. Shut down the meeting and convention activities at all public institutions. ...and stop building additional infrastructure. A Convention Center is a GUARANTEED source of steady year-round tourists - make it easy for a developer to create one in Cumberland County.
- Keep the State and University workers from lobbying in Augusta. There is limited productivity at the University when a Legislative Session is underway. If a University employee can spend more than 2 days per session in Augusta...then perhaps the University doesn't need that person on staff. Haven't you yet figured out why so much money is spent on all the glossy marketing materials and slick presentations? Should the University (or for that matter - any publicly funded group) be allowed to spend an inordinate amount of money on collateral to impress legislators to spend yet more money on their programs?
- This State is going to have to take a real look at the way it is shorting their kids. Many don't have the funds to go onto college and people won't stay if there are no jobs. It's great that kids are attending Community Colleges, but that is also a sign that are families

are stressed getting their kids through UMO and paying the bill.

From: LizWLane@aol.com

- Having previously worked in the MCCS, I cannot figure out why the Legislature has not merged the MCCS and the UMS which by merging, they could save approximately \$2.5M in administrative costs. They not only would save money but they also could achieve a seamless system where students would not have to deal with two administrative structures when wanting to transfer from one system to the other. As a concerned taxpayer, I think it is time that the State look at the results of both systems in terms of retention rates and not only look at the admission numbers but the students who actually stay beyond one semester. I realize that \$2.5M is a drop in the bucket but for taxpayers it is a lot of money.

- I think it is time to consolidate the university system, and the community colleges. We could call it the Communiversity!

From: Margaret Craven; mcraven@midmaine.com; 7893-1897

- It is time to privatize Maine Maritime. They are going to be fine!

From: Margaret Craven; mcraven@midmaine.com; 7893-1897

- Thank you for the opportunity to make suggestions! I think our University and Community College systems are wonderful and making strides to be as efficient as possible. The University College system is redundant and should be dramatically downsized if not eliminated entirely.

From: Tom Palmer; 24 Pine Trail, Dedham 04429; thpalmer3@aol.com

- Take a look at the partial list of "fired" and/or "retired" administrators at the University of Maine and tell me if there is any room for "cost cutting" in the System. While the lowly employees have to beg for raises, the System continues to reward administrators who don't cut the mustard with golden parachutes at the expense of Maine taxpayers. My house taxes just went up by \$200 again this year...think these salaries don't make me angry??? ALBRIGHT, Elaine (former Dean of Libraries, retired) - Fogler Fellow for Library Development - \$38,001.12 EILERS, Rebecca (former Dean of Arts & Sciences, not renewed due to poor performance) - Presidential Professor of Psychology - \$103,344.28 HOFF, Peter S. (former president of UM)- UM System Professor - \$128,658.31 LEFFLER, Ann (former Dean of Arts & Sciences, not renewed due to poor performance) - Will be "Special Advisor to the Provost for Student Retention" then will have one-year fully paid sabbatical, then will be Presidential Professor of Sociology - current salary \$139,331.40 SILVER, Evelyn (former Director of EEO, "retired") - Senior Advisor to the President - \$120,737.64 WESTFAL, Joseph (former Chancellor) - University of Maine System Professor - \$208,381.88

From: Suzanne Moulton; 43 Holland Street, Bangor 04401;

suzanne_moulton@umit.maine.edu 299-2008

Transportation

- I don't have numbers or anything, but I would like to suggest and think it would save a lot of money. When repaving the roads, take the tar up and then reuse it in another location. I don't know what this would entail, but it would be better than just disposing of it. When they repaved Main Street Damariscotta, they paid to get rid of the tar, when there is a

public parking lot right in town that could have used it. That seems like a big waste of my money and every other tax payers' money to be throwing it away.

- I travel to New Hampshire on a regular basis and have noticed that their roads are in better condition than those here in Maine. Now it is a fact that NH spends much less than Maine and one wonders how they can spend less and do more. Perhaps Maine ought to be asking NH how they do that and take lessons as to implement these ideas. Now I know that New Hampshire weather is similar to Maine's and they allow similar traffic so why do their roads stand up better? Do they have better standards for road materials or is Maine being used by the construction companies? I am told that Dig Safe must redo its utility marking on a prescribed interval even though the work is not done for 6 months or even years. Is this not a waste? I even took a digital picture of an unsafe road condition last year and sent it to the Governor after DOT did nothing for nearly 4 weeks. It was fixed the next day with a dozen men, a backhoe and 4 dump trucks. This sends the wrong message when state departments need to be jolted by the governor to do their job. Stop looking at Maine citizens as the enemy. Look at them as customers to be served with respect and in a timely manner. Not only will it make you feel better it will lessen the frustration by the taxpayers.

From: George A. Fogg, Chair of North Yarmouth Taxpayers Assoc.; 56 Deer Run Road North Yarmouth, ME 04097; gafogg@verizon.net; 207-846-6333

- The State should also hire an efficiency consultant why it takes so many workers to accomplish the work needed in the highway maintenance department. I don't know how many times I have driven by sites when I see people sitting in trucks while others are working. It should also be looked at who is really working, as you hear so many reposts about employees who read the paper all day.
- Reduce the mowing done by the department of transportation that is done along side I 95 and the Maine turnpike. Do it half as often and do not go clear to the trees. This should reduce the need for as many people (yes reduce staff a business will have to when times are tough) and do not buy or lease many tractors for mowing (the state has more, newer, and better tractors than most farms in Maine).
- Get some old state trouper cars place them at different intervals along the turnpike or highways where the troupers cruise, place radar guns pointing at traffic to make roads safer. Place dummies in the cars[driving at 65mph you will not know if it is a human or dummies in the car] hook radar to certain cars that could be forwarded to highway patrol etc. This would save time for troupers, gas being spent cruising highways, maintenance on vehicles, and probably you could reduce number of troupers over the long run. And if this is a great idea, I would love a nice used Harley! ha ha ha!

From: Dan Lowell; 975 Roxbury road , Roxbury Maine; deroche@roadrunner.com

- Contract out snow plowing as many towns do.
- As an economic example, why in theory creating the Sunshine Trail by disassembling the train tracks might seem like a smart idea, you've essentially created a monopoly for the truckers to get products in and out of Downeast Maine. Did anyone ask the businesses there what they wanted before you did it? I doubt it. Monopolies aren't good for anyone. Where was the Commerce Department raising red flags on this? The State seems to be focused on road infrastructure, but not much else. That isn't healthy in a diverse economy. Where are our ports? Where are our trains? A good portion of Southern Mainers commute to Boston. Where is the infrastructure there? The Downeaster is too

slow and only goes into North Station.

From: LizWLane@aol.com

- One idea is DON'T STOP charging tolls for the Turnpike. Let that money go on being used to pay or help pay for Turnpike upkeep. In fact - on the contrary - I think you should ROUND UP all Turnpike tolls to the next even dollar. I really hate having to pay fifty cents or \$1.76 or whatever it is. Let's get away from coins on the Turnpike, and just use even dollar numbers; easier for the drivers; and a little more for the state coffer.

Thanks!

From: Jeff M

- I feel that seasonal mowing on our interstate system, I-95 & I-295 should be reduced. Now, even though our highways look pristine, we mow many yards to the right of each lane and a lot of the median. I can understand wanting to keep foliage from encroaching the travel lanes because of visibility and openness for winter sun to help keep road conditions under control. But mowing the median and up some slopes on either side of the highway seems a bit excessive. There should be a standard distance for which to mow. Thanks for the opportunity of suggestion.

From: Dave Probert; 103 Perry Dr Dresden, Maine, 04342; djprobert@verizon.net; 737-4959

- Hire out snow plow contracts for state roads to local contractors. Like you do for the mowing of the interstate.
- Subcontract all state road work, with competitive bids. Use time- and quality-incentives. Yup, that means eliminate the state road crews, where "Men working" is one of the most consistent jokes going!
- Eliminate the front license plate on vehicles. Many, if not most, states have already done this. This would reduce the cost by half and still generate the same amount in licensing/registration fees....thus increasing the margin made by the state.

From: Kevin Kenny; 14 Independence Ave; kennyllc@roadrunner.com; 570-4280

- Put tolls in on 295 exits (long-term).
- Increase the State Gas Tax per gallon by one half cent.
- Actually give a ticket to people who speed. All of them.
- Stop with all the speeding tickets. I have heard from 4 Massachusetts residents alone who claim they will not travel to this state anymore due to the Nazi like State Troopers. Please start running this state on industry again....not just fines and luxury taxes.
- I would like to see the Maine Turnpike Authority dissolved and the highway become part of the state highway system. The Turnpike Authority is awash with money while the state highways and bridges are in desperate need of repair monies. I believe the economies of consolidation would be as, if not more, evident in this instance as they are in the school districts consolidations.
- Eliminate the Maine Turnpike Authority, get rid of the tolls and personnel. Recoup any other costs with better negotiated contracts with retail/restaurant/gas businesses. Open up more off-ramps paid for by the businesses that could attract the existing traffic. Better travel use of the turnpike will free up traffic on alternate roadways. Probably best to keep the toll (tax) in York...we want folks entering Maine to understand what is in store for them.
- DO AWAY WITH THE FRONT LICENCE PLATE ON ME CARS AND TRUCKS.

- One suggestion is to undertake a study as to how the Maine Department of Transportation has difficulty funding their projects. But somehow they continue to find money for positions. They have several positions available. Where is that money coming from? How many lower paying positions are being left unfilled so higher positions can be filled? Where is all of this money coming from? DOT always to be running short of funds for projects. Is there really enough work to fund all of these higher paying positions? Is there really a need for all of the management positions? A lot of the generally funded state agencies have to go without and yet DOT continues to spend money like running water. Check them out.

From: Jennifer Brown

- There is a lot of waste in the Department of Transportation, yes the old saying that too many of them are always laying around not working when we drive by is heard all too often...but don't you think that if there are so many people saying the same thing, that there may be some truth to it? Seems plausible to me. More specifically when the Route 35 project from Goodwins Mills to Hollis was done this summer, it was done incorrectly. Reclaimed material was used as a base. Then a thin layer of new fresh pavement was laid down on top of that. The thing is the reclaim was not mixed properly with concrete dust to make the reclaimed material as hard as it should be. The result will be this, it will need to be repaved within the next 5 years after it starts falling apart. This will result in a greater cost down the road, where as if the road was ground down like it should have been and then repaved with no reclaimed material, it would have been done right and will have lasted longer. It was so bad that I heard that none of the local companies that pave wanted nothing to do with it and did not want their name on it. Instead Pike was used. Which leads to the fact that the DOT used their trucks to lay down the reclaimed material, but when it came time for the new pavement to be laid down, Pike used their trucks and not the DOT's, because the DOT's trucks were sitting parked in the parking lots at the DOT sheds, not working. So there is some waste, your paying a private company tons of money to do a job the DOT was more than equipped to handle and still end up paying the DOT workers as well. Also DOT projects all over the state are using hired flagging companies at a greater cost to the state than if the DOT used their own people, and again your paying a private company and DOT employees at the same time.

From: Alan Smith; 4 Lazy Brook Lane, North Waterboro ME 04061;

amsj02@hotmail.com; 247-5548

- Combine the MDOT and the Maine Turnpike Authority into one entity and let them manage all roads.
From: Chris Russell; E5@maine.rr.com
- Lower the weight limit for trucks on all roads in Maine. Heavy trucks are tearing up our roads and bridges. Reduced weight limits will reduce wear significantly and improve safety dramatically.
- Raise the gas tax and provide credits for high mileage vehicles and particularly for car pools and van pools. Increase support for public transportation to reduce the demand for highways and bridges
- Eliminate duplication in "Highway Safety"... aren't there such programs at public safety, transportation and the turnpike?
- Change the way our roads are made so they don't break up after two years of use. Some of the roads in Maine are not wide enough for two large trucks to pass each other. The

sides of the roads should have at least three more feet. That would cut down on the need for repair from the trucks riding on the edges and breaking them. That is throwing away good money. The trucks should be able to drive on the interstate all the way to Houlton all the time because they create a hazard while driving on the secondary roads.

