

Maine AI Task Force
Full Report Draft

Last updated: October 22, 2025

This is a complete draft of the AI Task Force report for your review. The Task Force will discuss and finalize this report during its October 24 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.) to supplement the text here.

Introduction

Letter from Co-Chairs

Dear Governor Mills,

As co-chairs of the Maine Artificial Intelligence Task Force, we are pleased to deliver to you, the Legislature, and the people of Maine this report synthesizing the Task Force’s findings and presenting a set of policy recommendations for consideration. As directed, this report explores AI’s implications for Maine’s economy and workforce, analyzes the potential harms AI poses to Maine people, and proposes guiding principles and promising use cases for enhancing public sector service delivery.

Underlying the Task Force’s findings is a unifying insight: during this period of rapid and profound change, the pursuit of potentially transformative opportunities from AI must be navigated through the novel or still unknown risks it creates to ensure enduring benefit.

Throughout our deliberations, Task Force members agreed that Maine should treat AI not as a passing trend, but as a transformative force that will shape the economy, labor markets, education and healthcare systems, and public governance for years to come. Planning now will allow Maine to be proactive rather than reactive, unlock new economic opportunities, and protect Maine people. By engaging early and thoughtfully, Maine can avoid being left behind as AI reshapes industries and institutions across the nation. The Task Force is grateful to Governor Mills for recognizing that Maine’s approach must extend beyond state government at a time when most other states have focused narrowly on internal operations to consider how AI will affect communities, workers, and residents statewide.

Over the course of our work, the Task Force heard from dozens of Mainers and national experts, including business owners, educators, workers, and State and local officials, who are already engaging with AI in their work and life. We learned about small businesses using AI to streamline operations and reach new markets; teachers exploring AI to enhance student learning and

engagement; healthcare professionals improving diagnostics and reducing provider burnout through AI tools; and governments leveraging AI to speed up housing permitting and production.

We also heard from Maine people about their very real fears surrounding AI. Public input urged caution about how AI in schools could impact children’s mental health, learning outcomes, and cognitive development; how AI might disrupt Maine’s labor force; and how energy-intensive data centers might impact local energy and water infrastructure systems.

Where we are optimistic, we see opportunities that align closely with Maine’s enduring priorities: enabling job creation in rural communities and strengthening local economies; leading the nation in delivering healthcare more efficiently and equitably to people in every corner of the state; and making government more transparent, responsive, and accountable to the Maine people it serves.

At the same time, meeting this challenge will require continued vigilance at every level: from policymakers who craft guardrails that encourage innovation while protecting the public interest; from educators and employers who prepare Maine people to thrive in a changing economy; and from communities that continue to guide how technology serves the common good. This report represents only the first step in that collective effort – a foundation upon which future leaders, partners, and Mainers themselves can continue to build.

AI literacy in particular will be important for Maine moving forward. This report considers ways to broaden exposure to AI technologies in safer and lower-risk settings and keep a human in the loop as AI’s impact spreads across our workplace and communities. Looking to examples of rapid technological shifts from the recent past like the advent of the Internet, the proliferation of personal computers and smartphones, and the rise of social media can be instructive. Increasing AI literacy not only illustrates its value and teaches best practices but also helps people identify when AI is being used, guard against bad actors, and grapple with unintended harms that AI might create.

It is important to emphasize that this report is not an endpoint but a foundation. Artificial intelligence is a dynamic, fast-evolving field, and no single report could anticipate every development to come. Instead, we offer a roadmap for continued collaboration across state government, all levels of education, industry, local communities, and the public to bolster innovation, strengthen guardrails against AI-related harms, and build capacity. The work ahead will require sustained monitoring of technical and policy developments, thoughtful investment and novel partnerships, and continued dialogue with the people of Maine.

In closing, we extend our gratitude to the members of the Task Force and our Technical Advisors for their time, expertise, and spirited engagement; to the many Mainers who shared their experiences and insights; and to the staff of the Governor’s Office of Policy Innovation and the Future and Maine’s Office of Information Technology.

We thank you, Governor Mills, for your leadership in convening this Task Force and for your commitment to ensuring that Maine approaches artificial intelligence with both ambition and care.

