



MAINE WON'T WAIT FUNDING AND LEGISLATIVE UPDATE
SEPT. 29, 2021

Members of the Maine Climate Council,

In the nearly 10 months since we unveiled *Maine Won't Wait*, the Mills Administration and Maine Legislature have advanced significant, bipartisan legislation and allocated unprecedented funding to support the climate plan and achieve Maine's ambitious targets for curbing greenhouse gas emissions and transitioning to renewable energy.

We've seen some early wins, such as the heat pump installations in Maine doubling in just a year, which is helping Maine people lower their heating bills, reduce emissions, and sustain clean energy jobs. The adoption of electric vehicles is also trending up, as new models enter the market and charging infrastructure continues to expand around the state.

In the Legislature, bills to ban harmful hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), institute efficiency standards for appliance, and codify sea level rise projections have been enacted. Maine became the ninth state to create targets for battery storage of electricity and took a bold step forward with legislation calling for a "clean energy accelerator" to finance important climate and energy investments. All of this progress has further cemented Maine as a national leader in climate, clean energy, and sustainability.

The hard work continues. We all know the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's recent report calls climate trends a "code red" for humanity, and that urgent action is nonnegotiable. Only two years ago this month before the United Nations, Governor Mills vowed that "Maine Won't Wait" on climate change, a vow that this climate council has more than upheld.

In this packet, you will find an update on funding and legislation that support *Maine Won't Wait* priorities, and list of public announcements and news articles about *Maine Won't Wait* since your last meeting.

As we look ahead, the upcoming months are critical for climate action. As of this writing, the U.S. Congress is considering infrastructure bills that would invest billions into resilience and clean energy, ahead of the UN's worldwide conference on climate – COP26 – in Glasgow, Scotland in November.

We don't know what will happen next. But whatever happens, we know Maine won't wait.

Regards,



Hannah Pingree, Director
Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future



Melanie Loyszim
Commissioner, Department of Environmental Protection
Co-chairs, Maine Climate Council

FUNDING TO SUPPORT MAINE WON'T WAIT:

Funding for climate and energy priorities of *Maine Won't Wait* was included in the state biennial budget and the Maine Jobs & Recovery Plan, the plan by Governor Janet Mills to allocate nearly \$1 billion from the federal American Rescue Plan Act.

Creation of the Maine Connectivity Authority to expand broadband Internet access, using **\$150 million** in federal funds from the American Rescue Plan Act. Expanding broadband will create greater access to virtual work, education, and health care, and help reduce commuting miles and costs.

\$50 million from the Maine Jobs & Recovery Plan for energy efficiency programs, such as residential weatherization and efficiency upgrades, matching funds for municipal efficiency projects, and industry and business efficiency incentives.

\$50 million from the Maine Jobs & Recovery Plan for affordable housing, which includes assistance for communities, developers, and builders to encourage construction or production of affordable, energy efficient housing units close to service and employment centers and to reduce commuting time and transportation costs.

\$50 million for innovation in heritage industries, which includes \$20 million for forest product innovation into climate-friendly building materials such as wood-fiber insulation and cross-laminated timber.

\$40 million in the biennial budget for land conservation, which contributes to Maine's fight against the climate change by maximizing carbon storage, supporting working farms and forests, and ensuring valuable ecosystems remain in place for future generations.

\$20 million from the Maine Jobs & Recovery Plan to support adaptation and resilience of state and local infrastructure vulnerable to climate change.

\$8 million from the Maine Jobs & Recovery Plan for advancing clean energy partnerships and initiatives to grow workforce and innovation in Maine's clean energy sector, in support of Governor Mills' goal of 30,000 clean energy jobs in Maine by 2030.

\$8 million from the Maine Jobs & Recovery Plan to expand municipal and public electric vehicle charging.

\$5 million from the Maine Jobs & Recovery Plan for workforce transportation pilot projects to expand public transportation, ride-sharing programs, and develop innovative public transportation options in rural areas to reduce commuting miles and costs.

\$4.75 million from the biennial budget for local and regional planning grants to prepare for climate change effects, reduce carbon emissions, and transition to renewable energy.

\$3.1 million from the biennial budget for studies, research, and staff to support power sector transformation, grid modernization and offshore wind.

\$3 million from the Maine Jobs & Recovery Plan to upgrade municipal culverts at stream crossings.

\$300,000 for eelgrass mapping; **\$200,000** for HFC, sea level rise, and appliance standards rulemaking; and **\$400,000** for forest carbon mapping to the Department of Environmental Protection from the biennial budget.

LEGISLATION THAT ALIGNS WITH MAINE WON'T WAIT:

LD 99 An Act To Require the State to Divest Itself of Assets Invested in the Fossil Fuels Industry

LD 226 An Act To Limit the Use of Hydrofluorocarbons To Fight Climate Change ([Factsheet](#))

LD 336 An Act To Encourage Research To Support the Maine Offshore Wind Industry

LD 340 An Act To Allow for the Establishment of Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy Programs

LD 347 An Act To Facilitate Maine's Climate Goals by Encouraging Use of Electric Vehicles

LD 437 An Act To Establish the Maine Healthy Soils Program

LD 528 An Act To Advance Energy Storage in Maine

LD 593 An Act To Restore Eelgrass Mapping and Enhance Salt Marsh Vegetation Mapping in the State