From: Clifford Shamrock; shammies29@hotmail.com

- The Department of Transportation spends a great deal of time and money ditching our roadsides. While a certain amount of this work is prudent, it largely pointless, as drainage problems do not exist in most of the areas that I have observed. Where there are drainage issues, a road grader can solve most of these problems more quickly than an excavator, and associated fleet of dump trucks. Thank you.

From: Jon Harris; charris@tidewater.net

- Stop all or most of new road construction. Repair/maintain the roads/bridges we already have. New roads add to the greenhouse effect by the loss of vegetation. The secondary and back roads of Maine have been and still are more appealing to our tourist visitors than super fast highways. The safety factor is a non issue which is always used for an excuse for bigger faster newer. I believe the accident ratio between super highways/rural roads is close. Freight transportation is able to meet our demands and with railroads showing progress this should relieve some of the highway pressure. In conclusion I want the DOT to be overhauled the savings in this dept alone can save the state millions. The reason the state is bankrupt is that it's not being run like a business. If it was, half of the state jobs would be eliminated.

From: Stuart Mahan; stuart@strongs.com

- Stop fixing perfectly good roads, like the stretch of I95 between Richmond and Brunswick EVERY YEAR.
- Buying Hybrid cars is a nice PR campaign, BUT isn't cost-effective at this time. Hybrids cost too much vs. fuel savings. Buy small 4 cyl cars (about half cost of Hybrids) AND run them until the engines or transmissions go - not sell them on a time cycle. You don't get enough re-sale value on the time cycle system vs. running them longer until a major breakdown. Cars will now hold up for close to 200,000 miles, so selling them at around 100,000 isn't economical. Look at CMP's new bill stuffer - they are bragging about buying small cars instead of pickups for meter readers - but they bought Focuses not Hybrids. Also, DOT should move trucks around from low usage camps to high ones, and vice versa, to even out mileage on them. Now on the time cycle sale system some of their trucks being sold only have about 100,000 miles while others have 200,000+. The same thing as above goes for running them until a failure happens. If there's worry over being "caught short" when a failure happens the savings will easily pay to keep a few new ones in reserve. Also, over time the people in charge of vehicles will know when to anticipate the "big one" happening to a vehicle and replace them just in time. There should be national data available, too.

Miscellaneous

- The state is so slow in paying bills that interest charges are often accrued. The state could save these interest charges by paying bills on time. Specifically, veterinary bills submitted by DIF&W K-9 handlers usually incur interest charges. Many vendors will not

bill IF&W any more because payment is so slow. As positions are cut to save money, the amount of time to process requests gets longer and longer. In the area of bill payment, this costs the state in the form of interest payments. Also, the Natural Resource Depts. are special ordering a green color from GMC for their vehicles. I assume that, even with the special order color which costs extra, that GMC still won the bid and is the low bidder. If this is not the case, then using trucks of a special order color may be an added unnecessary expense.

From: Deborah Palman, PO Box 57, Aurora, ME; dpalman1@rivah.net

- OPEN SECTION 8 FOR YORK AND CUMBERLAND COUNTIES AND REVIEW STAFF QUALIFICATIONS TO HANDLE PEOPLES' NEEDS. THEY ARE EXTREMELY DEFICIENT AND UNCARING.
- Move the Bureau of Employee Relations out of leased space, and eliminate the taxpayer funded daycare center they operate.
- Closely examine the Office of Health Policy, which is seriously overstaffed.
- Reduce or eliminate conference travel. If saving money is so important, out of state conferences should be a very low priority.
- Limit referendum items to general elections to save costs and to ensure better voter participation. Special elections should only be for filling unexpected vacancies if there is no rule covering that situation. When a referendum question has been decided by voters, a significant period of time should elapse before that issue can be on the ballot again.

From: Margie Rosenbaum; nmrosey@earthlink.net

- Close state and municipal offices when the temperature is above (summer) or below (winter) certain degrees to save energy costs. Adjust windows and doors for air circulation. Use window shades to keep out heat or cold. Never construct a building with windows that don't open. Wear clothing appropriate to the temperature, use fans, and adjust thermostats for the least energy usage.

From: Margie Rosenbaum; nmrosey@earthlink.net

- Don't buy every idea, improvement, gadget, gizmo, or program available. Be especially wary of anyone wearing a power suit making a power point presentation. Assume that every analyst, contractor, corporation, investment group, special interest representative, etc. is smarter and looking out for his/her own self-interest.

From: Margie Rosenbaum; nmrosey@earthlink.net

- Be as careful of spending taxpayer dollars as if they were your own.

From: Margie Rosenbaum; nmrosey@earthlink.net

- Maine is a large rural state. Comparing Maine to other New England or Northeast states is not useful or accurate. On the contrary, Maine can benefit by retaining its unique identity while the others merge into each other in the giant megapolis.

From: Margie Rosenbaum; nmrosey@earthlink.net

- I also see ads on Uncle Henry's with state email addresses for replies. Maybe a small item but one that sends very loud improper signals to we who are paying the freight.

From: George A. Fogg, Chair of North Yarmouth Taxpayers Assoc.; 56 Deer Run Road North Yarmouth, ME 04097; gafogg@verizon.net; 207-846-6333

- Close the Levenson Center in the Bangor area and relocate the patients to Treats Falls, a private facility.

From: Sen Karl Turner

- Close the Dorothea Dix Center and relocate patients to private facilities or other public facilities.
- Privatize the management and service delivery of Riverview in Augusta. Benchmark ourselves against NH for the number of facilities and beds we have to gauge the right sizing of our in state mental health facilities.
From: Sen Karl Turner
- OPEGA has indicated Maine Government has forty different economic development programs. Let's force rank these 40 programs using a cost/benefit matrix and eliminate those without clear benefit to job creation. As a target, seek to eliminate the bottom ten programs.
From: Sen Karl Turner
- Reduce the financial commitment to the Non-categorical Medicaid waiver program in FY09 from \$90 million to \$80 million as was proposed earlier this year.
From: Sen Karl Turner
- Remove illegal aliens from welfare rolls and turn them over to ICE for deportation.
- Abolish spending for tourism industry.
- Repeal "Clean Elections". It's a farce!
- Stop taking actions and passing laws that strengthen the MSEA/SEIUs strangle hold on government efficiency. LD1915 just put more money in their political coffers so that they can stand taller against vital market based and needs based adjustments in employment and benefits for state employees and programs.
From: A concerned taxpayer and citizen.
- Seek out and employ/continue to employ folks that are skilled in delivering results and continuous improvements. Stop allowing the protection of employees on the basis of seniority and start retaining employees only on the basis of performance, creativity, continuous improvement efforts and results.
From: A concerned taxpayer and citizen.
- Promote people into leadership roles that have leadership skills, attitude, values and energy suitable for the role. Get people that understand the leadership role is 90+percent service - enabling those who are doing the front line work to increase their contributions, efficiency and success. Get rid of the "structure" builders and promote the process and efficiency builders. Stop the empire building.
From: A concerned taxpayer and citizen.
- Hire some folks that understand organizational change and effectiveness and get real about the people side of change, the energy it takes and the time needed to produce true institutional change. Education is building new hen houses using foxes as consultants to do it. Those who have most energetically resisted change during their own careers in education are now acting as facilitators for the formation of RSUs and on top of that fact, few have facilitation skills sufficient to perform the tasks required - but they are part of the old club. Go to industry and seek trained organizational development and effectiveness professionals to lead the effort.
From: A concerned taxpayer and citizen.
- Stop trying to build on top of broken rock - fix the backlog either by retiring badly used assets or through effective asset management - our infrastructure is crumbling while we pretend to be improving. Cutting costs ahead of infrastructure repair dooms us to a trend

to failure and higher taxes.

From: A concerned taxpayer and citizen.

- Much time is wasted by elected officials by having to raise so much money. They could get more done if they weren't out selling themselves to the highest bidder for campaign contributions. Let's publicly fund campaigns so the system will run more efficiently therefore saving money. Also the state spends excess money on ideas and projects that are bullied into action by lobbyists who promise gifts and campaign donations in exchange for favors. Let's publicly fund campaigns and outlaw lobby contributions. This will promote maximum efficiency by our legislators and reduce the temptation of wasting money on less than useful projects. To avoid the "freedom of speech" argument tell the lobbyists that they can talk all they want but can not give anything. If Maine did this we could truly say "AS Maine goes so goes the Nation" These changes are badly needed on the federal level. We could start here and fix our broken system. Thanks for your time.

From: Max Arnold; 38 Chase Farm Road Newcastle Maine 04553; 586-5111

- I'm always amazed at the volume of state vehicles on the road which are new or no more than a year or two old. It's in stark contrast to the vehicles owned by average Maine citizens. I think Maine could save money, still have a reliable vehicle fleet, and not give the impression of profligate spending on creature comforts for state workers by extending the life of its fleet by additional years before trading for new vehicles.
- As currently involved w/ state govt.; in considering the cost of operations and energy, it would seem reasonable to research the cost savings for some departments - in moving to four day work weeks, 10 hour days, etc. The savings in heating costs and travel costs would be worth the consideration. The public would have to adjust with a worthwhile tax dollar savings.

From: Francis W. Zito; PO Box 642, Searsport, ME 04974; zzoo@verion.net; 548-6089

- The State public officials have to reassess their own perspectives. I would suggest that the State is, in part, in a fiscal deplorable condition year after year because it (Maine) must be viewed by politicians as a place to preserve nature NOT a nature preserve. The second consideration, has been, in part, considered and that is the fact that education and its ancillary supporting factions comprise the largest employer in the State. What supports education as a business?

From: J. D. Garcia; dimas@clinic.net

- Do not, any longer, pay rental fees to state employees who get a state vehicle to go back and forth to their state job. Many currently are paid to park the state vehicle in their yard overnight. Outrageous--they get free taxpayer transportation to and from work and paid extra.

From: sas@zwi.net

- Across the board unpaid leave for non-essential (non police and safety) personnel.

From: David Hoisington; david@hoisingtonbean.com

- Legalize gambling and tax the heck out of it. Marijuana too since it's the number one cash crop in Maine, which is sad.
- Sell the excess power we generate at a premium that is exported to the other states.
- Triple taxes on the out-of-state residents that own second homes in Maine. Yeah, I know, that can't happen constitutionally, but it would be nice.
- Reduce the heat in government offices by 2 degrees. Yes, wear more sweaters.

- In order to generate valuable suggestions it's always a good idea to reward the people who make them. I suggest rewarding the person who makes a valuable suggestion with half the savings from the first year. (At the very least a person should be paid in proportion to the savings generated, so that better ideas are rewarded more.)
From: William Vaughan, Jr.; 207 South Road; wvvaughan@chebeague.net; 846-3817
- I have two suggestions that make most economic and operational sense if done at the same time, but either could be implemented separately. I'm not a state employee but have seen private industry successfully implement these two methods to reduce ongoing employee costs. (1). Eliminate ban hiring retired state employees. To ease with the transition of losing experienced employees, eliminate the current ban on hiring retired state employees. That is, allow retired state workers, to immediately apply and begin work for any open State of Maine position. In particular a retired employee could apply, and be hired to the position they retired from (part time or full time) until a permanent employee is hired for the position, or the position is eliminated. The retired employee would be paid normal wages and benefits for the position, as though there was no break in service. But, the State of Maine would NOT make any retirement or health care payments, as the employee would already be eligible to collect these from the retirement system. (No retirement or health care payments is a direct saving to the State of Maine) Use of experienced employees is also a direct saving to the State of Maine instead of hiring inexperienced short temp employees. (2). Early retirement to state employees. Offer early retirement to state employees who will be 55 years within a year of January 1, 2008, as though they were 62. (Adjust the age equivalent from 62 to a younger age to adjust how many employees would likely take the early retirement.) This change will immediately reduce the headcount, payroll and benefits payable by the State of Maine. Suggestion (1) above would ease the transition of losing potentially large numbers of employees.
From: Ken Doiron; Bangor ME; ken_doiron@msn.com
- Establish clearly defined metrics and deliverables for each branch of government - when I was a technology consultant for the MDOE (2000 - 2003), there were a number of major initiatives going on in education to include local assessment system (LAS), MEDMS database, the laptop program and a revision to the Maine Learning Results (MLR). As far as I know, there were absolutely no metrics in place in order to measure the effectiveness and deliverables involved with each of these major initiatives. As far as I know, there still are not. An organization cannot possibly do a good job of implementing major changes unless clear expectations are articulated in respect to the process, deliverables and schedules. The LAS project was a disaster, MEDMS went way over it's initial projected timeline, there are no clearly defined metrics associated with the laptop program (other than anecdotal and vendor produced) and many school systems still are in great turmoil with respect to the MLRs.
From: Bill Portela; 36 Greeley Rd, Windsor, Maine 04363; maplelanefarm@adelphia.net; 549-3495
- LIHEAP Program - I am not exactly understanding why one must apply for LIHEAP in order to keep or increase their food stamps. My Grandmother has to apply for LIHEAP in order to keep her food stamps. She gets \$5 a month when she doesn't even have a utility bills, as they are all included with her rent which is public housing. I am not sure how many thousands of individuals receive this same benefit, but the actual money going

to people that do not have electric bills combined with the administrative expense of processing these claims I am sure could save thousands and thousands of dollars.