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Co-chairs, Maine Artificial Intelligence Task Force

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Executive Summary

On December 20, 2024, Governor Janet Mills signed an Executive Order¹ establishing the Maine Artificial Intelligence Task Force. Their work comes in response to a rapid surge of technological advancements poised to revolutionize how people live and work.

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.² 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.

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

Task Force recommendations

The Task Force’s recommendations are organized according to the three charges in the Governor’s Executive Order:

- 1) Prepare Maine’s economy and workforce for the opportunities and risks likely to result from advances in AI

Topic A: Economy

- A1. Expand entrepreneurial assistance for AI-enabled startups and Maine businesses
- A2. Identify and pursue new economic opportunities where AI can broaden prosperity and create good jobs
- A3. Help private sector firms, community nonprofits, and other organizations enhance cybersecurity
- A4. Improve access to advanced computing resources
- A5. Provide regulatory predictability to support safe adoption of AI tools by Maine businesses

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

Topic B: Workforce

- B1. Actively evaluate AI's real-time impacts on Maine's workers and labor markets with enhanced real-time labor market intelligence
- B2. Expand training opportunities that prepare Maine workers with the skills needed for an AI-enabled workplace
- B3. Ready Maine's workforce investment strategy and re-employment policies for the AI era
- B4. Leverage AI tools to expand reach, speed, and impacts of state workforce programs
- B5. Engage workers to ensure AI improves careers and expands opportunities for all
- B6. Equip Maine students and trainees to learn on state-of-the-art industry tools and infrastructure that prepare them for the future workplace

Topic C: Education

- C1. Recognize and support Maine educators leading in AI adoption and create pathways for their insights to guide peers
- C2. Reach every educator in Maine with professional development supports focused on AI
- C3. Prepare new teachers to use and teach about AI
- C4. Embed AI literacy into the curricula for all graduating students and adult learners
- C5. Explore AI-backed tools and technologies with the greatest potential to jumpstart learning outcomes, particularly for students with learning challenges and in less-resourced districts

Topic D: Healthcare

- D1. Establish Maine as a national innovation hub for the discovery and demonstration of how AI can improve rural health outcomes
 - D2. Identify and validate AI literacy and training resources for healthcare professionals
 - D3. Prepare Maine's health regulatory landscape to enable Mainers to safely benefit from emerging AI health technologies while mitigating potential risks
 - D4. Upgrade technology infrastructure and build out partnerships that help AI technology reach patients in all of Maine's communities
2. 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: Topics relating to protecting Mainers from AI-related harms

- 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
 - E2. Conduct dedicated study and ongoing monitoring 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
 - E3. Ground AI policy in principles of regulatory balance, accountability transparency, modernized standards, and ethical use by government
 - E4. Consider ways to affirm to courts how and where existing Maine statutes apply to circumstances involving AI
 - E5. Launch a public AI literacy campaign to help Mainers navigate these emerging technologies in their daily lives
 - E6. Actively monitor AI's emerging use cases and associated risks to Maine residents
3. 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

- F1. Position AI as a policy priority across state agencies
- F2. Invest in state capacity for AI adoption and governance
- F3. Enhance public transparency into how AI tools are deployed in State government operations and where they are improving outcomes for Maine people
- F4. Support municipalities in assessing opportunities, developing technology plans, and identifying implementation funding for AI tools that improve local service delivery
- F5. Collaborate with Maine's higher education institutions to launch a Maine AI Innovation Hub
- F6. Enable innovative procurement strategies to solicit AI solutions for critical challenges

The report also identifies areas where, through proactive investment and targeted efforts, Maine has a unique opportunity to carve out areas of national leadership in the rapidly evolving field of AI. This includes AI for rural health innovation (addressing structural health challenges in rural areas of the state through investments in new technologies that build on existing partnerships and infrastructure) and AI to help address strategic priorities by augmenting municipal capacity (helping Maine's approximately 480 cities and towns overcome long-standing capacity and resource constraints that limit their ability to engage with constituents, deliver services efficiently, and consider new policy initiatives such as housing).

