Maine AI Task Force
Draft report
Last updated: October 7, 2025

This is a current draft of the AI Task Force report for your review. The Task Force will discuss this report during its October 8 meeting.

Note – GOPIF communications staff are currently working to create a fully designed version of this report, which will include narrative collateral materials (photos, profiles, quotes, etc.), a letter from the co-chairs (to be discussed during the 10/8 meeting), a table of contents, and an executive summary.

Introductory Sections

Table of Contents

9) Areas where Maine can lead nationally

10) Implementing the Task Force's recommendations

11) Conclusion

12) Appendices (*to be added following 10/8 meeting)*
    a. Appendix – Executive Order Establishing the Maine AI Task Force
    b. Appendix – Task Force and Technical Advisory Committee Members
    c. Appendix – Description of Task Force meetings
    d. Appendix – Public comments summary
    e. Acknowledgements

Introduction: Why focus on AI?

On December 20, 2024, Governor Janet Mills signed an Executive Order[1] establishing the Maine Artificial Intelligence Task Force. At that time , about half of all U.S. states had created similar bodies to advise state policymakers on emerging AI-related technologies.[2] Maine's Task Force stands out among this group for its wide-ranging scope – whereas most other state AI task forces, commissions, or councils are exclusively focused on AI's implications for State government operations, the Governor's Executive Order charges Task Force members with also recommending ways to respond to AI's broader implications for Maine's economy and workforce, and for other public sector entities such as municipalities.

Their work comes in response to a rapid surge of technological advancements that are poised to revolutionize how people live and work. Nearly one-fifth of the U.S. workforce is classified as "highly exposed" to AI,[3] making them particularly vulnerable to job transformations driven by advancements in AI. At the same time, AI has the potential to create new jobs and businesses, improve productivity and efficiency, and reduce barriers to entry in some technical fields. The Task Force conducted their work in the context of a dynamic federal policy environment, which further reinforces the importance of state leadership on AI policy.

Defining AI

Artificial intelligence (AI) refers to computer systems that perform tasks by mimicking human-like intelligence via pattern recognition, predictive modeling, language processing, and content generation. Previous analytical and generative technologies rely on traditional logic-based coding – "if-then" models, deterministic analysis, or mechanistic processing. AI instead analyzes large amounts of data and makes inferences based on observed trends.[4] This is what makes AI so powerful – its ability to internalize new information, adapt its "thinking," and make intentional and informed decisions.

Generative AI (GenAI) is a subset of this technology referring to AI tools that leverage Large Language Models (LLMs) that are trained on large quantities of data to produce something qualitatively new. This includes natural-language chatbots like ChatGPT or Google Gemini, text-to-image models like Midjourney or DALL-E, and text-to-video tools like Sora.

This report uses the general term "AI" to refer to the entire range of artificial intelligence technologies, including GenAI, machine learning, and agentic AI (a newer AI subset that refers to

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[1] https://www.maine.gov/governor/mills/official_documents/executive-orders/2024-12-order-establishing-maine-artificial-intelligence-task

[2] CPSAI memo

[3] https://www.brookings.edu/articles/generative-ai-the-american-worker-and-the-future-of-work/

[4] https://www.brookings.edu/articles/what-is-artificial-intelligence/

models that can engage in a greater range of independent decision-making and execution with more limited human interaction).

AI technologies are meaningfully different from prior technologies in ways that have direct implications for state governments. Unlike the Internet, social media, or other earlier technologies, AI systems can generate content, make autonomous decisions, and adapt at scale – capabilities that present new opportunities and risks for regulators to address. Several defining differences include fewer barriers for creating lifelike synthetic information; lower costs for reaching large audiences with individualized messaging; more powerful autonomy across a wider range of use cases, including in the physical world; less predictability and transparency compared to rule-based systems; and greater consumer willingness to share personal data to unlock personalized features.

This AI moment

In November 2022, the San Francisco firm OpenAI released a general-purpose AI chatbot called ChatGPT. Within two months, ChatGPT reached 100 million monthly active users, making it one of the fastest-growing consumer applications in history.[5] Other large tech companies launched their own models, while venture capital funding for AI startups surged – over half of the near-record-high venture capitalist funds in the first half of 2025 was driven by investment in AI companies.[6]

ChatGPT's launch exposed the public to a class of technologies that has existed for decades. Prior to this recent surge in popularity, AI tools were used in specialized computing labs and research settings, but with little consumer adoption. Over the past several years, AI has increasingly become part of the way that we work and live.

Businesses in every sector have moved quickly: some surveys have shown that 92% of companies plan to invest in AI over the next three years.[7] In healthcare, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration has authorized approximately 950 AI- or machine-learning-enabled medical devices since 1995, including more than 200 in 2023 alone, signaling a rapid acceleration of AI in clinical contexts.[8] In education, one in four U.S. teenagers now reports using ChatGPT for schoolwork, up from just over one in 10 the year prior.[9] In the workforce, national studies estimate that nearly one in five American

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[5] https://www.reuters.com/technology/chatgpt-sets-record-fastest-growing-user-base-analyst-note-2023-02-01/

[6] https://www.reuters.com/business/us-ai-startups-see-funding-surge-while-more-vc-funds-struggle-raise-data-shows-2025-07-15/

[7] https://www.reuters.com/business/us-ai-startups-see-funding-surge-while-more-vc-funds-struggle-raise-data-shows-2025-07-15/

[8] https://www.medtechdive.com/news/fda-ai-medical-devices-growth/728975/

[9] https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2025/01/15/about-a-quarter-of-us-teens-have-used-chatgpt-for-schoolwork-double-the-share-in-2023/

jobs involves tasks that could be replaced or substantially transformed by AI,[10] and a growing share of workers report that AI already plays a role in their day-to-day responsibilities.[11]

These developments underscore the pace at which AI is moving from experimental technology to structural force. The questions now facing policymakers are pressing and complex: How will rising demand for energy and broadband infrastructure affect state and national capacity? What protections are needed to ensure AI systems are deployed safely, responsibly, and equitably? How should liability be assigned for inaccurate or biased outputs? What steps are required to ensure that workers, students, and communities can adapt to these changes? And, critically, how can Maine capture the benefits of this new technology while mitigating its risks?