LD 597 An Act To Establish the Wood Energy Investment Program

LD 609 Resolve, To Establish a Commission To Increase Housing Opportunities in Maine by Studying Zoning and Land Use Restrictions

LD 722 Resolve, To Study the Establishment of the Maine Climate Corps

LD 815 An Act To Support School Decarbonization

LD 820 Resolve, To Convene a Working Group To Develop Plans To Protect Maine's Agricultural Lands When Siting Solar Arrays

LD 936 An Act To Amend State Laws Relating to Net Energy Billing and the Procurement of Distributed Generation

LD 937 Resolve, To Facilitate the Provision of Incentives for Soil Carbon Storage

LD 940 An Act To Establish Appliance Energy and Water Standards

LD 1053 An Act to Allow Microgrids in the Public Interest

LD 1100 An Act To Support the Continued Access to Solar Energy and Battery Storage by Maine Homes and Businesses

LD 1484 An Act To Enhance the ConnectMaine Authority's Capacity To Provide World-class Internet

LD 1572 Resolve, To Analyze the Impact of Sea Level Rise ([Factsheet](#))

LD 1659 An Act To Create the Maine Clean Energy and Sustainability Accelerator

LD 1682 An Act To Require Consideration of Climate and Equity Impacts by the Public Utilities Commission

LD 1710 An Act To Require Prompt and Effective Use of the Renewable Energy Resources of Northern Maine

RECENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sept. 24: During a visit to Dave's World in Dover-Foxcroft, [Governor Janet Mills announced that more than 28,000 high-efficiency heat pumps](#) have been installed in Maine buildings over the past year, marking a major milestone toward the governor's target of installing 100,000 new heat pumps by 2025.

Sept. 23: Governor Mills gives remarks on Climate Week [during U.S. Climate Alliance event.](#)

Sept. 20: [Governor Janet Mills proclaimed Clean Energy Week in Maine.](#) to recognize the critical need to develop clean, renewable energy to contribute to the global efforts against climate change, offset the use of imported fossil fuels, and build a thriving economy with good-paying jobs across Maine.

Aug. 10: Governor Janet Mills and members of her administration [released the following statements](#) in response to the Sixth Assessment Report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

June 1: GOPIF announced the selection of [8 Maine communities for local climate change planning projects.](#) The communities have been selected to participate in pilot projects for local climate resilience planning to help them prepare for effects of climate change and develop climate planning models for towns and cities in Maine. The pilot projects are supported by \$125,000 in private funds donated to the Maine Climate Council.



NEWS ARTICLES SELECTED FROM THE BIWEEKLY CLIMATE COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

Blue Hill peninsula towns planning for climate change: A Blue Hill peninsula planning group is fostering regional collaboration to prepare for climate change, and recently held a workshop, “Blue Hill Peninsula Climate Change: Who Pays and How?” to discuss climate change impacts and funding and planning resources for towns.

Climate Initiatives in Maine’s Legislature: a more in-depth look at 10 climate measures [passed by the Maine Legislature this session](#).

Dual Use Solar: Maine farmers are collaborating with solar developers to creatively grow solar power on agricultural land, with examples ranging from [solar sheep grazing in Skowhegan](#) and locating [solar panels alongside low-bush blueberries in Rockport](#).

Pandemic and Climate Change: Climate Council co-chair Hannah Pingree recently called in for Maine Calling’s discussion of [“Climate & The Pandemic: Effects of the Pandemic on Climate Change & Lessons Learned about Global Crises.”](#)

City of Ships prepares for Climate Change: Bath residents have already noticed growing impacts from climate change like flooding and sea level rise, and the “City of Ships” is working to become more [resilient and prepare for future climate impacts](#).

Maine towns cutting heating, lighting bills: grants from Efficiency Maine Trust and The Nature Conservancy are helping 60 Maine municipalities cut bills and carbon emissions through [140 energy efficiency projects](#).

Maine’s electric vehicle incentives extended for another year: Efficiency Maine Trust has announced that it will extend its [EV incentive program for the next year](#), two years after it began, helping Maine continue progress towards our greenhouse gas emissions goals. If you missed earlier announcements, enhanced incentives for lower income Mainers are available for the purchase of both new and used EVs.

Planning for climate change around Maine: the town of Kittery has recently dedicated funding to [create their climate action plan](#), following recommendations from their Climate Adaptation Committee. Bar Harbor’s Task Force on the Climate Emergency will soon be [presenting a climate action plan to their town council](#).

Maine philanthropists demonstrating climate leadership: In a summer awash with climate catastrophes, stories of creative solutions float like lifeboats. One Maine example is particularly heartening: an unusual partnership between philanthropists and state policy leaders that has directed more than \$700,000 into work on the state’s [Climate Action Plan](#).

Maine’s climate is getting more unpredictable – are you ready? Maine’s climate isn’t just getting warmer – it’s becoming more extreme and unpredictable. Now is the time to make your home more resilient, experts say.

Portland Initiative Aims To Reduce Carbon Footprint With Heat Pumps, Solar Panels, EV Chargers Portland’s ‘Electrify Everything’ campaign will use bulk purchasing to lower the cost of heat pumps, solar panels, and electric vehicle chargers for businesses and homeowners.

UMaine to join Bangor and Orono in creating a regional climate action plan: The University of Maine is joining forces with Bangor and Orono to address the region’s impact on the climate as part of a collaborative that aims to stretch across Penobscot County.

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