From: Amy Babb; P.O. Box 186, Richmond, Maine 04357; ababb@suscom-maine.net; 737-0936

- Spend money - Yes, that's right - we need to spend money to make Maine people better educated and to attract businesses to the state. We are always trying to nickel and dime ourselves in Maine - when what we need is some ways to bring real money into the Maine coffers.
- Consolidate usage of state leased/owned buildings & real estate. I am willing to bet that like many other states, there is much inefficiency amongst the commercial buildings the state owns or leases. This is especially timely as Maine's state agencies continue to streamline themselves to meet new spending limit goals. If the state's space needs were assessed on a holistic basis (i.e. one centralized person with a spreadsheet), then opportunities for consolidation, other efficiencies, and even the disposition of properties (sale, non-renewals, etc) would be much more apparent. I think the potential annual, ongoing savings of this effort is substantial enough (could be \$10M/yr or more) to warrant such an exercise.

From: Daren Hebold; 119 Middle Street, Portland ME 04101; dhebold@ramharnden.com; 773-3531

- Add another buck a pack onto the cigarette tax (it's not a savings in the short term, but medical studies strongly show that we'll recruit far fewer juvenile smokers when the price goes up a buck!)
- Use a "zero-based" budget process--every dept must justify their existence and tasks.
- We need to recruit more businesses to the state, generating more revenues. What will that take? Can our state University be better enabled to spin off businesses? Would that require a rewriting of the charter? Tax incentives? Grants?
- Start a massive, "BUY LOCAL" program. Studies done in Ohio revealed that only \$0.17 of every dollar spent at a Wal-Mart stays in state. Roughly triple that for purchases made at local institutions. Again, more tax revenue staying in state sounds like a good deal for all!
- How about bringing back the snack tax. Let's call it the Healthy Maine Tax. Any thing with a high fat content or high sugar (except staples butter milk etc) like candy bars, high fat chips soda or just plain junk food add the extra tax.
- Let's stop housing non-violent drug offenders and addicts in our county jails. Our jails should only be used for violent people who are a danger to society. Let's direct our police resources to crime fighting instead of hassling old hippies and cancer patients for enjoying cannabis. We can't afford this madness.

From: Common Sense; Maine.

- Financing the unfunded liability with the Maine State Retirement System via a bond issue rather than the current indebtedness to MSRS would save about \$2 million a year.
- I'd ban lobbyists altogether from the State. In general they represent too many outside interests. I'd also ban outside interests from getting signatures for ballot questions. Mainers should be deciding what is important to them without outside interference. And that should exclude National Organizations with "local" (mostly in Augusta for easy access) offices.

From: LizWLane@aol.com

- Show us the proposed budget item by item and then ask us for ideas.
From: Laurie Sirois; 14 Albert Crossroad, St. Agatha, Maine 04772;
laurie@evergreen99.com; 728-4900
- Local governments could be collecting more Business Equipment Taxes if the State would be more Business friendly. Why not ask some Business owners what needs to be done.
From: Laurie Sirois; 14 Albert Crossroad, St. Agatha, Maine 04772;
laurie@evergreen99.com; 728-4900
- A great way to solve this mess is to stop providing food, housing, healthcare, transportation, child care, and auto repair, free of charge to migrants, illegal aliens, and anyone else who feels this state is a place to sap the life force and blood out of the hardest working people in this country. We are all here for the same thing, freedom and prosperity, give to all or give to none, wake up government and make people pay their own way.
From: Pamela Hearn; Cherryfield, Maine
- A drop in spending must be accomplished by a reduction in costs and not a shifting of the cost by increasing taxes or fees. I realize there are some State expenses that cannot be reduced such as insurance costs, fuel, pension expenses, etc. But, there are areas that can be reduced such as number of employees, number of departments, lighting when employees aren't present, travel for non essential purposes, etc. Those areas should be identified by the accounting office and the departments involved should be required to reduce their budgets by 2½, 5, and 10 percent to see how these reductions would affect the overall expenses of the State. The steps they would go thru to accomplish those reductions should be itemized and show the effects those changes might have on their operations. Experience shows the greatest savings can be accomplished by reducing staff and nonreplacement and encouraging of early retirements can help in that area. Government must be run like a business and, admittedly, our taxes and State expenses are too high. No one likes cuts, but they have to be done, and if done on an equal and fair basis, they can be accepted by all. It would be presumptuous of me to suggest any specific cuts since I do not have the necessary knowledge of State operations to do this, but there are people in the state, that if given a free and non-political authorization to do so, can provide the information. then it is up to the State Government to implement the savings and not treat this as simply an exercise. A change doesn't have to happen all at once. A start can be made this year and another cut in expenses next year, and more the third until the satisfactory level is reached.
From: Robert Crosen; 12 Hillcrest Drive, Cumberland Center; RCrosen@maine.rr.com
- New initiatives for saving energy and also costs of state government are most timely. I would hope that you might encourage state environmental and other community groups to get involved. Creating opportunities for dialogue between these groups and business interests seem vital. A recent report in the CITIZEN discussed the "poor" business climate in Maine. What seems to be missing here is a willingness to work with environmental groups up front, rather than waiting for the permitting process, where there is a more confrontational exchange. We are all in this together: energy costs, global warming, the need for a stronger economy in Maine affect us all. We would do well to find ways to work together for the common good. I hope you will consider opportunities to make such a dialogue happen, with citizen input being a valuable part of the

discussion.

From: Joanne Boynton, Belfast; Joanne_Boynton@umit.maine.edu

- Streamline the needlessly complicated Maine Unemployment System. Provide dislocated workers with a maximum 26 weeks of unemployment benefits whether they are in work search, training or starting their own business. Yes, some individuals will try to maintain their unemployment benefits as long as possible but the majority of Mainers simply want to get back to work as quickly as possible.
- Impose strict performance reviews and fiscal audits on non-profit agencies who contract with the Department of Labor to provide services at Maine CareerCenters. Example: Investigate Western Maine Community Action over fiscal years 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 and, in particular, Western Maine Community Action's performance at the Lewiston CareerCenter.
- Improve the technology available to employees of the Department of Labor. Upgrade or eliminate OSOS. Investigate the CareerCenter Labor Exchange. The system is linked to and part of OSOS when it could be a consumer friendly, stand alone internet system. The time and effort spent by DOL employees on OSOS in Labor Exchange is out of proportion to any benefit received.
- I had suggested that anyone receiving any form of subsidized housing or not responsible for electricity bills be eligible for LIHEAP, I also believe that anyone receiving subsidized housing should not be eligible for the tax and rent rebate. The current formula actually allows for rebates to individuals only paying rent based on their income.

From: Amy Babb; P.O. Box 186, Richmond, Maine 04357; ababb@suscom-maine.net; 737-0936

- Bring real savings to health insurance. Eliminate the mandates and encourage menu plans. Lower cost health insurance will save a considerable amount of both state and local public spending. We can't afford the program we currently have.
- Stop competing with Maine businesses. Have each department do an internal audit. If existing work duplicates that done in the private sector...stop doing it!
- Stop funding groups like Women, Work and Community with money they didn't ask for by taking it away from a group that could help all of Maine workers (Governor's Training Initiative).
- Stop funding SBDC and all of its siblings. They compete with and have driven away the best consultants in Maine. Stop offering a myriad of FREE services - the private sector will do it better, will have much better credibility and will generate tax revenues from their work. The state groups make their numbers, outreach and success look good, but they employ folks whose job it is to make the numbers look good. Free up the offices wasted by SCORE, SBDC, SBDTC and all of the others and you'll find that state employees might not have to rent meeting space outside of state offices to hold their meetings.
- Shut down the state-run incubators. They haven't worked and won't work. A private group could do a much more effective job luring and growing entrepreneurial businesses.
- Hand off most of the work of established Commissions, Committees and Councils to Consumer Groups and Industry Associations - more effective, certainly less cost for the state. The Commissions have turned into a new "good-old-boy" appointed network of folks who have no incentive to work with the Consumer Groups or the Industry Associations. This one change could have the most profound effect on the budget and

actually get Consumer Groups and Industry Associations working closer together to solve problems. There are also State Departments that could shift much of their activities to Consumer Groups & Industry Associations: Maine Arts, Atlantic Salmon, Marine Fisheries, Behavioral and Developmental Services, Historic Preservation, Historical Society, Hospice, Humanities, Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, Foundation for Blood Research, Saco River Corridor (what do they do with \$50K per year?), St. Croix International Waterway (\$25K for what?). Ask the tough questions...if a commission is getting less than \$50K per year; we probably can stop funding them and not miss much. If you can't outsource the activities, at least look at consolidation. There is no reason why we couldn't create a "Maine Cultural Commission" and combine the Maine Arts Commission, Maine Historic Preservation Commission, Maine Historical Society, Maine Humanities Council, Maine State Museum and the Maine Public Broadcasting Corporation. ...just don't let the University run it!

- Eliminate funding to Maine Manufacturing Extension Partnership - their "stewardship" of the manufacturing sector has led to the sector's decreasing economic contribution.
- Charge for services at the Law and Legislative Reference Library
- Instead of spending cuts, perhaps, an increase in revenue could be generated, not by taxes, but by direct loans from the Maine state government. The interest collected from such loans could be earmarked for specific programs/agencies. For example, the State government of California has a home purchase loan program for state veterans called "CalVet Home Loans". These direct loans from the California State government provide a stable revenue stream in the form of repayments to the State Treasury. Also, this program makes it possible for many California Veterans to own their own homes.

From: Bill Gregg; Portland, ME

- Workers Compensation - Why is there a right to a publicly paid Advocate? In other states, if an individual truly has a case, a private Attorney would be willing to take the case on a contingent fee basis. This would eliminate Advocate positions, winnow out frivolous cases, eliminate Advocate errors caused by overwhelming case loads and ease the backlog of cases created by general overloading of the system.
- Set up a budget similar to that of a family and stick to it---- Dave Ramsey and Suze Orman both have great suggestions concerning budgets and finances. Why can't the state of Maine follow a plan similar to what they suggest? It may sound humorous to some people, however, at least it would give the committee a place to start.

From: Jill Gott; 170 Garland Street, Apt # 2, Bangor, Maine 04401; 945-5999

- Develop tighter controls over contracts, and departmental spending. Know just what contracts cover and what the companies you have contracted with have to offer. Knowing these two things, should hopefully allow for tighter financial control and make for fewer unhappy surprises later on. I am tired of hearing about financial deficits being found soon after someone has been reelected--what were they doing, hiding the fact that there was a deficit and waiting until all the votes had been tallied before bringing it to the attention of the voters? Here is an example: if you find a company with a good track record of doing what they promise, and they offer both lawn care and snow removal services, then why, not negotiate the price and have them do both jobs? I realize there are legalities when dealing with contracts and state monies, but perhaps what you really need is to have some people who know how to negotiate and how to get along on a budget.

From: Jill Gott; 170 Garland Street, Apt # 2, Bangor, Maine 04401; 945-5999

- Make more use of Grass Root involvement. Asking people their opinions is a wonderful way to start. This will allow people to develop a sense of pride and ownership in their state as well as in local matters. They may not always get what they want but at least they know they have had an opportunity to participate. I don't think cutting welfare and other programs entirely is the answer, instead, we need to look for ways to help those who are working but who have little to no health insurance and who are struggling to survive. We need to reward people for working.