State of Maine AI actions to date

Here in Maine, in June 2023, Maine's Office of Information Technology imposed a six-month moratorium on the use of generative AI (such as ChatGPT) in executive branch agencies. This pause – ultimately extended a further three months – gave the State time to study the new technology's implications. Maine IT officials conducted risk assessments focused on security and privacy threats, examined potential bias and ethical issues, and surveyed the patchwork of evolving federal guidance and regulations. By early 2024, this work led to the publication of guiding principles and an acceptable use policy for generative AI in state government, aligning Maine's approach with emerging best practices.[12]

Federal policy context

The Task Force's work occurred concurrently with federal and other state efforts to grapple with AI policy. At the federal level, the *Take it Down Act* was signed into law in May 2025 after bipartisan support in the Congress. The bill addresses nonconsensual deepfakes and is one of the first major acts passed by Congress to tackle AI-related harm.[13]

However, other recent federal efforts have aimed to limit AI regulation. Early in his second term, President Trump rescinded a prior presidential executive order[14] that outlined an approach for safe, secure, and trustworthy development and use of AI. The summer 2025 budget reconciliation bill passed by the House of Representatives proposed a prohibition on states from enforcing for 10 years "any [state] law or regulation regulating artificial intelligence models, artificial intelligence

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[10] https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2023/07/26/which-u-s-workers-are-more-exposed-to-ai-on-their-jobs/

[11] https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2025/02/25/workers-exposure-to-ai/

[12] https://www.maine.gov/oit/sites/maine.gov.oit/files/inline-files/GenAIPolicy.pdf

[13] President Trump signs Take It Down Act, addressing nonconsensual deepfakes. What is it? (AP, 5/20/25)

[14] https://bidenwhitehouse.archives.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2023/10/30/fact-sheet-president-biden-issues-executive-order-on-safe-secure-and-trustworthy-artificial-intelligence/

systems, or automated decision systems," with some exceptions. This language was ultimately stripped from the bill before it passed into law.[15]

The White House released a national AI Action Plan in July 2025 that asserts, "AI is far too important to smother in bureaucracy at this early stage, whether at the State or Federal level. The Federal government should not allow AI-related Federal funding to be directed toward states with burdensome AI regulations that waste these funds," while also allowing that "[the Federal government] should also not interfere with states' rights to pass prudent laws that are not unduly restrictive to innovation."[16]

In the absence of greater federal action, states led by Governors across the political spectrum are taking steps to address AI's potential harms in their communities. The National Governor's Association (NGA) estimates that over 550 AI-related bills were introduced across more than 45 states in 2025, an increase from 400 in 2024 and 67 in 2023. NGA's analysis notes that these bills address the design, development, or use of AI tools and frequently touch on issues such as data privacy, transparency, reliability and effectiveness, and fairness and equity. [17]

[15] https://apnews.com/article/congress-ai-provision-moratorium-states-20beeeb6967057be5fe64678f72f6ab0

[16] https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Americas-AI-Action-Plan.pdf

[17] National Governor's Association, Legal and Regulatory Considerations Related to Artificial Intelligence (Updated), April 29, 2025. NGA has published a short summary of themes emerging among state AI regulation activities. As part of their AI policy toolkit, the National Conference of State Legislatures maintains databases of state AI-related legislation for each of the last three years, which can be accessed here: Artificial Intelligence 2025 Legislation.

Task Force process

The Task Force is co-chaired by Dr. Mary Dickinson, Executive Vice President and Chief Scientific Officer at the Jackson Laboratory, and David Daigler, President of the Maine Community College System. It is comprised of 21 individuals, including State and local officials, legislators, representatives from higher education, and business and non-profit leaders. The Task Force is supported by an 11-member Technical Advisory Committee that includes experts in technology, legal issues, Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education, energy and broadband policy, and workforce analysis. Staff from the Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future (GOPIF) and Maine's Office of Information Technology provide policy and technical support.

The Task Force, which was announced in December 2024,[18] held 12 public meetings between January and October 2025. These meetings, which were open to the public and recorded and posted on a dedicated Task Force website,[19] allowed members to hear directly from technical experts, practitioners, and state and national leaders. The Task Force's meetings, a mixture of virtual and hybrid, engaged experts from Maine and several other states, and leveraged the Task Force and Technical Advisory Committee's expertise on a wide range of AI-related topics. This work was supplemented by two opportunities for public comment; the first, in June 2025, surveyed the public about their exposure and priorities around AI, and the second, in October 2025, solicited reactions to the Task Force's draft recommendations. GOPIF staff also managed an email newsletter that announced upcoming meetings and encouraged recipients to find materials from all meetings on the Task Force website.

Task Force meetings

The first two Task Force meetings (January 31 and February 14, 2025) were designed to introduce the charges set out in Governor Mills' Executive Order and to provide information for Task Force members about the state of AI today. The Task Force also provided input about the topics they thought the Task Force should explore to address the questions posed in the Executive Order.

Between March and July 2025, the Task Force held six meetings on the topic areas that emerged as high priority: AI's implications for Maine's economy, workforce, education system, and healthcare system; AI's use in Maine's public sector (State and local); and a discussion of potential harms to Maine people that AI could create or exacerbate. In parallel, six subgroups (one focusing on each topic area above) met between May and August 2025 to generate recommendations in each of these topic areas.

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[18] https://www.maine.gov/governor/mills/news/governor-mills-signs-executive-order-establishing-task-force-artificial-intelligence-2024-12

[19] https://www.maine.gov/future/artificial-intelligence-task-force

At the Task Force's final four meetings (September 5, September 26, October 8, and October 24), they synthesized their learnings and developed their recommendations.

Structure of this Report

This report reflects months of study, analysis, and deliberation, and is intended to provide an initial set of guidance for Maine policymakers to begin to respond to the opportunities and risks of artificial intelligence. It covers many of the sectors where AI is already beginning to make itself felt in Maine, weaving together what the Task Force learned, the principles that emerged from those discussions, and recommended actions to better position the State to promote safe, equitable, and responsible AI adoption in Maine.