The report concludes with key considerations for implementation, including the need to help Mainers learn about AI's potential benefits and risks and to continue to bolster protections against

harms, while at the same time taking steps to unlock long-term, large-scale opportunities. Continued state engagement will be critical, as will innovative partnerships and funding strategies.

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, more sophisticated tools and by producing unintended consequences when used without adequate training or understanding.

The Task Force's work is 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, while also protecting Maine people from AI-created or enabled harm.

Why focus on AI?

On December 20, 2024, Governor Janet Mills signed an Executive Order³ 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.⁴ 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 poised to transform how people live and work. Consumer adoption of new AI-related technologies is outpacing that of the internet and personal computers.^{5 6} 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.

Introduction

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 training data and makes inferences based on patterns, with more powerful capabilities unlocked in recent years by greater computing power, more sophisticated datasets, and advances in training procedures.⁷ This ability to generate compelling outputs without requiring prescriptive instructions is what makes AI so powerful – and what also makes it more complicated to interpret, audit, and manage.

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. New forms of “Agentic AI” are now emerging, which are capable of operating independently for long periods of time and with significant autonomy.

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.⁸ 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.⁹

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, with more than 60% of U.S. adults reporting they interact with AI at least a few times each week¹⁰.

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.¹¹ 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.¹² In education, one in four U.S. teenagers now reports using ChatGPT for schoolwork, up from just over one in 10 the year prior.¹³ In the workforce, national studies estimate that nearly one in five American jobs involves tasks that could be replaced or substantially transformed by AI,¹⁴ and a growing share of workers report that AI already plays a role in their day-to-day responsibilities.¹⁵

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: What steps are required to ensure that businesses, workers, students, governments, and communities can adapt to these changes? What protections are needed to ensure AI systems are deployed safely, responsibly, and equitably? How will rising demand for energy and broadband infrastructure affect state, regional, and national capacity? And, critically, how can Maine capture the benefits of this new technology while mitigating its risks?

State of Maine AI Actions to Date

As the capabilities of consumer-facing Generative AI technologies emerged in the months following ChatGPT's release, the State of Maine took steps to ensure the responsible use of GenAI in state government. 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.¹⁶ This pause – ultimately extended a further three months¹⁷ – 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.¹⁸ Governor Mills subsequently established the Maine Artificial Intelligence Task Force in December 2024.

Maine’s legislature has begun to act on AI as well. In June 2025, Governor Mills signed two AI-related bills into law: LD 1944,¹⁹ which adds AI-generated content to Maine’s existing revenge porn statute; and LD 1727,²⁰ which prohibits companies from using an AI chatbot without proper disclosure.

National 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.²¹

Other recent federal efforts have aimed to limit certain AI regulation. The summer 2025 budget reconciliation bill passed by the House of Representatives proposed a 10-year prohibition on states enforcing “any [state] law or regulation regulating artificial intelligence models, artificial intelligence systems, or automated decision systems,” with some exceptions. This language was ultimately stripped from the bill before it passed into law.²²

The White House released a national AI Action Plan in July 2025 that set forth goals for U.S. leadership in AI. The strategy is organized around accelerating AI innovation, building AI infrastructure, and addressing AI security. The plan calls for investments in workforce development, manufacturing capabilities, and science and technology.

States led by Governors across the political spectrum are taking steps to embrace AI’s opportunities and address AI’s potential harms in their communities. The National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) estimate that over 1,100 AI-related bills were introduced across more than 45 states in 2025, an increase from 480 in 2024, 135 in 2023, and 67 in 2022. A National Governor’s Association (NGA) analysis of these bills notes that they 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.²³

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 appointed by Governor Mills, 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 2024,²⁴ held 12 public meetings between January and October 2025. These meetings, which were open to the public, recorded, and posted on a dedicated Task Force website,²⁵ 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 access 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 charges laid out 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 of these topics) met between May and August 2025 to dive deeper into their area and generate recommendations for the rest of the Task Force to consider.

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 be deployed 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 respond to AI's policy implications for Maine people, businesses, and communities.

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

In response to **“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 identifying safe and responsible uses of AI to improve health delivery, expand access in rural communities, and ease burdens on healthcare sector workers.

In response to **“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 AI literacy and protections against risk must stand alongside innovation as priorities for Maine.