From: Jill Gott; 170 Garland Street, Apt # 2, Bangor, Maine 04401; 945-5999

- Cut 1% across all departments except Education, roads.
- Limit travel to maximum 5 people for conferences.
- Stop closing a facility, renovating it so another department can move in, and then renovating another building so that the same type of facility can move into a new building. Case in point, the Bangor Pre-Release Center which was housed on the BMHI/Dorothea Dix Campus. The State closed the Pre-Release Center and sent all of the occupants to the Charleston Correctional Facility. Then the old Pre-Release Center building was renovated and IF&W moved in. The old IF&W Building I believe sits vacant and now part of the Dorothea Dix facility is being renovated for a Women's Pre-Release Center. This does not make sense to me!!!
- You could start by putting a freeze on "luxury items" and start with the recently publicized law suit against a contract award measuring tourism to a Canadian firm. The question of who the contract should have been awarded might be better solved by canceling it altogether. Toll booth info or even voluntary data input by business seasonally would give same answers.

From: Laurie Walton; Glenburn; dognapper2@msn.com

- Park the State vehicles to avoid abuse as one forest ranger does in his district helping a local contractor move his crews around and using the vehicle when working on his days off for the same contractor. If the State was serious they could save monies if it was not for the good old boy club.
- Reduce the tax and rent program to just poor and elderly. This program has grown to the point that someone making 105,000 can qualify for a rebate in their property taxes. People that can afford to are buying up waterfront property and than the state is giving them a rebate on their taxes. But some older people who make just over 15000 can get nothing because they live in a run down place way up north and have low property taxes. Stop subsidizing the out of staters that come here, buy all the waterfront property, jack up the price so locals can't afford it and then give them a break on their taxes. Put the program back to what it was meant to be. Low income and elderly. It would save a bundle.

- Stop building brand new subsidized housing on the city level, put these people in older housing where the subsidies are smaller as a direct result of the age of the building.

From: George J Venturelli; 113 Yankee Ave Bangor, ME; gventure@verizon.net; 270-0246

- Loosen up guidelines on small business loans to allow more small businesses to grow.

From: George J Venturelli; 113 Yankee Ave Bangor, ME; gventure@verizon.net; 270-0246

- Give tax breaks to larger businesses to entice their movement into the state, while not overtaxing existing businesses, i.e. the casino.

From: George J Venturelli; 113 Yankee Ave Bangor, ME; gventure@verizon.net; 270-0246

- New \$1 tax on a bottle of wine, six pack of beer, pint of hard alcohol, etc. Then, reduce or eliminate gas tax. Making Maine more business-friendly through lower transportation costs will result in more businesses, more employees, and higher wages. Or use the new tax to fund domestic violence programs, childcare, MaineCare, or the jails.

From: Julie; Augusta, ME

- Stop hiring out-of-state (or out of country) companies for highway work, construction, waste management and processing, etc. Only Maine-owned businesses and Maine employees should get Maine taxpayer dollars. No more outsourcing; the only exception should be if there are not enough Maine residents to do the work. And there should ALWAYS be a bidding process for major projects. It may be painful in the short-term but re-investing in Maine people will pay off in the long run.

From: Julie; Augusta, ME

- I work with a man from DHS, he carries with him each day to work on our unit a pager & a cell phone, if he can't be reached quickly by pager he is called! Why not just give him the phone? You know, if he uses this system of communication within DHS many others in state government must also!

From: homertrje24@yahoo.com

- Why do we pay for taxi vouchers for methadone patients to go to the clinic, isn't it enough we pay for the clinic meds. Many members of this setup have a significant other also in the program, they get 2 vouchers each day, why can't they share the taxi if in the same household.

From: homertrje24@yahoo.com

- REQUIRE ALL State of Maine vehicles to have door decals affixed to indicate Department that vehicle is used by. Exempt law enforcement. Ex: I ran into a small economy car in Augusta at an Ice Cream stop. It had State of Maine license plates, it was occupied by two females that had shopping bags in the back seat, they had stopped for an ice cream, laughing and giggling the whole time, they were there for 45 mins! I asked my House of Rep to find out and it was licensed to DOT. By requiring ALL State vehicles to have door decals will ID to tax payers and may provide accountability to State employees. I know DEP vehicles do not have door decals. PROHIBIT personal use of State Vehicles.

From: Dave Libby; Falmouth; dlibby@commfac.com ; 797-7536

- Here is an idea...as small as it may seem. Please ask the governor to refrain from taking long trips, which I would think uses a lot of fuel, to check on professional searchers that are doing their job. He spent a half hour riding in a search boat in Fort Fairfield this summer, while they were looking for a little girl that fell into the river. How much did that cost in fuel and security?
- I would like to see Augusta do a cost comparison between the state run ferry system in Penobscot bay and the public ferry system in Casco Bay. Maine State taxpayers are unfairly subsidizing island residents of Maine's most affluent islands in Penn. Bay. A car ferried to Peaks Island costs more than 3 times what a car to North Haven costs and only travels one quarter of the distance. The Maine State Ferry system constantly runs in the red and taxpayers have to make up the losses. Why can't this system be self-supporting?

- As an attorney, I've noticed that the county courthouses have an 8:30am docket call and an 8:31am docket call. This is silly. If I have a client on the 8:31am list, I have to be in court for the earlier docket call so as not to disrupt the court, even though the later list won't be called before 9 or 9:30am. More often than not, the judges take a recess after calling the docket and I end up waiting until 10am or later. It would seem to me that with so much money being spent on court-appointed attorneys, such as myself, waiting around at the taxpayers expense could be managed more effectively simply by making the 8:31am list a 10am list. The numbers may not add up to millions of dollars immediately, but if I can count a dozen attorneys waiting for 2 hours once a week that adds up to 1,200 per week for just one court house. That's approximately sixty-thousand dollars per year in wasted money. Just my two cents.

- Increasing revenue has the same effect as saving money. It is time for an additional tax on alcoholic beverages. They are not a necessity .Cigarettes have been singled out for tax upon tax. Alcohol usage costs the state in many ways, such as drunk driving, health problems, domestic violence, etc. An increase in the tax on alcoholic beverages would help pay for law enforcement officers and health providers who deal most directly with its abuse.

From: Edward Farlinger; 125 Waterboro Road Hollis ,Maine 04042

- Fire people that mess up time after time. To do that you have to get rid of the unions, then people will be careful when they do there work if they might lose there job, now they don't care. With there union there safe. Just look at DHS, they screw up all the time there still there. MAKE PEOPLE ACCOUNTABLE IN WHAT THEY DO, WHAT THEY BUY " like computer systems that don't work or know how to operate them " The whole state a mess work on it. Saving money is one thing, you need to make money by making it better for business to operate in this state, right now that sucks. More business's more jobs, more money for the state, simple.

From: Richard Cronkhite; 71 McNamara St.` Lewiston; rccronk@verizon.net; 784-8931

- My wife and I are residents of Lewiston, ME Our professions are Electrical Engineer and Accountant respectively with the following suggestions for State budget relief:
 - 2) Immigrant/non-native Maine resident welfare support (Maine welcomes additional residents with diverse talents and marketable skills, rather than provide a free pass to a lifestyle everyone else must work hard to enjoy).
 - 3) Laptops for 7th graders (this should be a subsidized purchase rather than a freebee).
 - 4) Subsidies for Maine fisherman (These Maine residents are living lifestyles above the average Maine resident, times have changed and they need to adjust their business plan if they wish to maintain their lavish lifestyle).

From: J. Desjardins; Zagbus@Gmail.com ; 576-2305

- FIRST, AUCTION OFF A LICENSE FOR A FULL FLEDGE CASINO TO BE LOCATED WHEREVER THE CITY OR TOWN WILL ACCEPT IT. START THE BIDDING AT 500 MILLION. EARMARK ALL PROCEDES FROM THE OPERATION TO GO ONLY TO HIGHWAY AND BRIDGES. ABOUT EVERY PERSON THAT GAMBLES THERE WOULD BENIFIT WITH BETTER ROADS AND BRIDGES BECAUSE MOST ALL PATRONS HAVE CARS AND COULD SEE WHERE THEIR MONEY IS GOING. NO SPECIAL INTERESTS LIKE RACING, INDIANS, SCHOOLS, ELDERLY ETC.MAYBE THE STATE WOULDN'T HAVE TO

BORROW ALL THE TIME TO KEEP UP WITH HIGHWAY AND BRIDGE REPAIR AND IMPROVMENTS. I WOULD MUCH RATHER SEE A FEW CENTS OF MY GAMBLING DOLLAR SPENT WHERE I CAN SEE IT INSTEAD OF GOING TO CONN. OR SOME OTHER STATE.

From: DICKMORTON@VERIZON.NET

- WITH THE COST OF FUEL AND REPAIRS TO VEHICLES TOO MANY VEHICLES SIT AROUND NOT BEING UTILIZED WHEN THEY COULD BE RENTED ON SHORT TERM RENTALS ALSO DHS PAYS TO MOVE A NUMBER OF CLIENTS AND DO NOT SHOP AROUND FOR THE BEST DEAL IN RENTING VEHICLES FOR THEIR CLIENTS. TO VERIFY THIS INFORMATION ACROSS FROM THE PARK IN AUGUSTA LOOK OUT BACK AT THE WASTE OF ALL THE TRUCKS AND CARS SITTING THERE WITH LITTLE OR NO USE AND THE PILE OF VEHICLES OF NEW VEHICLES SITTING ALL OVER THE STATE NOT BEING UTILIZED.
- Every government agency should be audited by an inspector general and a report should be presented to the governor as well as the legislature. This would cost money to facilitate, but Mainers would see it as an investment, as cost-saving measures, unnecessary bureaucracy, and other waste would undoubtedly be found. It would also increase citizens' confidence in government.

From: Josh; j_j_reny@hotmail.com

- My idea is simple for saving money by reducing disability payments. Instead of paying disability to someone based on their current position without the expectation of them every working again, use disability as "gap payment" based on what the person's previous occupation was, and what new occupations the person could perform without affecting the disability injury. For example a person with an injured back that could not longer perform a manual labor occupation could still function in another position that did not require manual labor. Base the payment on the difference in compensation between the two jobs, not the total of original job. A complete review of the disability system should also be a part of this process, as too many people get turned away from one Physician who will not qualify them as disable only to find another that will grant them disability.
- Put a cap on administrative salaries.
- Haggle with contractor bids.
- Raise sin taxes more.
- Think of all the wear and tear and gas it would save if state owned cars and trucks were not taken home by employees.

From: ddugan@hughes.net

- Eliminate front license plates.

From: Joe Gallant; jgallan5@maine.rr.com

- Pattern The Maine Unemployment Compensation system after a state like New Hampshire. In Maine, Unemployment regulations are overly complex and not easily understandable to the average person. State employees must interpret rules and monitor each individual receiving weekly Unemployment Benefits. There are rules for individuals in training, work search rules, the necessity of compiling, mailing and reviewing Work Search Logs and a special MEO program for people who want to start their own business and collect Unemployment Benefits. Even a minor deviation from regulations, can result

in an interruption or suspension of weekly Unemployment Benefits. The amount of state workers needed to staff and maintain a bureaucracy of this size can be trimmed by simply allowing Claimants to receive the maximum Weekly Benefits to which they are entitled. Eliminate the rules, regulations and most, if not all, of the reporting requirements. The current system assumes that every Claimant is out to defraud the state and that every Claimant wants to stay on Unemployment as long as possible. This is not the case. The majority of people want to return to work.

- Decrease funding to municipal governments replacing it with strong, centralized, well funded county government throughout the state. This will eliminate duplication of government services.
- 10% CUT ACROSS THE BOARD -- EVERYONE -- EVERY DEPARTMENT INCLUDED. Believe me when your budget is cut, you'll find many ways to eliminate WASTE. The burden will be with the people who know their department and work so are best able to know what can, cannot be cut.