The report is organized according to the three charges set out in the Governor's Executive Order:

Under "**Prepare Maine's economy and workforce for the opportunities and risks likely to result from advances in AI,**" the Task Force recommends a series of actions to support Maine businesses, protect Maine workers, and understand how AI is already showing up in the Maine economy. This section examines how AI might increase productivity, create new industries, and support entrepreneurs, while also acknowledging real risks around workforce disruption in fields ranging from manufacturing to professional services.

This section also contains a deeper dive into AI's implications for Maine's education system, recognizing that Maine's schools are at the front lines of technological change; and Maine's healthcare system, with particular focus on AI tools that could improve patient health outcomes, expand access in rural communities, and ease burdens on physicians.

Under "**Protect Maine residents from potentially harmful uses of AI technologies, such as safeguarding consumer data privacy, mitigating bias in datasets, and mandating disclosure around AI utilization**," the report addresses some of the risks created or exacerbated by AI, recognizing that its rapid spread brings not only opportunity but also new forms of harm, including AI-created deepfakes, increasingly sophisticated fraud schemes, the rapid spread of mis- and disinformation, and new cybersecurity concerns for Maine's public and private sectors. This section of the report highlights some of the most pressing of these harms, and emphasizes that safety and trust must stand alongside innovation as priorities for Maine.

Finally, under "**Explore the most promising uses for State agencies, quasi-State agencies, and other public entities such as municipalities to deploy AI technologies to address capacity gaps and improve service delivery to the populations they serve**," the report examines how AI can transform the work of government itself. This section lays out some actions that State agencies and local governments could take to improve service delivery despite budgetary and staffing constraints. AI may offer opportunity for government to streamline licensing and permitting,

improve customer service, and modernize core systems. But doing so will require thoughtful investment in infrastructure, data governance, and capacity building across public institutions.

The report concludes with a section outlining some areas where Maine could become a national AI leader and initial steps the State could take to prepare to implement the Task Force's recommendations.

Recommendations

Prepare Maine's economy and workforce for the opportunities and risks likely to result from advances in AI

Topic A: Economy

Artificial intelligence holds the potential to help Maine businesses of all sizes increase productivity, competitiveness, and innovation. For large employers, AI tools can expand markets, improve business processes, and support a broader workforce by enabling participation among workers who are traditionally left out. For smaller enterprises, AI can unlock capabilities that were once out of reach, such as expanding access to business intelligence, automating routine tasks, and streamlining operations to save time and cost.

Yet adoption remains a significant hurdle, particularly for small and mid-sized firms that face inconsistent AI literacy, infrastructure gaps, and cybersecurity and data-management challenges.

Recommendations

A1) Expand entrepreneurial assistance for AI-enabled startups and other Maine businesses

The State should explore ways to enable Maine businesses to leverage AI tools to grow, support employees, and establish appropriate governance and data privacy policies, while also continuing to lower the barriers to entry for entrepreneurs looking to build new AI-powered startups in Maine. For Maine's small businesses in particular, AI can dramatically strengthen market intelligence, allow access to previously unaffordable technical capabilities, and smooth operations.

One model to consider expanding upon is the Maine Technology Institute's Maine Entrepreneurial Resource Corp, which recently launched an initiative specifically designed to equip entrepreneurs with AI skills relevant to their business. New AI-powered tools could also be developed to help businesses more easily discover and access existing financial and technical resources like tax incentives, grants, or loans.

A2) Identify and pursue new economic opportunities where AI can broaden prosperity and create good jobs

AI offers Maine promising paths for economic growth and job creation. The State should aggressively explore and cultivate economic innovation unlocked by AI, especially in areas where the State has competitive advantages and long-standing strengths. For example, new opportunities may include AI tools that improve rural health outcomes; solutions for monitoring the health of

forests, coasts, and oceans; new advances in smart manufacturing and precision agricultures; and biotechnology breakthroughs that use AI to advance animal and human health diagnostics.

As access to data underpins much AI-driven innovation, the State should also foster the production of open-source, AI-ready training data in areas of its economic priorities and pressing challenges. In a recent survey of venture capital investors, more than half of respondents cited a startup's access to good data as the factor most likely to make them stand out in a crowded field. AI-ready datasets (cleaned, anonymized, and maintained) can draw in innovators looking for raw data on which to train their AI tools.

A3) Help private sector firms, community nonprofits, and other organizations enhance cybersecurity

As AI accelerates the volume and sophistication of cyberattacks, it will be imperative that Maine's small businesses, nonprofit organizations, municipalities, and other non-public entities continue to modernize their protections against threat actors. Existing programs in Maine offer help on cybersecurity, such as subsidized access to business consultants through Maine Technology Institute's Maine Entrepreneurial Resource Corps and technical expertise from University of Maine Augusta's Cybersecurity Center and Maine Cyber Range program. The State should take steps to continue to grow supports like these.

A4) Improve access to advanced computing resources

Training AI models requires significant investment in computing power. To lower the barrier for early-stage companies to start here, Maine should explore strategies to improve access to advanced computing resources for firms that may not otherwise have relationships or financial resources to leverage top-tier AI tools. This could involve public-private partnerships, targeted incentives, or shared-use models that reduce costs for smaller actors. By investing in the underlying infrastructure upon which AI depends, Maine can help ensure that the benefits of innovation are broadly distributed across sectors and geographies.

A5) Provide regulatory predictability to support safe adoption of AI tools by Maine businesses

Regulatory predictability will be critical to helping Maine's firms adopt AI tools with confidence necessarily to globally compete. Clear, consistent guidelines around safety and consumer protections will need to be tailored to the realities of Maine's small business landscape. Incremental rulemaking, long implementation timelines, and robust stakeholder engagement can also provide firms with predictability while allowing businesses to adapt and grow alongside emerging AI capabilities.

A6) Continue to strengthen Maine's broadband and energy infrastructure to prepare for AI's impacts

AI's economic potential will only be realized if the underlying infrastructure is in place to support it. The State should assess broadband, computing, and energy infrastructure needs in light of growing AI use — particularly among small businesses and rural communities — and align infrastructure investments with economic and climate goals.

The State should consider ways to forecast AI-related demand in energy and broadband planning efforts, including capacity gaps, interconnection needs, and data center siting considerations; evaluate legacy industrial or public-sector sites that could support modular data infrastructure; explore shared-use models for high-performance compute infrastructure that reduce costs for small businesses, startups, and public agencies; and develop a playbook for responding to data center development project opportunities.