Finally, in response to **“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. 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 should take to begin 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 and expand opportunities for good jobs. 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 while developing structures that ensure benefits of such innovation accrue to Maine. 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.²⁶ AI-ready datasets (cleaned, anonymized, and maintained) can not only help existing Maine businesses increase competitiveness and expand market intelligence, but also draw in entrepreneurs and innovators looking for raw data on which to train their AI tools in ways that benefit Maine.

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 and water infrastructure needs — particularly in rural communities and for small businesses — in light of growing AI use 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, ratepayer protections, and data center siting considerations; explore shared-use models for high-performance computing infrastructure that reduce costs for small businesses, startups, and public agencies; and develop a playbook for responding to data center development project opportunities while ensuring that development supports State goals.

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 Incentive²⁷ and other programs.

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 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. Impacts on cognitive development, behavioral health, and learning are crucial considerations any time new technologies are introduced in schools. Those districts that do wish to adopt AI tools must navigate still-emerging guidance on best practices and persistent financial and infrastructure gaps, particularly in rural areas, that make it harder to access or effectively integrate these emerging tools safely and responsibly.

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, Iowa²⁸ and Louisiana²⁹ have both recently rolled out AI-based reading skills tools in public elementary schools at low or no cost to their districts, and Indiana piloted a grant program for districts to implement an AI platform of their choice during the 2023-24 school year.³⁰

Topic D: Healthcare

AI offers significant promise for improving the delivery of healthcare for 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, many 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 can 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 support for technology and data gathering, 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)³¹ 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 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.

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 alone 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.³²
- *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 simulations of an individual's voice or likeness in a commercial or deceptive manner,³³ and

California's AB 1831 expands the state's child sexual abuse material (CSAM) protections to include AI-generated or manipulated materials.³⁴

- *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.

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 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.
- *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 effects on cognitive development.

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).³⁵ 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.
- *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 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 be a first point-of-contact on AI topics for external groups (including the public, higher education institutions, the private sector, and organizations responsible for Maine’s energy resources and broadband infrastructure) to provide input, thereby maintaining robust public engagement on AI-related issues.

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 consider building 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 Hub³⁶, this

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.³⁷

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.³⁸ 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.

Promising AI Use Cases for State Agencies, Quasi-State Agencies, and Other Public Entities

Across the country, AI uses are emerging every day that offer new ways for state and local government to improve service delivery, enhance constituency experiences, and be more responsive and transparent to voters. The Task Force came across examples that could advance many top policy priorities for Maine, including housing, workforce development, economic innovation, public benefit delivery, natural resource protection, and energy resource management.

Some of the most promising AI use cases for the public sector in Maine could include:

Operational enhancements

1. Enhance core business functions, such as budget forecasting, management data analysis, capital project and maintenance sequencing, and contracting
2. Enable client-facing customer service representatives to provide more efficient, clear, and accurate support through easier real-time access to information, policies, and guidance
3. Reduce the time required to draft written documentation, such as records of customer interactions or administrative decisions
4. Translate government documents, websites, and policies into different languages to enable greater access to non-English-speaking Mainers
5. Promote more efficient, transparent, and navigable legislative and judicial processes, and engage the public in policy development

Policy opportunities

1. Streamline permit and license application, review, decision explainability, and status transparency
2. Connect economic development and infrastructure projects with best-fit incentive programs, grant opportunities, and capital stacks
3. Offer tailored education and workforce opportunities for job seekers, as well as augmenting career navigation and coaching supports
4. Monitor health of forests, oceans, lakes, and other natural resource systems and improve identification of wildlife and gamefish
5. Predict, anticipate, and mitigate power grid disruptions and improve building efficiency through advanced control systems
6. Prevent and detect fraud in government programs

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 to accomplish these goals is only just beginning.

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

Enable Mainers to learn about AI, its potential benefits, risks, 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 that is informed by Mainers' ongoing input and experiences, 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 in domains where harmful AI uses are apparent, responses are clear, and protections are lacking. Specifically, the Executive and Legislative branches should act quickly to address election security concerns, consumer protection, guard against AI-enabled deepfakes, and bolster State cybersecurity protections. The State should also set in motion studies to examine and engage the public on more complex topics including healthcare, agentic AI and autonomous systems, data autonomy and privacy, bias and discrimination, intellectual property and creative industries, and protections for harms specific to children.