From: pschools@necomm.com

- I was a student at USM when the "Talloires Declaration" was adopted. USM looked for more green ways to run the school and be generally more sustainable. In doing so, they realized that they could save a great deal of money simply by shutting off the lights. My suggestion, though simple, is to shut off the lights in all state office buildings after hours. I live in Augusta and see the lights on every day/every night in the Burton Cross Building for example. Shutting off these lights and the other state office building's lights would save money and it would help to save a little piece of the environment (less carbon leeching into the air, less light bulb replacement, etc). Thank you for your consideration!

From: Kimberly Duplisea; 132 Old Winthrop Rd Augusta; kimberlym_82@yahoo.com

- I have a couple of ideas - I am a state employee and, although this would not save thousands of dollars, it would save some dollars. Monitor who get cell phones in the Departments. I know for a fact of at least one or two people where I work who do not travel, but yet get cell phones - for what? Also, monitor who gets Secure ID's - where I work - we actually have a clerical who gets a Secure ID - but for what? She works here - not at home. If there are other agencies doing this, then this could possibly end up saving money.
- At the risk of giving away more money than you want to, why not incorporate the Rent and Real Estate Tax Refund program into the Income Tax program? With a check-mark, income tax payers could indicate that they wish to take advantage of the R&RE Tax Refund. There could be a space provided for the Real Estate Taxes (or Rent) paid, and you would already know their Maine Adjusted Gross Income. This could be done with I-file or Tele-file or paper filing. Voila! No expense for printing the multi-page form, mailing it, or having the paper come back. For those who tele-file income tax, they could get a post card, and for those who file income tax on paper could have a line on paper to indicate participation in the R&RETR program.

From: Ted Lindsey; 76 Barnes Point Road; tlindsey@suscom-maine.net; 729-1007

- Abolish all clean election funds.
From: Frank Rier; 9 School Bus Rd; frankrier@yahoo.com; 320-1111
- Release non-violent inmates into supervised release programs.
From: Frank Rier; 9 School Bus Rd; frankrier@yahoo.com; 320-1111

- Set all thermostats at 65 degrees in the winter and 78 degrees in the summer.
From: Frank Rier; 9 School Bus Rd; frankrier@yahoo.com; 320-1111
- No re-hiring retired workers into former position; fire all present people in that situation now.
From: Frank Rier; 9 School Bus Rd; frankrier@yahoo.com; 320-1111
- Have each department head prepare a budget for 3% cut; 5% cut; and 10% cut and send budgets to legislature to approve which ones are feasible.
From: Frank Rier; 9 School Bus Rd; frankrier@yahoo.com; 320-1111
- The Governors Failing DIRIGO Health Care Program should be shut down before it sinks this state entirely.
- The State of Maine needs to be more pro-active toward a consumption tax (Sales Tax) increase. This will not only increase our tax revenue from tourist but also from the people not paying into the states tax base by "working under the table", selling illegal substances and things of that nature. This way the consumer can make the decision on what they buy no matter if they are Rich or Poor.
From: David Burchill; PO Box 1007 Alfred, Me 04002; burchill@roadrunner.com; 651-7905
- I think this is an excellent idea. The citizens of this state are aware of many areas in state government that might be redundant, or be performing at an unacceptable level for the costs involved. As a business person I am surprised at the very modest level of "savings" you have set for your goal. I believe a goal of 50 million each year in a 2 year budget is easily attainable. Setting a "savings" goal of less than 2/10ths of one percent for this budget is like asking all state employees to drink tap water during their meetings instead of charging the state for a commercial beverage. With the above being said (the goal should be 100 million over 2 years) I make the following suggestion based on my personal experience over several years. I recommend the closing of the Career Centers throughout this state.
- Please remove all "Sanctuary State" funding. Our tax dollars should not be used to fund any church or religious related charity. We are in debt because of programs like this, and such so-called generosity is not good for our state in the long run. It's like running up a Visa bill to donate to a charity - we still have to pay, but what are we actually getting out of it?
- I would first like to say that I will never bring up a problem without a solution, nor should any one else. **SUPPORT SPLIT ENERGY. MONEY MAKING AND WASTE SAVING IDEAS FROM SPLIT ENERGY.** Here are a few ideas to make and save enough money to more than cover your needed goals. They will get better as I move forward.
 - 1) End unnecessary overtime for state employees. Instead of using the police dept. at construction areas and spending time sitting at turn around on highways. Make a sign that looks like a patrol car with flashing blue lights on the top and add a radar device that starts the lights flashing if a vehicle is going faster than you would like. The results will be the same. And eliminating that overtime could save a bundle. While on the subject of traffic, you could use those fake deer on the roads posted with the warning signs of that type of animal. Why just store them until hunting season?

- 2) Advertise and get citizens to report police officers breaking the speed limit or other laws and let them pay a few tickets or lose time from work. They should be leading by example.
- 3) I have been to a lot of state and local offices and been amazed to watch the waste of materials and workers time. They use new paper to make notes while within reaching distance is a trash can nearly full of paper that is either blank on one side or both sides. I also watched a man using a copier that needed a new toner in the middle of his project. Instead of finding a new one and reading the instructions on how to replace it, he asked “who knows how to fix this” and he was told that the girl who normally does that is out today. I watched as he looked like his world had ended then said “I guess this won’t get finished on time”. I thought he was an idiot. Finally another woman stopped what she was doing and found a toner, read the instructions and replaced it in less than one minute. I also noticed that as soon as she took over, instead of learning how to do it, he walked away for coffee. So what would be wrong with making it mandatory for all employees to learn how to do simple maintenance on office equipment? It could keep more people working with fewer interruptions with stupid questions. Last but not least. If you are supplying the coffee why not let employees bring and use their own cups? I could go on forever, but you’re after quick cash.
- 4) Long term capitol as well as helping others could be done by issuing all state citizens what I call “the Maine Card”. It is a credit card and alternate form of identification that is issued to all Mainers 18 and older. It’s a card that is primarily used for paying off taxes, state fees, licenses, fines and more. If it can not be paid off all at once payments can be made and the state collects a fair interest rate which could be a huge amount. A credit line or interest rate could be determined by the type of transportation they use, if they are signed up at a recycling center, if they are a registered voter, if they volunteer help anywhere, as well as other factors. Not how much money or property they have, in fact they should pay more if their car is not fuel efficient or they generate more waste than they recycle. I would hate to see this card used to save those well off, more money. If a payment can not be made on time it can be paid by doing community service. Also a credit limit could increase every time they vote or do something helpful for their community. Why pay to accept credit cards when you can start your own company with about 5 to 800,000 members? No other company can start off as well and it could start a trend for other states to copy.
- 5) Quick cash can be had by taking it from what you pay out on the front end to our school departments while increasing their share of funds at the same time. Sounds impossible, but it is very practical, educational and great for the environment. I call it my “Key Idea”. Nearly if not everyone in the state of Maine owns a key that is no longer in use due to job, lock, auto’s, location and other changes in their lives. But they never throw it further than a junk drawer or container. If you could get all the third to fifth graders to collect them all, they would have well over 1.5 million keys. Most keys are made of brass or nickel covered brass and scrap brass can sell for over \$.50 per pound. It takes about 15 keys to make a pound and that equals 7.5 million dollars. But don’t stop there. By educating these students about other junk items made from the same material like old faucets, locks, hinges, door

lock sets, screws, old fittings, and too much more to list here. That 7.5 million could be multiplied by 100 or more equaling (\$750,000,000.00.) which I believe would go a long way to meeting or exceeding your needed cash flow problems. The reason I chose these kids is they are old enough to learn and participate yet young enough to go door to door asking for scrap keys without alarming or threatening home owners or tenants. The next year you could gather copper which sells for more, then aluminum, then stainless, then paper and so on. But please use this money wisely. Do not use it for sport programs, or other wasteful things. Split Energy could be the best investment you could possibly make as these were some of the ideas I planned on using to raise needed funds for my project. Split Energy has hundreds of other ideas it had planned to share with the government in order for them to save or make more money. Actions we make today, could determine if there is a tomorrow.

From: Allwell; Allwell@splitenergy.com

- Shut down Dirigo Health. It's a money hog that's going to bankrupt us.
- Divest unneeded state assets. This doesn't decrease any services and increases the tax base.
- Eliminate the Maine Arts Commission.
- Streamline the State's purchasing and financing of health care by consolidating the administration of MaineCare, the State Employee and Retiree Health Benefit Plan, and Dirigo Health Plan into a new independent Maine Health Care Purchasing and Finance Agency focused exclusively on purchasing high quality health care in a cost effective manner.
 - > Move the MaineCare program out of DHHS to the new agency.
 - > Move the State Employee and Retiree Health Benefit Program out of DAFS to the new agency.
 - > Move the Dirigo Health Program to the new agency.
 - > Eliminate the Governor's Office of Health Policy and Finance.
 - > Make modifications to support agencies such as Maine Health Data Organization and the Maine Quality Forum to reflect new organizational structure.

Each of these programs has or is in the process of moving toward becoming purchasers of health care that use fiscal agents or administrative service organizations to administer their benefit plans. By consolidating into a single agency they will be in a stronger position to implement these initiatives, to realize efficiencies in administering their programs and to achieve savings from coordinated purchasing of health care. Their legacy agencies would also benefit. In the case of the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department would be freed of much of the burden of administering MaineCare that has so dominated its time and resources and re-focus on its core functions and complete the merger begun more than four years ago.

- Get rid of the following - they are NOT ESSENTIAL to the running of this state:
 Draft of the Governor's Budget 123 Maine Legislature 1st Regular Session, 2007

Arts Administration	\$814,045.00
Arts General Grants	\$357,051.00
Arts Sponsored Programs	\$420,648.00
Atlantic Salmon Commission	\$741,288.00
Blueberry Commission	\$1,595,000.00

Boating Facilities Fund	\$1,746,408.00
Building and Grounds Operations	\$10,707,107.00
Certified Seed Fund	\$1,069,789.00
Farms for the Future Program	\$250,000.00
Lobster Promotion Council	\$436,000.00
Lottery Operations	\$4,749,705.00
Maine Public Broadcasting Corporation	\$2,250,700.00
Milk Commission	\$1,921,839.00
Mining Operations	\$321,244.00
New Century Program Fund	\$95,000.00
Office of Tourism	\$7,321,984.00
Off-Road Recreational Vehicle Program	\$4,511,978.00
Outdoor Heritage Fund	\$1,144,926.00
Personnel Services at the Blaine House	\$557,958.00
Potato Board	\$1,417,526.00
Potato Quality Council	\$200,418.00
Seed Potato Board	\$811,752.00
Snow Grooming Property Tax Exemption Reimbursement	\$18,565.00
Total	\$42,289,835.00

- Have all purchasing of items consolidated and executed by one department for government and schools.
- Institute TABOR to slow the hemorrhagic bleed of Maine taxes.
- Police doing road construction detail on overtime or straight time. Have the contractors supply their own road watch instead at a lower rate
- Why do inmates sit on their butts in jail when they can be cleaning up our roads and highways, saving the public works for repairing roads instead?
- Harbor patrol ,marine patrol, coast guard, why do we need 3 agencies that do the same thing in one river?
- Consolidate the U.M. camps and cut there spending. Cut the over all spending in state gov. We have to follow a budget because can't get money we haven't got so why does the gov. think they can spend money they don't have?????????
- Standardization is always more efficient and helps reduce costs. This may be as small as standardizing all the printers so that bulk buying of printer cartridges is less expensive. It may also be representation based on population and not county lines. Just like the school consolidation was controversial so will be changing representation. But having each person share the same amount of influence and representation is equality and fairly spread to all.

From: Marjorie DeSanctis; desanm@mmc.org; 662-7196

- I have a great idea for making the state more money! I believe if the people that ride bicycles on the road want motorist to share the road, I say they should have to have a license plate on there bike and they should have to register there bike every year. The fee could be \$5.00 or more. The reason why I would like to see license plates on bicycles is because some bicyclists don't obey the rules of the road. I would like to have a plate number that way if they did something illegal, I and other motorist would have a number to report them by. I feel some of the bicyclists think they own the road and they don't have to get over so that motorist can pass they safely. As an experience driver I believe

that this would help keep our Maine roads safer.