Topic B: Workforce

AI technologies are expected to change the nature of work across many occupations, influencing the types of skills in demand, the structure of job tasks, and the speed of labor-market change. Some jobs, particularly in low- and middle-wage service occupations, could be disrupted, while others could be created as new technologies drive innovation and productivity. Many workers are concerned about AI's impact on future job prospects, employment fairness, and surveillance. Existing data tools, both nationally and here in Maine, tell an incomplete story about AI's current impact on labor markets and credible research points to a wide range of future scenarios. Like their peers across the country, many Maine employers and training providers are responding to these changes by helping people build new AI-ready work skills.

Recommendations

B1) Actively evaluate AI's real-time impacts on Maine's workers and labor markets with enhanced real-time labor market intelligence

Develop leading and longer-term data metrics that enable the State to actively monitor potential AI-related job disruptions, wage impacts, and other labor market effects. Insights should be shared back with workers and employers continuously, including, for example, information about future high-wage, in-demand occupations. Senior policy leaders should regularly discuss these data to allow rapid policy responses as the labor market changes and workers' needs evolve. The State Workforce Board can help Maine's training institutions continue to stay abreast of how AI is changing the skills sought by Maine employers and solicit input from workers about AI's impact on their careers.

B2) Expand training opportunities that prepare Maine workers with the skills needed for an AI-enabled workplace

To keep Maine's workforce competitive, the State should integrate AI into existing training programs and encourage employers to invest in AI skills for their employees. Developing credential and educational standards can help ensure trainees gain the competencies needed for a technology-driven economy. New career exploration and apprenticeship programs can be developed that focus on emerging occupations related to AI. Higher education and training providers should partner with employers to develop and deliver AI-focused training, and the State should work with these organizations to ensure streamlined access to funding resources like the Dirigo Business Incentive[20] and other programs.

[20] Maine's Dirigo Business Incentives offer up to $2,000 per worker annually in tax credits to help employers cover the cost of providing approved trainings in eligible sectors. For more, visit https://www.maine.gov/decd/business-development/financial-incentives-resources/incentives/dirigo.

B3) Ready Maine's workforce investment strategy and re-employment policies for the AI era

Artificial intelligence is reshaping industries, workflows, and employment patterns across Maine. While the pace and scope of these changes may not yet be visible, their cumulative effects – job opportunities and disruptions that cut across sectors, communities, and skill levels – could be profound and may require updating or changing portions of existing state workforce strategy. For example, some State re-employment initiatives are specifically designed for place-based workforce impacts, whereas AI may have job implications across specific occupations regardless of geography.

The State should also explore ways to proactively build the state's capacity to help workers retrain, transition, and thrive as AI transforms the economy. The State should consider ways to update proven workforce retraining and career transition services; cultivate innovative partnerships with employers and educators to develop new training curricula and foster digital literacy; and ensure that our rapid response and re-employment practices are equipped to react to distributed, occupation-specific disruptions. The speed at which these changes might occur also suggests the need for the State to identify new resources, including federal funds.

B4) Leverage AI tools to expand reach, speed, and impacts of state workforce programs

AI tools offer promise to expand the reach of state workforce programs and make them more helpful for Mainers that use them. For example, Indiana has used AI's data analytic capabilities to offer unemployment filers with tailored recommendations and customized data based on personalized employment histories. New Jersey is using AI to more seamlessly translate documents into workers' native languages and adjust them based on educational background. Workforce programs with intensive navigation services – like ASAP, which is proven to increase college completion for at risk students – may may benefit from innovations to expand their reach through AI supports that complement human coaches. AI policy "answer bots" and automated documentation tools could help Maine's career counselors and eligibility workers spend less time hunting for answers and completing compliance-oriented paperwork, and more time with clients.

B5) Engage workers to ensure AI improves careers and expands opportunities for all

AI has the potential to create new jobs and advancement opportunities, improve pay, and reduce unsafe or repetitive tasks, but these outcomes will not happen automatically. As work and career opportunities evolve, worker perspectives must shape how AI is introduced and used. The State should elevate worker voices in policy discussions on training, job quality, and technology adoption, while employers can engage employees directly in decisions about AI in the workplace. AI may also allow business to bring more people into the workforce, especially those that are currently being left out of job opportunities.

Ongoing attention is also needed to how AI affects working conditions, including surveillance of workers, worker autonomy, and the role of professional judgment in mission-critical tasks. In rural communities, where access to training and infrastructure is more limited, prioritizing worker voice is especially important to make sure AI strengthens economic opportunity.

B6) Equip Maine students and trainees to learn on state-of-the-art industry tools and infrastructure that prepare them for the future workplace

Maine has made substantial investments in upgrading facilities and equipment available to students and trainees in K12 classrooms, at Career and Technical Education programs, and across Maine's public higher education institutions. Maine should continue to pursue creative solutions that help keep this infrastructure modern as AI changes the tools and equipment used in the workforce.

Topic C: Education

Educators across Maine are beginning to explore how AI can enhance teaching and learning, from using generative tools to improve students' writing skills, to creating more dynamic lesson plans tailored to different learning styles, to finding new ways to engage students who might otherwise struggle to participate. Teachers and staff are also leveraging AI to automate time-consuming administrative tasks such as grading, lesson planning, and progress tracking, freeing more time for direct interaction with students. However, the adoption of AI in classrooms also raises important challenges. Schools across the state face inconsistent guidance on best practices; ongoing concerns about students using AI to cheat or bypass assignments; and persistent financial and infrastructure gaps, particularly in rural areas, that make it harder to access or effectively integrate these emerging tools.

Recommendations

C1) Recognize and support pioneering Maine educators who are leading in AI innovation and create pathways for their insights to guide peers.

Adoption of AI in education has largely been driven by a small number of early pioneering teachers, administrators, and other educators experimenting with ways to improve their pedagogy and administrative tasks. The State can continue highlighting AI's potential to improve learning by supporting and accelerating peer education through priority access to emerging tools, platforms to collaboratively address challenges and learn from each other, and structured opportunities to share insights with State leaders and peer educators. The State could build on models like Maine's annual Learning Technology Initiative Conference to regularly capture their experiences and highlight their successes as a way to create a practical knowledge base and inspire other educators to explore AI in their own classrooms.