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, while also protecting Maine people from AI-created or enabled harm.

Appendices

Appendix – Executive Order Establishing the Maine AI Task Force

An Order Establishing the Maine Artificial Intelligence Task Force

FY 24/25

WHEREAS, the recent proliferation of technologies that rely on artificial intelligence (AI) has significant policy implications for Maine’s people, economy, and workforce;

WHEREAS, AI’s potential positive impacts could include creation of new jobs and businesses, gains in productivity and efficiency, and reduced barriers to entry in some technical fields;

WHEREAS, up to a fifth of American jobs are considered “highly exposed” to AI – jobs for which AI could present both opportunities to increase performance and risks of displacement or other negative impacts;

WHEREAS, both established businesses and a growing community of startups in Maine have already begun to adopt AI-based technologies into their core business practices;

WHEREAS, AI relies on collecting and interpreting large amounts of data from end users, which makes it susceptible to reinforcing biases, removing transparency from decision-making, and misusing private consumer information;

WHEREAS, at least 26 other states have established or are in the process of developing task forces or similar bodies to study policy issues related to AI;

WHEREAS, Maine’s Office of Information Technology has already taken steps to analyze risk for state infrastructure and has begun to develop capabilities to support state agency usage of AI tools;

WHEREAS, private industry, academia, and local and state government entities can collaboratively support and reinforce long-term AI policy strategies that leave Maine communities with less risk and better prepared for the future;

NOW THEREFORE, I, Janet T. Mills, Governor of the State of Maine, pursuant to authority conferred by Me. Const. Art. V, Pt. 1, §§ 1 & 12, do hereby Order the following:

1) **Task Force Established; Purpose**

- A. The Maine Artificial Intelligence Task Force (“Task Force”) is hereby established.
- B. The purpose of the Task Force is to investigate the implications of recent and anticipated advances in the field of AI for the State of Maine and make recommendations to:
 1. Prepare Maine’s economy and workforce for the opportunities and risks likely to result from advances in AI;
 2. 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;

3. 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.

2) Membership, Chairs, and Advisory Committee

- A. The Task Force shall consist of the following members:
 1. The Commissioner of the Department of Labor or their designee;
 2. The Commissioner of the Department of Economic and Community Development or their designee;
 3. The Commissioner of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services designee;
 4. The Commissioner of the Department of Education or their designee;
 5. The Commissioner of the Department of Health and Human Services or their designee;
 6. The Chancellor of the University of Maine System or their designee;
 7. The President of the Maine Community College System or their designee;
 8. The Director of Governor’s Office of Policy Innovation and the Future or their designee;
 9. The Director of the Maine Technology Institute or their designee;
 10. Two members of the Senate appointed by the President of the Senate, including one member from each of the two parties holding the largest number of seats in the Legislature;
 11. Two members of the House of the Representatives appointed by the Speaker of the House, including one member from each of the two parties holding the largest number of seats in the Legislature;
 12. A municipal leader;
 13. A representative of Maine workers;
 14. A representative from a civil rights advocacy organization;
 15. A representative from a consumer protection organization;
 16. A representative from a large employer or industry group;
 17. A representative from a small or medium business;
 18. A representative from Maine’s entrepreneurship community;
 19. A leader from a Maine health care organization.
- B. A Technical Advisory Committee shall inform the Task Force’s work. The Technical Advisory Committee shall consist of the following members:
 1. The Director of the Governor’s Energy Office or their designee;
 2. The President of the Maine Connectivity Authority or their designee;
 3. The Maine Attorney General or their designee;
 4. The Maine Chief Information Officer;
 5. The Director of the Maine Office of Information Technology AI Center of Excellence;