From: springbrook06@aol.com

- To save money in all areas of state spending, the state should ask for charitable donations from Maine citizens. The state could provide a downloadable and printable PDF form on the internet that Maine people can fill out and check a box next to the areas in state government they want to donate money to like adult education, healthcare programs, or highway and bridge maintenance.
- I can see a huge savings in getting rid of a lot of state/county cars. Portland commissioners have county cars. I do not have a county car and I still make it to work everyday. The savings in maintenance/insurance, replacing and other things will reduce the county budgets. There is always a fight with the counties trying to justify expenses. Their budgets would be reduced here to save not only the tax payers but the State Budget. This also applies to other government jobs where they have a car for use. I believe that if they must keep a car for "official" driving trips, they could use a few of the cars they have as pool cars, they would have to place an order for them and return them when done. Many of the state cars out there now are used for personal uses. This could be stopped.
- I would like to see is the Blaine House cut down on the amount of staff that is given to their disposal i.e. multiple cooks, housekeepers, reduce the amount of social parties they give. I really think the Blaine House occupants should live and manage the home like the money has to come from their pocket. *From: Terry Weston; westonx2@aol.com*
- The whole state in general every department should live within their budgets. If it's not a public safety issue then it can wait. Beautification and gardens can wait until our financial situation has improved. *From: Terry Weston; westonx2@aol.com*
- Is if we are doing the work on the budget and helping figure out how to cut costs, shouldn't I or anyone else that comes up with some ideas get paid what a politician gets paid. I'm doing the same work am I not ? Must be nice to sit back and be able to vote yourself a raise whenever they feel like it.... can I do that ? Nope, maybe its time that some of these politicians do something for the greater good instead of for their own pockets. How about a pay cut across the board, after all we are doing some of the work for free. I do have a question as far as this suggestion box on how to cut the budget...how much did this idea cost to set up a section of a website entirely for this purpose, and how many people worked on it ? I would very much like to know. If you want to hear more I have a ton more to say especially about banks, and how they are fleecing the average citizen.... on other tax related suggestions.... on budgeting, the medical field and stem cell research, and just to add a little flavor how about universal healthcare and the insurance companies. Oh yeah can't forget about the livable wage debate either as in essence it is basically the same debate as universal healthcare, with just a different subject attached to it. I have a ton of ideas and things to say and your more than welcome to have me speak about them anytime and anywhere. Thank you for your time and consideration....and yes I do request a follow up in pertaining to my questions, heck I would even go in front of the state budget committee to express any of these ideas in a heartbeat.

From: Alan Smith; 4 Lazy Brook Lane, North Waterboro ME 04061;

amsj02@hotmail.com ; 247-5548

- Modify the Sex Offender Registry. It has become a Witch Hunt. Help support the true nature of rehabilitation by welcoming these people into the communities in which they live by knowing them, befriending them, and supporting them in work opportunities.

Monitor their activities as necessary around children. This system is currently driven by fear and alienation and it is costly. We should be more concerned about the sexual and physical abuse which happens everyday in your neighbors home, the Catholic Church, and perhaps in your own home.

- Eliminate "street sweepers." You know.... those useless, polluting machines which require we move our cars every week so they can move the dust around to the other side of the street. A waste of our money and harmful to the environment.
- Eliminate the 511 travel information program. I am a commercial driver and have stopped using it. The voice prompts rarely get the city location correct- even using perfect English... and I have no accent. The traffic reports are completely inaccurate for what is actually happening on the roads. This is a waste of our tax dollars.
- This is a suggestion for increased revenue not a spending cut, but perhaps a good idea anyway since paying it is completely optional for the taxpayer. Mainers love their "vanity plates". You see them everywhere. You see three in my driveway. They are a cheap way of making a statement and having some fun. The web site for selecting a plate is simple and easy to use and lets you know immediately if the plate you want is available. It even shows you what it will look like. My suggestion is to offer a menu of various plate designs at increasing increments so that the residents of...let's say Scarborough or Cape Elizabeth...can show a little more "vanity" on their Lexus' than the folks in Cornish do on their Silverados. Keep the basic vanity plate priced as it is, but offer a "blueberry" plate for \$35 a year. Maybe a "moose" plate for \$50. The "puffin" plate would be \$200...and the coveted "lighthouse" plate...well you get the idea. It would cost very little to develop and print the needed graphics. So most every extra dime is new revenue for the state. The best part is that it appeals to people's need to show off. Let's give the rich an "opportunity" to pay more if they choose to. Maybe if this takes off we can generate enough revenue to offer a "black fly" plate at a rate below the current cost. Perfect for the F-150 from Brownfield. With all these expensive new license plates, I might start a business marketing tamper resistant license plate holders.

From: Fosco Picchi; PO Box 22 Cornish, ME 04020; foscop@adelphia.net; 625-4111

- Electronic time cards for those employees who work in offices - I work for the state and know that many people show up 10-15 minutes (plus) late every day, take an hour lunch when they only have a half hour and leave 10 minutes early....that adds up over time.
- From: Stacey Chandler; Richmond*
- If you could stop relatively all gov. agencies from spending all the excess monies in their budgets at the end of the year just because they have to get rid of it so they can show they needed it, thus ask for more the following year, you would find much of the needed money your looking for. I worked in a state agency and Know this is a common practice among many State Sectors. i.e. They Park Service all sectors, DHS, Some Sectors of the Education Department, The DOT, etc. etc. If you look into it you will see a big spending spree at the end of each year as these agencies are so afraid if they have any money left over, they're budgets will not grow, remain the same, or possible even be cut. I've seen this practice in the School Depts. Parks and Rec. Depts. DHS, DOT all Sectors, Town Offices, The list is endless. It Should be very easy to look into!

From: James W. Dunn; jwdwinggss@hotmail.com

- Liquor licensing renewals, as they are currently done, are time consuming and wasteful. Every year a four page app must be completed, regardless of whether any changes have

occurred or not. Every year it requires diagrams of the building and sales figures which are already available. Every year it requires ownership data and every year the licensee must pay for public notices in the paper. This goes to the town and consumes the time of the Town Clerks, and the governing authority, and a hearing is held. Then it's back to the licensee and then back to the state. It could be done much more efficiently. Have a renewal that says if nothing has changed in ownership or the physical layout of the facility then the licensee can mail it back in with their signature attesting to that, along with the appropriate fee for the license with a copy to the town. If a town objects they can notify the state within 30 days. You would save time and money.

From: Tony Palminteri; tonypalminteri@yahoo.com

- Raise current sales tax to 6 or 7%

From: Susan; Portland, Maine

- Raise lodging tax to 9% (leave restaurants at 7%) Add service tax of 5% for lawyers and similar professionals

From: Susan; Portland, Maine

- Thank you for this opportunity to share, kudos to you all. Speaking with 20 years experience and having been the former Chief Technology Officer to the \$1B Motorola Internet and Networking Group and having been directly involved during 2006 and 2007 with numerous State of Maine Information Technology related programs, proposals and projects. I strongly urge you to appoint an independent (outside of OIT) technology ombudsman to review, audit and report the astronomical number of opportunities to consolidate and streamline past present and proposed automation initiatives. I have never witnessed such inefficiency in over twenty years of service to the industry. Please do not hesitate to contact me for further dialog.

From: Robert E. Stewart, Sr.; 5 Russell Farm Road; bob@bobstewart.com; 284-3120

- Listen to the recommendations of the Brookings institute study.
- Increase lodging taxes. No, it's not a cost SAVINGS per se, but is an overall effort to balance our budget. It puts the financial burden on those from out of state. Reducing property tax, but increasing taxes on services is robbing Peter to pay Paul and solves nothing.
- Reduce the amount paid for travel.

From: Chris Russell; E5@maine.rr.com

- Allow citizens to interact more via the internet. Have DMV and other interactive kiosks at or near Malls.

From: Chris Russell; E5@maine.rr.com

- Every government building should have solar panels.

From: Chris Russell; E5@maine.rr.com

- Reduce the printing of paperwork across all departments and move towards a more paperless system.

From: Chris Russell; E5@maine.rr.com

- Set all thermostats at 68 in winter and 75 in the summer.

From: Chris Russell; E5@maine.rr.com

- Replace every light switch with a motion activated switch, and every state building should use compact fluorescent or other low energy bulbs, and future buildings should be designed so as to maximize the usage of sunlight.

From: Chris Russell; E5@maine.rr.com

- Let the Maine Native Tribes have back all their land that is now state parks and reserve land and let them manage them (undeveloped) for all of us but ensure public access for eternity.
From: Chris Russell; E5@maine.rr.com
- Create a Maine Civilian Conservation Corps to work on projects throughout the state. People that are receiving welfare and that are willing and able to work should be required to give something back (for fair pay) and this would help provide training for future jobs.
From: Chris Russell; E5@maine.rr.com
- Evaluate and eliminate third party, out of state/country IT system development and programming contracts and conduct software development from within.
From: Joe McAllister; 16 Wildwood Lane, Gray ME; kelciecoll@maine.rr.com; 657-7375
- Hire qualified, educated individuals. Stop the good ole boy hiring and promoting practices. Promote based on quality work and accomplishment, not on who you know or are related to. Eliminate bringing back retired workers. Use them on a consultant only basis. This and the above idea will allow for new ideas, it will allow hiring of college grads from within the state. It will allow IT systems and code to be developed and maintained in-house. What good does owning the code developed by outside contractors if you have no one in house who can work on it.
From: Joe McAllister; 16 Wildwood Lane, Gray ME; kelciecoll@maine.rr.com; 657-7375
- Eliminate "working from home" unless the work can be verified and time accounted for.
From: Joe McAllister; 16 Wildwood Lane, Gray ME; kelciecoll@maine.rr.com; 657-7375
- Keep closer tabs on loaned vehicles, or laptops "stolen" and then replaced.
From: Joe McAllister; 16 Wildwood Lane, Gray ME; kelciecoll@maine.rr.com; 657-7375
- Simplify the State Tax system.
From: Joe McAllister; 16 Wildwood Lane, Gray ME; kelciecoll@maine.rr.com; 657-7375
- Control the amount of "meetings" attended, or at least force agencies to justify time spent in meetings.
From: Joe McAllister; 16 Wildwood Lane, Gray ME; kelciecoll@maine.rr.com; 657-7375
- Cut down on the computer turn over time, computers can last longer than the states current turn-over. Develop in-house hardware repair instead of maintaining high cost contracts. Once again, you can make use of in-state home grown talent. Keep the money in the state. Stop purchasing full blown desktop software when users only use 1/10th of the software that is being paid for.
From: Joe McAllister; 16 Wildwood Lane, Gray ME; kelciecoll@maine.rr.com; 657-7375
- Consolidate towns and counties. Deny break away efforts. When Maine became a state what are now the towns of North Yarmouth, Yarmouth and Cumberland (as well as parts of Pownal, New Glouster and Harpswell were all included in the one town of North Yarmouth. Hugh savings would be realized and improved service to citizens should result.

- Raise the driving age to 19 years with a high school diploma or 21 without a high school diploma. Young problem drivers are a problem and expense for government at all levels. More time for school and other constructive activities would produce positive benefits in addition to the reduced enforcement problems for police and courts.
- Enforce existing laws so the "underground employers", "independent contractors" and other scofflaws are denied refuge. The additional revenues received would allow reduction in taxes for those of us now paying more than our share in taxes, unemployment insurance and workers comp premiums. Just enforcing wage and hour laws would produce a surge in "recorded" economic activity, and produce revenues to allow savings for all tax payers.
- Eliminate TIF's and other corporate subsidies. They do not serve a legitimate public interest and burden other tax payers.
- Consolidate the oversight of state gaming...including eliminating "boards and commissions" that oversee this area, and relying on staff with expertise to make such licensing decisions...as is done in other areas of state government. (This includes the lottery...and move liquor to the state police, who is already enforcing it.)
- Because I was a foster parent for a number of years, I was able to see clearly that there are huge state dollars that are spent every year on items that are not necessary. For instance, why is a caseworker insistent on purchasing a "brand new bicycle" for a foster child that already has a bicycle? I argued with this case worker, but she insisted that "she" wanted to buy my foster daughter a new bicycle. And she did. She took my foster daughter to Wal-Mart, with a State of Maine voucher and purchased the bike. She also bought her a new helmet, again not a necessary expense as we had already provided one to our foster daughter. In addition to this, I am aware of numerous circumstances where the Department purchases beds for children to sleep in when the foster home they are being placed in does not have an available bed. This is acceptable except that when the child moves, the bed does not go with them. I would like someone to investigate how many beds, cribs, toddler beds and bunk beds the state purchases every year. Why aren't these beds used again for other children coming into care? What about all of the infant seats and car seats that the Department has purchased? I believe all totaled, it would shock most Maine people at how much money is being spent and how little inventory the state actually retains. It is time for Maine to tighten-up on the spending. And this is one Department that seems to have an endless supply of funding. It appears that there is no accountability.