C2) Reach every educator in Maine with professional development supports focused on AI

Many Maine educators and administrators are eager to learn about AI but districts lack the capacity, time, or technical expertise to do so. Maine should build on resources like the Maine Department of Education's best-in-class AI guidance and toolkit and peer learning programs offered by groups such as the Maine Math and Science Alliance. Efforts like these can help convert pockets of AI innovation into resources from which all Maine educators can benefit. The State can also help districts and school administrators interested in piloting AI tools, highlighting promising use cases aligned with real-world needs, and exploring potential funding mechanisms to support innovation.

C3) Prepare new teachers to use and teach about AI

Integrating AI concepts and tools into Maine's teacher preparation programs will help new educators enter the workforce ready to engage with AI technologies responsibly and effectively. Exposure during pre-service education can build familiarity with AI's classroom applications, ethical considerations, and potential risks before teachers face them in practice. Focused coordination on AI topics between the Maine Department of Education, colleges of education, and accrediting bodies could help establish consistent expectations so that all graduates, regardless of program, are prepared to guide students in an AI-enabled learning environment.

C4) Embed AI literacy into the curricula for all graduating students and adult learners

Just as Maine's educational institutions play a central role today in helping students to safely and critically navigate the Internet, schools in Maine should ensure their students graduate with the foundational AI literacy necessary to navigate life and workplaces of the future. Students and adult learners should be exposed to how AI tools work, introduced to topics of AI safety and ethics, and shown how to evaluate AI outputs. Opportunities for students and life-long learners to learn both with and irrespective of AI will be crucial to their long-term adaptability and success.

C5) Trial AI-backed tools and technologies with the greatest potential to jumpstart learning outcomes, particularly for students with learning challenges and in less-resourced districts

As research grows about how and where new AI-backed tools can benefit student learning, Maine should pilot deployment of the most promising tools as part of broader efforts to strengthen learning outcomes while uplifting and supporting Maine's educators. There may be particular benefits for closing inequities experienced by rural districts, students with learning challenges, and schools with high shares of non-native English speakers. Other states may offer models. For example, Iowa and Louisiana have both recently rolled out AI-based reading skills tools in public elementary schools at low or no cost to their districts[21], and Indiana piloted a grant program for districts to implement an AI platform of their choice during the 2023-24 school year.[22]

[21] https://www.wwno.org/education/2024-10-08/meet-amira-the-ai-tutor-helping-louisiana-students-improve-their-reading-skills and https://www.govtech.com/education/k-12/iowa-rolls-out-ai-reading-tutor-for-all-elementary-schools

[22] https://drive.google.com/file/d/13eJJ5dICQqvD7q2l2qWwhp4t8vuec_nt/view

Topic D: Healthcare

AI offers significant promise for improving the health of Maine people, especially in rural communities where access to care can be limited. Across the state, health systems are already deploying AI tools such as ambient documentation, remote patient monitoring, and AI-assisted diagnostics, with early results showing gains in provider retention, reduced employee burnout, and more accurate and timely diagnoses. These tools are helping Maine's healthcare system deliver higher-quality care, and they illustrate how responsible innovation can improve both patient outcomes and clinician well-being.

However, access to these cutting-edge technologies remains uneven, with smaller, independent providers often lacking the financial and operational capacity to deploy AI tools. In addition, most AI tools have been trained on datasets from large, urban patient populations, leaving a need for additional innovation for older, more rural populations like Maine's. AI technologies are also introducing new diagnostic, operational, and communications capabilities that often directly interact with patients in ways not yet fully contemplated by Maine's existing oversight systems.

Recommendations

D1) Establish Maine as a national innovation hub for the discovery and demonstration of how AI will improve rural health outcomes

Rural health communities nationwide are experiencing widening care gaps as costs push traditional providers out of business. New AI applications in areas like virtual behavioral healthcare delivery, wearables, and hospital business operations could offer major opportunities to close those gaps – yet little of that tech is being designed with rural health populations in mind.

Maine should aggressively pursue the opportunity to become a national hub for attracting AI health innovation focused on rural communities. This initiative could include investments to establish innovation demonstration sites at Maine rural hospitals with supports for technology, policy revisions, project management, and technical assistance; spurring development of AI tools that support older, rural patients or those trained on rural patient population data; trialing clinical deployment of emerging AI tools in rural health settings; and developing a regulatory and reimbursement environment tailored to R&D and commercialization activities. Duke University's Health AI Partnership offers an example of a hub-and-spoke model in which larger health systems serve as technical partners and testing grounds, helping smaller rural centers pilot AI tools and share knowledge.

D2) Identify and validate AI training resources for healthcare professionals

AI adoption in healthcare settings has been robust (over 70% of respondents in a 2024 survey reported pursuing GenAI tools)[23] and offers enormous potential benefits to hospitals and patients. However, healthcare's high stakes, heightened privacy restrictions, and the need for trust between patient and provider require healthcare professionals to achieve a greater level of proficiency when using AI than workers in many other sectors.

The State should collaborate with external partners to identify and validate best-in-class training options. Health organizations, workers, patients, and academic institutions could partner to develop new training modules tailored to different healthcare roles, grounded in human-centered care and real-world case studies. Providing adequate AI exposure and training to health professionals ahead of their use in real-world clinical settings is critical to ensuring that AI is used responsibly, safely, and ethically.

D3) Prepare Maine's health regulatory landscape to enable Mainers to safely benefit from emerging AI health technologies while mitigating potential risks

The State should proactively prepare Maine's healthcare regulatory landscape to capture potential opportunities for emerging AI tools to improve patient outcomes and quality of care, close inequitable access gaps, and address other structural healthcare challenges. This includes enabling safe and equitable deployment of technologies that can improve patient outcomes, enhance quality, and reduce inequities. Incorporating AI as a tool to address Maine's structural healthcare challenges – including significant coverage gaps in rural areas, creating long waits for primary care physicians and specialists like behavioral health providers – may necessitate speeding up outdated adoption processes, rethinking MaineCare reimbursement, and working with insurance providers to negotiate coverage for new health applications.