6. Two subject matter experts in AI technologies;
 7. A subject matter expert in legal issues presented by AI;
 8. A subject matter expert in Maine workforce data;
 9. A subject matter expert in financial markets.
- C. The Governor shall designate two members to serve as Co-Chairs of the Task Force and, unless otherwise indicated, shall appoint the members of the Task Force and Technical Advisory Committee identified in Sections II(A)&(B). The Co-chairs may, in their discretion, appoint additional experts to the Technical Advisory Committee.
- 3) **Funding and Staffing**
- A. The Governor’s Office of Policy Innovation and the Future and the Office of Information Technology shall provide such staff as may be necessary to fulfill the Task Force’s charge within existing resources and may seek staffing and financial support from other state agencies and private entities to accomplish the goals and work of the Task Force. Members of the Task Force and Technical Advisory Committee shall serve without compensation.
- 4) **Proceedings, Records, and Report**
- A. The Co-Chairs will preside at, set the agenda for, and schedule Task Force meetings. To the extent practical the Commission should conduct its work in a manner that is open and accessible to the public. Records, proceedings and deliberations of the Commission are not subject to the requirements of 1 M.R.S. c. 13, in accordance with sections 402(2)(F), (3)(J) and § 403(6) of that Chapter. The Commission may conduct its work through subcommittees, which may include non-Task Force members in advisory roles.
- B. The Task Force shall issue a public report of its findings to the Governor and the State Legislature no later than October 31, 2025.

Appendix – Task Force and Technical Advisory Committee Members

Task Force Members

- Laura Fortman, Commissioner, Maine Department of Labor
- Mike Duguay, Commissioner, Maine Department of Economic and Community Development
- Kirsten Figueroa, Commissioner, Maine Department of Administrative and Financial Services
- Pender Makin, Commissioner, Maine Department of Education
- Sara Gagné-Holmes, Commissioner, Maine Department of Health and Human Services
- Sarah Curran, Director, Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future
- Ryan Low, Vice Chancellor for Finance & Administration, University of Maine System
- David Daigler (**Co-Chair**), President, Maine Community College System
- Brian Whitney, President, Maine Technology Institute
- Sen. Nicole Grohoski, D-Hancock
- Sen. James Libby, R-Cumberland
- Rep. Dan Sayre, D-Kennebunk
- Rep. Mathew McIntyre, R-Lowell
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- John Brautigam, Public Policy Advocate, Legal Services for Maine's Elders
- JJ Rouhana, Chief Information Officer, LL Bean
- Michael Odokara-Okigbo, Chief Executive Officer, ESM Global/NKENNE
- Chris Mallett, Chief Administrative Officer, Roux Institute at Northeastern University
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- Dan Nigrin, Chief Information Officer, MaineHealth

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- Scott Kleiman, GOPIF
- Dan Matz, GOPIF

Appendix – Public comments summary

Survey 1

Between April and June 2025, the Task Force solicited input from the public via a survey hosted on the GOPIF website. The Task Force received 65 responses from members of the public.

Participation was spread across the state, though most respondents were from Cumberland, York, and Penobscot counties. Nearly three quarters reported being very familiar with AI, while most others indicated at least some familiarity. Just under half of respondents said they use AI daily; only 6 reported never using it. Reported contexts of use were fairly evenly split between personal and work settings, with smaller numbers citing school and volunteer or community roles.

When asked where AI could have the greatest positive impact in Maine, respondents highlighted a range of areas. The most common responses included education, business, government services, and environment and energy. Other areas such as healthcare, transportation and infrastructure, and job opportunities were also frequently cited, though a minority expressed uncertainty or felt there was no area where AI would be beneficial.

The survey also asked respondents if they have concerns about AI's risks for Maine people. Many respondents cited concerns about job disruption and displacement, bias in AI systems, uncertainty about AI's impact on Maine's environment and energy grid, and educational implications. Others raised concerns around security of AI systems, issues around copyright and intellectual property, and the opportunity costs of being slow to adopt AI technologies.

Survey 2

The Task Force issued a second call for public comments on a draft version of their final recommendations. Between September 30 and October 7, 2025, the Task Force received 48 responses from members of the public.

In this round, the public was asked for their reactions to recommendations on any or all of the six topics (economy, workforce, education, healthcare, AI-related harms, and the public sector). The draft education recommendations received the most engagement, followed by those related to the economy and the harms created or exacerbated by AI.

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