From: Vickie Decker; 365 Lakeview Drive, South China, ME 04358; 445-2017

- Using OFPR budget figures, it appears that the average biennial budgets for the major cabinet-level agencies, Legislature, Judicial Branch and Secretary of State increased by approximately \$1.02574 billion between FY98/99 and FY 06/07. Of this increase, Education, DHHS and Corrections account for \$1.02327 billion, leaving all other major agencies with a net total increase of just under \$2.5 million. (This includes the establishment of OIT and other consolidations, which reduces the DAFS budget but presumably increases the budgets of most other agencies, making it a wash.) Because these agencies have not even come close to keeping up with inflation, the end result is that they have lost purchasing power, meaning that their budgets have effectively been reduced. With the exception of Education, HHS and Corrections, all state agencies have been slashing budgets, searching continuously for savings and living on shoestrings for

the past ten years. They simply have no more to give, and you're fooling yourselves if you think otherwise. There are no more efficiencies to achieve, no room for so-called "streamlining," no more waste to eliminate (at least not sufficient to solve your self-imposed problem). To achieve this savings target (which itself represents an abrogation of your budgetary responsibilities), you must now look at entire agencies and/or programs. Accordingly, eliminating DECD will save you about \$12 million; getting rid of Marine Resources will save about \$9.5 million, and axing Conservation would save about \$22 million. You choose; one or all of them. This is the only way, as continued piecemeal, across-the-board cuts will destroy the viability of hundreds of programs within dozens of agencies. Death by a thousand cuts, if you will. Or, you could take the money from where the vast majority of it is: Education and HHS; their budgets have increased by about \$1 billion over the past ten years, and we know from experience that \$10 million - or even \$30 million - doesn't mean a thing to them. One further thought: Your Quixotic quest for \$10 million in savings is very likely costing nearly that much in staff time and other expenses as agencies agonize over yet more ridiculous demands, and scramble to make impossible reductions while trying to faithfully pursue their statutory missions.

- People ask why NH and other neighboring states do not have the taxes that Maine has! They don't need them because people from Maine shop and buy in those neighboring states! Maine has taxed its residents to the point of forcing them to travel a little further to avoid the taxes. Is this so hard to understand?? Do the people in power have no grasp of reality?? CUT TAXES, give the people back their money so they can afford to spend it in Maine! Maybe Maine will not need be the Tax State that will kill itself from the inside.

From: Neal R Wooley; 56 Oak Hill Road Otisfield, ME 04270; n.r.wooley@justice.com; 627-7092

- WHO EVER GAVE BICYCLES THE SAME RIGHTS AS MOTORIST SHOULD BE PUT IN TO A NUT HOUSE FOR 5 YEARS (OK INSPECTIONS, INSURANCE CARDS, WHERE'S THEIRS? IF THEY HAVE THE SAME RIGHTS THEN THEY HAVE THE SAME RESPONSIBILITIES!!!!)
- Every other insuring entity in the health industry including Medicare uses CPT codes for billing and reimbursement. MaineCare has Z codes which are not compatible with the CPT codes which are almost universal. Why not use the CPT codes with which everyone else is familiar? This would probably allow more integration capabilities in the databases in the healthcare industry, provide continuity across the board for health professionals billing the State under MaineCare, and allow medical billing personnel to carry their skills into State employment without having to reeducate themselves to a whole new system of coding.

From: Kathleen Molatch; Eastbrook; kcmolatch@gmail.com; 565-8846

- Instead of the government competing with private business, work with them in helping the economy grow. For example: Career Centers.

From: Julia Comeau; jacomeau63@gmail.com

- Every time someone in the legislature proposes a new bill, there should be a form filled out on the pros and cons as to how it would affect the short and long term governmental administrative cost and how this new law or mandate could affect the business climate, taxpayers, and/or communities that it as it relates. Clean up a lot of the waste that is now

going on within the state's government.

From: Julia Comeau; jacomeau63@gmail.com

- We should tax all 2nd homes, whose owners do not have a primary residence in Maine, at 125% of the full assessed value. Also create a tax for all waterfront/waterview property that is purchased and razed within the first 10 years. These McMansions are destroying the character of Maine of which our tourism depends on greatly. I'd also reduce all road widening programs. If traffic is horrible people will be less likely to spread into the countryside. This will reduce the costs of services. I would also increase taxes on new homes that are outside a designated urban density center unless they are farms or other similar properties. Or decrease taxes on homes that fall within a designated urban density center. Part of the increased spending incurred by our state is because of its spread out rural nature. It's only going to get worse as roads and bridges crumble. They'll need to be fixed, and so will new roads constructed to allow all the mind-numbing sprawl. Southern Maine is turning into Massachusetts. And on the bridge subject. We need some aesthetic design standards. While the Waldo Hancock bridge is nice. The Casco Bay bridge is an eyesore that feels like you are on any other highway bridge in the nation. Even the Lamps are disgusting and non-descript. The old bridge had character and beauty.

From: Chris Russell; E5@maine.rr.com

- Employees of the State of Maine are automatically signed up for Anthem Blue Cross free of charge to the employee. The cost to the State of Maine is about \$600.00/month. Many of the employees have no need for the insurance because they have other insurances, but are forced to take it at a huge expense to the state. Please consider this a tremendous potential cost savings!!!

From: Rebecca Lee; 20 Silas Adams Rd. Gray, ME; leerb@supship.navy.mil; 442-2553

- Stop having two license plates. Many people don't use them, and some cars don't even have a place to put them.

From: Clifford Shamrock; shammies29@hotmail.com

- When you buy items/materials to run the government, shop around for the best buy for the money and longest lasting like us little people have to.

From: Clifford Shamrock; shammies29@hotmail.com

- My idea is for the consolidation of the following Counties:

CONSOLIDATING 16 COUNTIES OF THE STATE OF MAINE TO 8 COUNTIES
CONSOLIDATE:

County	WASHINGTON	HANCOCK	TOTALS:	
Pop 2000	33,941	51,791	85,732	
Sq Miles	2,569	1,589	4,158	
Pop Per/Sq Mile	13.2	32.6	20.6	SAVINGS
County Employees	9	11	20	6 - 8
County Seat	1	1	2	- 1
Municipalities	47	37	84	
Road Miles	1,212	1,251	2,463	
Interstate Miles	-0-	-0-	-0-	

County	FRANKLIN	OXFORD	TOTALS	
Pop 2000	29,467	54,755	84,222	
Sq Miles	1,698	2,078	3,776	
Per/Sq Mile	17.4	26.3	22.3	SAVINGS
County Employees	10	13	23	9 - 11
County Seat	1	1	2	- 1
Municipalities	21	36	57	
Road Miles	944	1711	2,655	
Interstate Miles	-0-	-0-	-0-	

County	KENNEB	WALDO	KNOX	LINCOLN	TOTALS	
Pop 2000	117,114	36,280	39,618	33,616	226,628	
Sq Miles	868	730	366	456	2,420	
Per/Sq Mile	134.9	49.7	108.2	73.7	93.6	SAVINGS
County Empl	9	11	15	13	48	32 - 35
County Seat	1	1	1	1	4	- 3
Municipalities	29	24	18	20	91	
Road Miles	1607	1115	708	795	4,225	
Interstate Miles	53	1	-	-	54	

County	SAGADA	ANDROS	CUMBER	YORK	TOTALS	
Pop 2000	35,214	103,793	265,612	186,742	591,361	
Sq Miles	254	470	836	991	2,551	
Per/Sq Mile	138.6	220.8	317.7	188.4	231.8	SAVINGS
County Empl	13	11	11	13	48	32 - 35
County Seat	1	1	1	1	4	- 3
Municipalities	11	14	27	29	81	
Road Miles	487	1153	2359	2223	6,222	
Interstate Miles	18	17	69	40	144	

CONCLUSION:

This consolidation of Counties would have an immediate savings of 79 to 89 positions. If 79 @ \$40,000.00 (with salary, health benefits, s/l, a/l, workers comp, unemployment matching, etc.) equals \$3,160,000.00 or \$3,560,000.00 for 89 employees. Also, closing 8 sets of offices and their related outreach offices will have another \$4,000,000.00 to \$10,000,000.00 savings. The positive effect of this suggestion is a more stream-lined County working structure and being fair to all of Maine's population. There will be a more uniform spread of roads, square mile accountability, people per square mile, County employees per County, municipalities per County. There may be other savings that I may not be aware of at this time. At the current time Aroostook County is and has been discriminated against on all fronts in that we continue to be deprived of a good Interstate system up to the end of the line – Fort Kent, Madawaska or Van Buren. It is irrelevant which town is the terminus – but that it does indeed end up here. Even Hawaii has an

Interstate system even though it does not directly connect to the mainland. The common joke a few years ago was, "Come to Houlton, where the Interstate stops and the trails begin." Yes, that commercial played on the radio for a long time. If Aroostook cannot be dealt a better hand amongst the Counties – then it should be "just" that the other 15 account for their actions in working with the Maine population that they cover. Look at it, 366 square miles for Knox, 254 for Sagadahoc, 6,672 for Aroostook. Does this make any sense? It would be stupid to split up Aroostook and create more bureaucracy. The ideal is to make them as even as is possible – being fair. This would not affect the 2 Congressional Districts. Our towns and Cities have a hard-enough time maintaining the roads of which we have a large share. On the other side of the State, we have such lower numbers in "all" the other Counties. We are paying for more road improvements and on top of that we have the worse weather for it. It's like we're being penalized for living here – in Maine. I was born and raised in Fort Kent. I know what is going on down State. I have lived all my life here (now in Frenchville) except for my 2 years in the US Army and almost 3 years in Connecticut. Maine is God's Country. However, it is time that this injustice be looked at and acted upon. No, it is not Mission Impossible. Anything is possible when you put your mind to it. Sell it to the Maine people. We couldn't even get Dickey Dam. Now, the powers-that-be do NOT want the windmills.

*From: Manzer Belanger, Jr.; 19 Starbarn Ave Frenchville ME 04745;
manz7@hotmail.com; 543-6295*

- Our largest financial crisis is health care. I have worked in the field for 15 years. HMO's DO NOT WORK. Turning illness into a business DOES NOT WORK. In the 60's, I lived on an Island near Belfast. We had two doctors who charged \$10 a visit, and they usually made house calls. Can't imagine that now. The answer to your budget problem is an obvious one- Maine needs to go GREEN. We are up there fighting for it, but we still ship overly processed food loaded with toxic additives into our state. We still allow and promote pesticide use. Then everyone is perplexed because those same toxins create health problems with asthma, diabetes, obesity and addiction. I worked at MMC for several years, and was disgusted with the system. It's a good hospital in that its employees are dedicated to healing. But they can only heal with what they are taught, which is to push medication, costly procedures and tests that rack up enormous medical costs. The whole system is a joke. Physicians aren't in charge of health care- big business is. THAT DOES NOT WORK. Alternative Medicine DOES. This state would save a TON of money by forcing insurance companies to pay for Holistic Health Care, and we would see less obesity, diabetes, addiction, cardiac issues, etc. We have land here- we should be using it to grow our own organic food, eliminating toxic ANYTHING, and encouraging people to seek alternative health practices. We can't replace conventional medicine- we need both to make it all work. The problem is there is no happy medium- people are either all or none, and that doesn't work, either. We have many great naturopaths who work much cheaper than medical facilities, because there is no outrageous cost for unnecessary procedures. Other countries are already existing this way, and much healthier than us! For instance, did you know that Asian women have almost NO breast cancer? REASON? They have soy in their diets every day. They eat healthier and live better. Mammograms cost thousands of dollars and are still not foolproof. I opted out of having one, and had heat thermography done instead. It takes 15 years for a lump to be large enough to be detected on a mammogram, but

thermography picks it up instantly. And thermography is used AFTER a mammogram in conventional medicine to determine the seriousness of a suspected lump. Thermography? \$150.00, and the results are reviewed by licensed physicians who specialize in women's health issues. No breast crushing, no waiting for results, no run around. All of those things cost money. The thermographer has a little office, no overhead, no crazy scheduling. Our state suffers because we have a lot of welfare people who get no education, have to live on food stamps, which means they can't afford good food. Alternative Health Practitioners are trained to recognize health problems that go beyond their scope of healing. They work with a network of conventional MD's and specialists to help heal patients. It's a merger that WORKS, when given a chance. Why should Mainecare pay a \$200 ER bill for a patient who has a pinched nerve, when an alternative healer can help them learn to fix it themselves for \$30?