The State should create clear pathways for approving innovative, evidence-based AI tools that can supplement health services and help individuals navigate to the most appropriate level of care. This work should include extensive engagement with patient groups, clinicians, licensing boards, payers, and other critical stakeholders. It should address readiness topics including safety, licensing, oversight, reimbursement models, malpractice responsibility, and insurance network adequacy rules.

D4) Upgrade technology infrastructure and build out partnerships that help AI technology reach patients in all of Maine's communities

Today most providers and health organizations access AI-backed health innovations as they are offered through or together with their existing electronic medical record system or enterprise resource management system. (For example, the passive charting tools now widely used at

[23] https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/healthcare/our-insights/generative-ai-in-healthcare-adoption-trends-and-whats-next

MaineHealth are integrated tightly within EPIC, the system's electronic medical records platform.) When health centers remain stuck on previous-generation or limited-feature platforms – as is the case for many of Maine's independent hospitals, clinics, and Federally-qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) – it means that it can take many years for these providers and their patients benefit from tools available to others today. Technology upgrades and technical assistance can help these providers access modern tools and develop operational practices for how to benefit from them most.

Protect Maine residents from potentially harmful uses of AI technologies, such as safeguarding consumer data privacy, mitigating bias in datasets, and mandating disclosure around AI utilization

Topic E: AI-related Harms

Keeping Mainers safe from harmful uses and impacts of AI will be of growing importance as uses of AI technologies grow and change. In many circumstances, current federal and state law offer protections and remedies against unlawful behavior regardless of the underlying enabling technology. In other cases, AI's novel capabilities – such as its ability to generate realistic content, personalize mass messaging, and operate with new levels of autonomy – introduce new challenges.

Over the coming years, the reach of new technology will further blur distinctions between those products and services that use AI and those that do not. Maine policymakers will not be able to anticipate or counter every harmful use or impact of AI. Absent complementary strategies that grow AI literacy, legislation and regulation alone will not be sufficient to help residents safely benefit from AI technologies.

Recommendations

E1) Pursue near-term legislative and executive action where harmful AI uses are apparent, responses are clear, and protections are lacking, ensuring that Maine is prepared to respond as these risks become more complex and widespread, including:

- *Election security:* Preventing fraud or misinformation campaigns amplified by AI. Maine election laws currently make no mention of plain language disclosure requirements around artificial or manipulated content; many other states have passed laws regulating deepfakes in elections that may offer models.

- *Consumer protection:* Safeguarding that AI-generated output does not mislead, manipulate, or cause harm to users, particularly in commercial, financial, and healthcare contexts. Maine's 132nd legislature has initiated some work here with LD 1727, An Act to Ensure Transparency in Consumer Transactions Involving Artificial Intelligence, which requires disclosure of use of AI chatbots to customers where they might otherwise reasonably believe they are interacting with a human.[24]

- *Deepfake mitigation:* Expanding and enshrining protections against impersonations, cloned voices, and fake personas deployed for malicious gain, including sexually explicit images. Deepfakes potentially fall within traditional defamation frameworks if they falsely depict someone doing or saying something harmful presented as fact, but testing in the courts has been limited. For example, Tennessee's ELVIS Act explicitly prohibits unauthorized digital

[24] https://legislature.maine.gov/legis/bills/display_ps.asp?LD=1727&snum=132

simulations of an individual's voice or likeness in a commercial or deceptive manner, [25] and California's AB 1831 expands the state's child sexual abuse material (CSAM) protections to include AI-generated or manipulated materials.[26]

- *State cybersecurity:* Ensuring that Maine state information systems have the resources and access to expertise necessary to keep public information safe in current and emerging threat environment. Recent and ongoing investments by MaineIT offer a foundation on which to continue building.

- *Labor and employment impact:* Monitoring how AI is used in hiring, workplace surveillance, and productivity tracking. Several states and cities are advancing "algorithmic fairness" rules for hiring and promotion decisions (e.g., New York City's bias audit law for automated employment decision tools).[27]

E2) Conduct dedicated study and ongoing monitoring in domains where harmful uses or impacts of AI are still emerging, where the appropriate regulatory response path is ambiguous, or the breadth of AI's impact will be significant, such as:

- *Healthcare:* Addressing licensing, standards, and oversight for AI-assisted health services and tools. For example, healthcare licensing statutes (32 M.R.S. §3171 et seq.) assume a human provider, leaving unclear how certain autonomous AI health tools could be safely approved and deployed.

- *Agentic AI and autonomous systems:* Clarifying state regulatory and legislative policy that enables new and more powerful forms of autonomous systems while addressing accountability for oversight, liability for harms, and how individuals may designate AI software to act as fiduciaries on their behalf.

- *Data autonomy and privacy:* Defining consumer rights over personal data and self-image, such as access, deletion, sharing and expectations for institutions to disclose how collected data are used. Because AI tools are trained on data, a data privacy framework can provide a valuable foundation for subsequent AI-specific law.

- *Bias and discrimination:* Ensuring consistent protections and expectations to protect against discriminatory AI outputs. Maine's Human Rights Act (5 M.R.S. §4551-4634) already prohibits discrimination based on race, color, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, and other factors in employment, housing, credit, education, and public accommodations.

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[25] https://www.capitol.tn.gov/Bills/113/Bill/HB2091.pdf

[26] https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=202320240AB1831

[27] https://www.nyc.gov/site/dca/about/automated-employment-decision-tools.page

- *Intellectual property and creative industries:* Examining how AI affects artists, writers, musicians, and software developers in Maine, their creative output, and unauthorized uses of likeness or style.

- *Protections for children:* Examining how to protect children from emerging AI technologies that heighten vulnerabilities they already face online, such as exposure to sexualized content, exploitation of private information, addictive attributes of social media, inappropriate relationships, and isolation.

E3) Ground AI policy in principles of regulatory balance, accountability, transparency, modernized standards, and ethical use by government

As the legislature and executive shape state policy on AI, several common principles can anchor deliberations across a range of specific domains. These include:

- *Balancing regulatory precautions with beneficial opportunities.* Policymakers should carefully consider how to protect Mainers from potential harms without preventing them from accessing opportunities with potentially substantial benefits. Underserved communities may be especially vulnerable to policy actions that create barriers to innovation, jobs, or essential services – particularly in healthcare, employment, and housing.

