

## **Highlights of LD 258 Budget Initiatives**

In January 2023, Governor Mills [unveiled her Administration's budget proposal](#) for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2024-2025 biennium. The Legislature then divided the Governor's budget proposal into two pieces of legislation: LD 424, which funds current services for Fiscal Years 2024-2025 and LD 258, which includes the remaining budget initiatives not funded as current services.

The [Legislature passed](#) and [Governor Mills signed](#) LD 424, the current services budget for Fiscal Years 2024-2025, in March 2023.

The following are highlights of the budget initiatives proposed in LD 258:

- Nearly \$123 million to promote the health of Maine people, including:
  - \$7 million to bolster direct response to the opioid crisis and funding to support substance use prevention, treatment, and recovery;
  - nearly \$8 million to catalyze improvements to behavioral health care for children;
  - \$12 million for foster care and adoption assistance to support the child welfare system;
  - more than \$8 million to strengthen care for older Mainers through home-delivered meals and programs that reduce abuse, neglect and exploitation;
  - nearly \$21 million for MaineCare rates for long-term care facilities to support the health of older Mainers and individuals with disabilities;
  - \$12 million to improve access to services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, including funding to transform service delivery by creating a new Lifespan waiver to connect individuals with the services they need over their lifetime within a single program rather than various sections of MaineCare.
- \$30 million to expand affordable rental housing options for workers and their families through equal funding to the Rural Affordable Rental Housing Program and the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program.
- \$15 million to continue providing up to two years of free community college for all students from the high school graduating classes of 2024 and 2025.
- Nearly \$55 million in higher education funding to support a 4.5 percent increase for Maine's public higher education institutions, including the University of Maine System, the Maine Community College System, and Maine Maritime Academy;

including \$6 million for the Maine Economic Improvement Fund which provides ongoing investment for research and development.

- \$10 million to increase the Maine State Grant Program's maximum award from \$2500 to \$3,000, providing need-based grants to Maine undergraduate students to help with the cost of higher education.
- \$400 million made available for the Maine Department of Transportation to repair Maine's multimodal infrastructure system, potentially matching up to \$1 billion in federal funds under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.
- More than \$31 million for State government capital requests, including funding for the Department of Marine Resources to purchase a Marine Patrol seaplane that can also assist with Right Whale research and more than \$14 million to leverage an estimated \$18.2 million in Federal funding for National Guard facility repairs and renovations that will result in better training, increased unit readiness, safer working environments for Soldiers, and improved morale.
- More than \$10 million to expand preschool programming for children with disabilities

In total, LD 258 proposes \$388 million in appropriations and \$250 million in transfers.

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