- I believe that the child support system needs to be overhauled. There is a loop hole that as long as you're on SSI you are exempted from child support. One example is you have two separate situations one person working a low wage job taking home \$600.00 a month after taxes and having child support taken out of their check, and the next group of people receiving SSI payments getting the same \$600.00 a month. Each has clear on an average the same amount each month but only one is forced to pay child support the other is exempted. I have seen and heard people on SSI who have boast they can't touch their check. I think income is income and even if the state collected \$10.00 a week or a month in child support from people on SSI it would help the state with its financial burden. I have seen some people on SSI not all but many on disability payments use their monies for tattoo's, alcohol, cigarettes and other none essential items. I think having them contribute something back may help.

From: Hartley West; 1091 Oliver Hill Rd. Dover-Foxcroft, Maine 04426

- Stop wasting our tax dollars funding the campaigns of those seeking elective office. We spend millions on this nonsense and we, the citizens, receive no benefit from the system. Legislators, get your own funding from your parties and your supporters and end the use of our tax dollars for your personal political ambitions. The stewards of all other resources are guarding their turf at this point. They will not offer help. Ignore this exercise and just make the state profitable.

From: Joseph Kenneally, DMD; 16 Rivers Edge Drive Kennebunk ME 04043; jkenneally@roadrunner.com; 967-4405

- The state of Maine should implement telecommuting positions for as many workers as possible. Not only will this save the state money by eliminating the cost for office space as well as all the utilities and supplies that go with it, but it would also reduce the wear on roads from commuters, and of course reduces green house emissions. Offering telecommuting would also open up jobs to residents living outside the Augusta area.

From: Kate Kastelein; Edgecomb; kate.kastelein@gmail.com

- Allow telecommuting for as many employees as possible.
- The town of Richmond just got some state matching funds for improving the "look" of main street... stop all programs like that.
- Software development in the state is a joke, you hire cheap programmers that do bad work and take too long and go way over budget. Hire better people for shorter amounts of time.
- Stop any form of "marketing" for social programs and tourism.

- Invest no money in getting people to stop smoking/drinking/doing drugs.
- Stop using Maine Army National Guard equipment to search for marijuana plants.
- Stop putting non-violent drug offenders in the courts and jails. It seems to me that this is simply an exercise in looking for "politically safe" things to "cut" because the as one of the worst states for taxes in the country, it's not like there's a shortage of excess! If politicians were less concerned with keeping their jobs for the maximum length of time and more concerned with what's best for the state, we wouldn't be having this conversation. It's not hard... just cut everything and give my money back :)
- How about this for a money saving idea: Inform all top administrators that they will receive, as a bonus at the end of budget year, 1/4 of any unspent monies in their budgets. See how penny pinching everyone will become.
From: Rachel Brewster; raisingcane@verizon.net
- Stop the Federal matching funds gimmick. So much money is wasted on projects that we don't need in the first place by justifying them by thinking this is a free gift from the fed. Obviously its not, we get whacked on the fed/state tax both. The threat of use it or loose it is ridicules. We probably would loose the fed funds but it would lower the state tax. We have to start somewhere to curb this capitalistic enslavement.
From: Maine Heritage Since (1635)
- I would like to propose that the Maine State Library eliminates their circulating collection. With resources available at the UMA Katz Library, the Lithgow Public Library, and the outstanding Law and Legislative Library, the State Library's circulating collection is a duplication of service.
- Ok casinos.
- In this day and age there is no reason why we have both a Sheriff's Department and a State Trooper branch. There is now repetition of all personnel and services, for no other reason than 'territorial issues' which is just ludicrous.
From: Sylvia Hudson; 375 Riverside Drive; leftmom@ghi.net
- Limit growth in spending year-over-year to revenue growth. Do not use projected revenue growth, use actual. This can be accomplished with a one year lag. For example if revenue growth in 2005 is 2% spending growth in 2006 will be 2%.
- Maine Department of Labor/Unemployment - Recently, I had had the misfortune of having to avail myself of the Unemployment Comp. In trying to secure employment, I was working part time for a company, that paid by direct deposit, paper copy to be sent 4 days after, every 2 weeks. When at the end of a week, one calls in, for the prior week, and one is honest and says one has worked, then until such time as a pay stub is produced(paper) and sent one does not receive unemployment compensation, which basically means one who is on unemployment and obviously really needs the money, receives nothing!!! But is sent official, threatening letter, deputy decision demanding paper pay stub, of which one does not have. Why is this system set up only for weekly pay periods? Why does the system from department to department not have the imaging that the citizen has received and therefore tons more of bureaucratic tape, personnel and reams of paper are expended? This is a very convoluted system and would be happy to speak to someone in the Governor's office concerning this. Within a Maine Department for the left hand not to know what the right hand is doing is an embarrassment and a complete monetary waste!
From: Sylvia Hudson; 375 Riverside Drive; leftmom@ghi.net; 626-3389

- Allow State Program managers to hire staff according to funded budgets. Allow State Program managers to spend the funds they procure from private and federal services. Stop the political bans on hiring and spending that force the State Managers to return money to the funders which they have procured for the State.
- Eliminate all fees and permits, and the associated staff that administers them! Examples: Local agent fee to register a vehicle, the \$2 DHHS charges me to process my ex-wife's child support.
- I am aware that a number of departments move offices and change buildings for seemingly little or no reason. Put a freeze on move of state offices and employees. There is a real loss of productivity when employees must spend time readying for a move, moving, reorganizing in a new space and acclimating to a new space/building..... Not to mention the expense that is incurred by the State hiring and paying movers to move office furniture and employees' personal items. There is also a very real expense incurred in rerouting of telephones, compute workstations, servers, and mail stops..... This all translates to \$\$\$\$\$\$.
From: Bill Walsh; P. O. Box 4601, Portland, ME 04112; billwalshjr@gmail.com
- Department Of Motor Vehicles - Allowing vehicle registration for a 2 or 3 yr period could pave the way to lower the administrative costs associated with the state annual registration requirements. Thus having the increased revenue in advance to the upcoming years could allow for better budget forecasts. Possible negatives could be: Required proof of motor vehicle insurance could be a hurdle needed to be looked at to overcome. Some type of verification I would think. Possible incentives could be: for the person registering their vehicle would be a percentage (%) discount on the advance number of years that they would request to register in advance. I believe some states presently do allow for multiple year advance registration.
From: Brad Leach; 31 Gray Rd. Gorham, ME 04038; dapple@maine.rr.com; 839-2092
- Phase out as much as possible the use of state cars. Do the taxpayers really need to supply state employees with vehicles? Also, have state employees pay for their own gas and minor upkeep on their state cars.
From: Bob Sprague; 106 Donworth Road, Stockholm, 04783; bergenne@ainop.com
- Rather than having many meetings in Augusta, use teleconferencing as much as possible. Time and tax money spent in going to and returning from many meetings is wasted. Have special meetings that may last for more than a day scheduled for University of Maine sites rather than expensive places like the Samoset, so that taxpayers' dollars will be doing double duty.
From: Bob Sprague; 106 Donworth Road, Stockholm, 04783; bergenne@ainop.com
- I'm not familiar enough with the inner workings of the state government and specific departments and programs to know specifically where savings can be generated. However, my proposal is to cut spending across the board by a certain percentage. I think this idea could be implemented if the streamlining and consolidation of the government gets to the point where no agreements can be reached by the parties involved on where to consolidate and cut spending. By reducing the spending for all the remaining departments, programs and services by a certain percentage amount, the cost of the cuts would be evenly distributed across the board. And I think the way to figure out what percentage decrease in government spending should be implemented is to look at the overall tax burden on us Maine residents and taxpayers and get our tax burden down to

below the national average for states. Or why not be at the bottom of the tax burden list instead of the top? Federal tax cuts have led to an increase in revenue to the federal government and I think the same principal applies to our state as well. Instead of looking at short term budgets and tax revenues, let's work long term to have a low tax burden and create a thriving and dynamic economy. This will attract businesses and workers and also keep our young people here to take advantage of what could be a state with great economic opportunities. We can achieve this great economy by cutting government spending and letting us workers in this state keep more of the money we earn. I think the lens through which we look at this issue needs to be turned around and away from the government and what it needs, to the people and what we need in the way of less government interference through high taxes. I really appreciate this forum for public input. I get a little tired of hearing about how the state government and various departments and programs need more money. We taxpayers need to keep more of the money we earn!

From: Jess Whited; jwhited@maine.rr.com

Solicitations – Products and Services

- There are consultants who cut costs for businesses by going through and systematically looking at all expenses (phone bills, electric, etc.) and get better deals from the provider, or switch providers. The consultant is paid a percentage of the amount saved by the company. This is what people do when they are trying to cut costs at home, and if you think about it, it's a very logical way to trim the fat without introducing changes that constituents might not be happy with. Plus, there is no additional cost in hiring the consultant since they are paid out of the savings. If you think this is a good idea, I think I know a consultant you might be able to use. Good luck!!

From: Merritt Carey; 29 Runnells Street Portland, ME 04860; 774-4638

- I have a suggestion for saving fuel within all the State transportation needs. My business has recently started selling and servicing scooters. These scooters get up to 100mpg! There is no need for a motorcycle license, they are extremely easy to operate, and very inexpensive. I suggest that the State look into the use of scooters for all the times and areas where they would be appropriate. For example, the State Park System, Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, Universities, Augusta Legislature, DOT, Project Management, State Police, State Prison and Jails, Couriers/Mail/Deliveries, etc. All of these areas could use the scooters as a means quick, energy efficient transportation. I would like to offer the State a discount and service package on my Scooters. Please consider this suggestion as a viable way to save an incredible amount of money on fuel costs, plus setting an example to citizens on the willingness of the State Government to change the way things are done. Other countries are way ahead of the US in alternate means of transportation...there is no reason why our State cannot work smarter, save money and contribute to the solution of fossil fuel dependence.

From: Elizabeth Mahan, Strongs Auto/Vespa Damariscotta P O Box 40 323 Main Street, Damariscotta, ME 04543; betsymahan@hotmail.com; 563-8185

- FISC Solutions is a Maine-owned company based in Lewiston. We specialize in providing outsourcing for statement and invoice printing as well as payment processing.

We can provide multiple ways for the State to save money on the processing of incoming payments such as traffic violations or user fees (retail lockbox) for various agencies. As well we provide wholesale lockbox and can provide optical character recognition serving the needs such as the Department of Revenue. We can consolidate printing invoices, statements and notices (such as annual license renewals, traffic violation payment notices and the like) – consolidating printing across agencies and departments while optimizing postage costs on any outgoing mailings. FISC serves the majority of Maine-owned banks and credit unions in item processing. Because of our core competency in clearing payment mechanisms we can offer our non-financial institutions 100% next day availability on funds – this would mean a significant savings for the state. Furthermore, consolidation of payment activity through FISC will lead to further reduction of costs and better reporting due to the consolidation of financial data and services. As a matter of reference, we are currently a service provider to FAME on the MaineAdvantage Student Loan program and we service several campuses of the University of Maine System.

From: Darell W. Davis, Account Executive; FISC Solutions, 168 Lisbon Street, Lewiston, ME 04243; ddavis@fiscsolutions.com; 782-6858x 5800