- *Making responsibility and accountability for outcomes of AI adoption transparent to the public.* Users should be able to expect that those developing or deploying AI tools have taken reasonable steps to mitigate and disclose potential risks and should benefit from reasonable transparency into how AI tools function. At the same time, individuals and organizations using AI tools should be accountable for the outcomes of their own use of AI technology. In many cases, the role of policy may be to ensure that user agreements are explicit and transparent about these rights and responsibilities.

- *Modernizing thresholds for regulated activity.* Certain existing State regulations are based on spending (i.e., disclosure of campaign donations is only required once a certain dollar threshold is met).[28] In light of the much greater audience reach that AI-based algorithmic targeting could afford, some of these regulations may need revision – it may no longer be effective to exclusively use spending or cost as a threshold for determining what activities may be subject to regulation.

[28] See 21-A MRSA §1052(2-A) (""Ballot question committee" means a person that receives contributions or makes expenditures **aggregating in excess of $5,000** for the purpose of initiating or influencing a campaign, other than a campaign for the nomination or election of a candidate. ")(emphasis added).

- *Ensuring government is ethical, transparent, and secure in its use of AI. State* policies and practices should enshrine a commitment to using AI in ways that are ethical, transparent, and secure. Maine should lead by example through its practices in evaluating and procuring AI tools, including with a lens towards choosing energy-efficient software; its transparency about how these tools are used; its practices for data collection, management, protection, and user control; its security standards; and its efforts to build employee AI literacy. Collecting data to train and operationalize AI tools should be thoughtfully weighed against the tradeoffs of collecting, storing, and using new data, as collecting data can create user burdens and increase risks of disclosure or unauthorized use. Maine should also leverage local private sector expertise to ensure state cybersecurity protections continue to reflect the evolving threat environment.

E4) Consider ways to affirm to courts how and where existing Maine statutes to apply to circumstances involving AI

The Legislature, State agencies, and the State Attorney General's Office should consider ways to provide targeted guidance to the courts for applying existing laws to emerging AI-related applications as AI is accelerating the volume, speed, and sophistication of unlawful activities. One option may be through a statement of statutory intent that clarifies legislative expectations for how these laws should apply to new technologies.

E5) Launch a public AI literacy campaign to help Mainers navigate these emerging technologies in their daily lives

A multiplatform, multimodal campaign should aim to enable Mainers to spot AI when interacting with it, understand AI's potential risks and benefits, and take steps to safely navigate AI in their daily lives. The campaign should build students' capabilities for leveraging AI as well as understanding its limitations and help Maine workers identify opportunities and benefits from building AI competency. It should close access gaps by offering safe ways for Mainers to interact with AI. The campaign should build on the State's existing digital equity strategy and the Maine Department of Education's AI Toolkit for Educators. It should leverage a wide range of trusted community organizations – including libraries, financial institutions, faith organizations, public health clinics, and legal services organizations. To ensure broad reach, materials should be accessible in multiple languages; available in rural areas; and tailored to meet the needs of older adults and youth in particular. The campaign should be continuously updated to reflect the rapidly changing AI landscape, ensuring that Maine residents receive timely, relevant, and practical guidance.

E6) Actively monitor AI's emerging use cases and associated risks to Maine residents

State agencies should monitor and regularly report to the Governor, the Legislature, and the public about how novel AI applications in the economy and society are impacting their stakeholders and

emerging in the domains they regulate. The State should closely track the federal regulatory landscape – including both legislation and court decisions – and work with Maine's Congressional delegation on AI issues that affect residents. The State should also consider multistate coordination efforts to learn from other states and collaborate on federal advocacy where appropriate. A central executive branch entity should be charged with coordinating these efforts across the administration and should be given the resources to do so.

Explore the most promising uses for State agencies, quasi-State agencies, and other public entities such as municipalities to deploy AI technologies to address capacity gaps and improve service delivery to the populations they serve

Topic F: Public Sector

For Maine's State agencies, quasi-State entities, and more than 480 municipalities, the most promising AI use cases can help address capacity and resource constraints and improve responsiveness. Government employees are already using AI to automate certain administrative tasks, support real-time information retrieval, and enhance decision-making in areas such as budgeting, contracting, and data analysis. Other states are using similar tools to match job seekers with training, streamline permit reviews, detect fraud, and monitor environmental conditions, demonstrating how AI can advance policy priorities like housing, workforce development, and resource protection. However, long-standing challenges risk inhibiting adoption of innovative AI tools by the public sector in Maine, including scarce technical expertise, fast changing cybersecurity threats, and plodding acquisition requirements. And the public entities most poised to benefit from AI's capabilities – including Maine's Legislature, Judiciary branch, boards, and local governments in small communities – often have the least operational capacity to overcome these barriers.

Recommendations

F1) Position AI as a policy priority across state agencies

AI and other related technologies will impact the mission and operations of every State agency in Maine. Each cabinet agency should develop a plan for how they will monitor and respond to impacts AI might have on their constituencies, as well as how their agency could utilize new digital technologies to improve service delivery.

The State should also consider establishing an interagency leadership council responsible for monitoring AI trends, promoting shared learning and talent development, and supporting coordination on AI governance policies and practices. This group could also be a first point-of-contact on AI topics for the public, higher education institutions, the private sector, and organizations responsible for Maine's energy resources and broadband infrastructure.

F2) Invest in state capacity for AI adoption and governance

To ensure Maine state government can responsibly and effectively adopt AI, the State should invest in developing AI capacity across all three branches of government, including educating its existing workforce, bringing in technical expertise, and coordinating AI policy. All state employees should receive training on how to safely and responsibly use AI tools in their work, with opportunities to

extend training to municipalities in partnership with organizations such as the Maine Municipal Association. AI also offers opportunities for the legislative and judicial branches to improve operations and increase transparency.

At the same time, Maine should strengthen its technical and policy capacity across agencies, ensuring MaineIT and State agency teams have the talent, partnerships, and expertise to evaluate, design, and deploy AI tools, monitor risks, and maintain strong cybersecurity protections. Finally, the State should build out centralized policy coordination to map AI's non-technical implications; track trends across state and local governments; and align Maine's AI strategy with broader economic, regulatory, and social priorities.

F3) Enhance public transparency into how AI tools are deployed in State government operations and where they are improving outcomes for Maine people

To build public trust and ensure accountability, Maine should publish what AI tools are being used across government, for what purposes, and with what safeguards. A public dashboard or registry could track these tools' status, intended outcomes, and any evaluations. Regular reporting can help elevate stories of where new AI investments are making a difference for Maine people. This transparency effort also creates a foundation for public dialogue and ethical oversight.

F4) Support municipalities in assessing opportunities, developing technology plans, and identifying implementation funding for AI tools that improve local service delivery

Municipalities often lack the capacity to explore how AI might help them meet their goals. The State should explore paths to enable technical assistance, planning grants, and implementation resources that help towns and regions responsibly explore AI use. The model could include needs assessments via trusted third parties like consultants or regional partners, grants for municipalities to pilot or scale AI solutions, and incentives for interlocal projects that demonstrate regional cooperation. Other public entities such as locally owned utilities may benefit from similar support, particularly around cybersecurity.

F5) Collaborate with Maine's higher education institutions to launch a Maine AI Public Innovation Hub

Maine's public and private universities could serve as partners in helping Maine government entities identify, design, deliver, and evaluate AI and other digital innovation projects. This centralized clearinghouse could match students and faculty with real-world needs in state and local government, offering support on technology design, procurement, deployment, and ROI evaluation. Modeled on programs like UMA's Maine Cyber Range and New Jersey's AI Hub[29], this

[29] https://njaihub.org/

Hub could also strengthen the public sector talent pipeline by exposing students to public service careers.

F6) Enable innovative procurement strategies to solicit AI solutions for critical challenges

Maine agency success in deploying AI tools will hinge in large part on the effectiveness of the State's procurement and contracting practices. Today, technology projects can take more than a year to progress from conceptualization to having a signed contract in place, a timeline that leaves government vulnerable to falling behind rapidly evolving technology. Procurement solicitations are often detailed and prescriptive, which can make it harder to consider innovative or lower-cost options from new AI solutions, and the required compliance processes may contribute to delays.[30]

New procurement tools developed in other places may offer models for Maine AI projects. For example, California has used a Request for Innovative Ideas tool, which was established via executive order, to identify and pilot AI solutions for complex problems facing the State.[31] Maine should update and monitor technology procurement and delivery policy, practices, and resources to enable the State to more effectively onboard technology that can improve outcomes for residents.

[30] https://partnersforpublicgood.org/procurement-excellence-network/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2025/03/Transforming-IT-Procurement-Part-1-Framing-the-Problem.pdf

[31] https://www.gov.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/1.8.19-EO-N-04-19.pdf and https://www.genai.ca.gov/ca-action/projects/

Implementing the Task Force's recommendations

The recommendations of the Task Force are designed to position Maine to capture the greatest benefit from an AI-enabled future while protecting Maine people from new and evolving risks. As the Task Force's work concludes, the work is only just beginning.

Over the next year, the State should take steps to establish a strong foundation for future action, including:

Educate Mainers about AI, its potential benefits, and how to stay safe

Public engagement, public-private partnerships, and firsthand experience will be central to Maine's ongoing response to AI technologies and to implementing the recommendations of this Task Force. Launching an AI literacy campaign, helping small businesses learn about new AI tools, and connecting schools and municipalities with existing technical resources will set a strong foundation for informed, robust dialogue about the State's forward-looking approach to AI.

Continue to bolster protections against the harms that AI creates or exacerbates

Early steps laid out in this report include taking immediate action on where harmful AI uses are apparent, responses are clear, and protections are lacking and setting in motion studies to examine and engage the public on more complex topics. At the same time, protecting Maine people will require preparing the infrastructure that underpins AI's economic and social potential. The State can begin by incorporating AI-related considerations into existing broadband and energy planning processes and developing a structured approach to responding to proposals for AI-related development projects.

Take enabling steps that unlock long-term, large-scale opportunities

The Task Force's recommendations highlight opportunities to position Maine as a leader in responsible and innovative AI use. Unlocking these opportunities will require early steps to lay the groundwork for long-term impact. Identifying and developing a small number pioneering open-source, AI-ready datasets can set an example for how to attract AI innovation to priority areas. In rural health, the State can partner with providers to identify pressing needs and pilot solutions for spreading innovative AI tools that improve outcomes in underserved areas. And to support municipalities – many of which face significant capacity constraints – the State should work with towns and cities to identify areas where AI can address common problems in service delivery, permitting, housing, and beyond.

Enable ongoing State engagement on AI issues

Many of the Task Force's recommendations will require continuous engagement as the technology evolves. Establishing State leadership and governance mechanisms that are responsive to rapid technological change will be essential as will be efforts to continue building AI-related knowledge and expertise among the public workforce The State should also continue steps that ensure policymakers have the data and other information to continue examining AI's impacts and implications.

Pursue innovative partnerships and funding strategies

These opportunities cannot be realized without sustained investment. To move from recommendation to action, Maine will need to pursue innovative funding strategies, drawing on State budget allocations, federal funding streams, and external partnerships with businesses, non-profits, and philanthropies. By combining these sources, Maine can maximize resources and ensure that promising initiatives have the support to succeed.

Conclusion

This is a moment of rapid and accelerating technological change and uncertainty. The Task Force's work is meant to provide Maine with foundational guidance to help make informed policy decisions around AI's continued proliferation throughout our economy, our workforce, and our communities. The recommendations in this report attempt to balance the need to harness AI's potential to grow Maine's economy, create good jobs of the future, and improve the ways that public sector services are delivered against the very real harms that it can create or exacerbate – both by arming threat actors with new and more sophisticated tools and by producing unintended consequences when used without adequate training or understanding.

To successfully navigate an AI-powered future, states will need deliberate and flexible policies that identify innovative solutions to real-world challenges while prioritizing safe, ethical, and effective AI use. The Task Force's recommendations are aimed at helping Maine establish itself as a national proving ground for not only adopting AI responsibly, but also demonstrating how this technology can strengthen communities, economies, and public institutions.