

### **On Investments in Economic Recovery and Growth:**

“By emphasizing investments in economic recovery, broadband, childcare, innovation and workforce development, Governor Mills has set the right priorities to support Maine’s people, while creating a strong foundation for economic growth,” **said Joshua Broder, CEO of Tilson, and Laurie Lachance, President of Thomas College, co-chairs of the Governor’s Economic Recovery Committee.** “We commend the governor and her administration for their dedicated attention to the issues facing Maine’s families and communities, and for bringing forth bold initiatives to restore Maine’s economic trajectory, grow jobs in our state, and further establish Maine as among the nation’s best places to live and work.”

“The COVID-19 pandemic has laid bare deep inequalities of income, wealth and power that cut along lines of race, class, gender and geography” **said Matt Schlobohm, Executive Director of the Maine AFL-CIO.** “As we forge Maine’s economic recovery we must build back better by growing our economy from the bottom up and the middle out, by addressing these deep inequalities head on and by being laser focused on creating high quality, union jobs. We applaud the proposed investments in apprenticeship and worker training, housing, childcare, broadband, fixing our state parks and rebuilding Maine’s infrastructure.”

“State government has an important role to play ensuring that Maine recovers faster from the pandemic and 2020 economic downturn than it did after the Great Recession, and recovers in a way that engages all Mainers,” **said Keith Bisson, President of CEI, and Betsy Biemann, CEO of CEI, and member of the Governor’s Economic Recovery Committee.** “We are pleased that the Governor’s Maine Jobs & Recovery Plan includes key investments that will help recover and grow Maine’s economy and enable Maine people to thrive. To be successful Maine must invest more in a sustainable food economy, child care and broadband infrastructure, especially in rural areas and this package is an important indicator of our state’s values and tremendous opportunities.”

“As Maine continues to work through the pandemic and into full economic recovery, it is fortuitous that Governor Mills had already established a ten-year Economic Development Strategy to grow the state’s economy, coupled with the Economic Recovery Committee’s recommendations to guide our investments,” **said Dana Connors, president and CEO of the Maine State Chamber of Commerce.** “Using these documents as our road map, the Maine State Chamber supports the Governor’s proposal for use of the American Recovery Act funds, because they represent short-term investments that will result in long-term gains to Maine employers and their employees.”

“In recent years, Maine’s Community Action Agencies have adopted new and innovative approaches to meeting many of the challenges facing low-income families to assist in their stability and economic advancement,” **said Jason Parent, President of Maine Community Action Partnership and CEO of the Aroostook County Action Program.** “As non-profit organizations working with some of the most

vulnerable families and individuals in our state, the key provisions in the Maine Jobs & Recovery Plan package that support low-income Mainers and residents of rural rim counties are critical for helping ensure no one is left behind as we move the state out of this pandemic.”

“The Governor charts a bold course for Maine’s recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic,” **said Jeanne Lambrew, Commissioner of the Department of Health and Human Services.** “The Maine Jobs & Recovery Plan helps small businesses provide affordable health care coverage to their workers, child care providers construct new facilities, and front-line health care providers partner with Maine to train, attract, and retain a high-quality workforce.”

“The Maine Jobs & Recovery plan balances short term economic need with an ability to invest in long term economic growth and good jobs,” **said Heather Johnson, Commissioner to the Department of Economic and Community Development.** “This is an investment in talent and innovation, which are critical as we move forward in the growth of Maine’s economy. The State is fortunate to have a roadmap for the Maine Jobs & Recovery Plan in the 10-Year Strategic Plan along with the recommendations of the Governor’s Economic Recovery Committee.”

#### **On Investments in Workforce Development:**

“Through the Maine Jobs & Recovery Plan, the Governor has dedicated funding for large scale investment in Maine’s workforce,” **said Laura Fortman, Commissioner of the Maine Department of Labor.** “This will provide needed, targeted support for educational and training opportunities for Maine people to access careers in industries that vital to Maine’s economy. The Department of Labor is eager get to work connecting Maine people and employers with these exciting opportunities, and help our economy and communities thrive.”

“The University of Maine System (UMS) is poised to put new American Rescue Plan investments to work immediately to build new research and development infrastructure that will put Mainers on pathways to careers in Maine’s traditional and emerging economic sectors,” **said University of Maine System Chancellor Dannel Malloy and Vice Chancellor for Research and Innovation Joan Ferrini-Mundy.** “ARP investments will be linked with Harold Alfond Foundation-funded UMS TRANSFORMS projects to have an even greater impact across the UMS R&D infrastructure to create the talent pipelines Maine needs to lead in the future envisioned in the Maine Economic Development Strategy 2020-2029.”

“The governor’s proposed plan captures both the strategic vision for the state and a reckoning with the fiscal demands of that vision,” **said David Daigler, President of the Maine Community College System.** “Smart, strategic investments in workforce training programs at Maine’s community colleges are a key part of that strategy. Mainers looking for good-paying jobs in high-demand fields need immediate access to high-

quality training right in their own communities - and Maine's community colleges can bring significantly more of that training, to more places, with this plan.”

“We commend Governor Mills’ support for Career and Technical Education Centers/Regions and Community Colleges, which provide Maine students exceptional learning opportunities and prepare them for future success as skilled members of Maine’s workforce,” **said Dave Keaton, CTE Director of Region Two School of Applied Technology in Houlton and incoming Executive Director of Maine Administrators of Career and Technical Education (MACTE).** “These additional resources will help Maine’s CTEs unleash the potential of Maine’s young people, help fill Maine’s high-growth careers, and create sustained economic growth.”

“I would like to express my thanks to Governor Mills for continuing to support education, especially Career and Technical Education,” **said David Dorr, Director of the Somerset Career and Technical Center.** “The Governor’s Maine Jobs and Recovery Plan will allow schools like mine to buy the equipment we need to continue giving all students the opportunity to learn a skill, fill needed jobs, and earn a comfortable living while strengthening Maine’s economy.”

“We are excited by Governor Mills’ efforts to expand career exploration, develop high quality internships, and increase support for postsecondary education to help Maine students prepare to thrive in our economy,” said **Jason Judd, Executive Director of Educate Maine.** “Her significant investment in postsecondary education and CTE programs will help Maine meet its 2025 goal of having 60 percent of Mainers holding education and workforce credentials valued by Maine’s businesses and industries.”

“Maine’s most vital resource is its people. Attracting and retaining diverse talent is crucial to our economy and the vibrancy of our communities,” said **Tae Chong, Consultant to Maine State Chamber on Multicultural Markets, Principal at Fresh Out of the Box Thinking LLC, and Chair of the DEI working group for the Governor’s Economic Recovery Committee,** “The Governor’s investment in equity will grow Maine’s economy by leveraging the talents of all Maine people, especially its fast growing bi- and multi-cultural populations. Maine has an opportunity to become a diverse, equitable, and inclusive state that supports its people and welcomes others. I am grateful for her leadership and her vision to make Maine a better place for all.”

“The Maine Renewable Energy Association applauds Governor Mills for her forward-thinking approach to responsibly growing the state’s clean energy economy. It is critical that we pair clean energy development and innovation with a well-trained and growing Maine-based workforce -- for too long efforts have not identified and proposed solutions to fill the holes in our workforce -- we know we must bring forward answers for how we go about filling those holes including for those Mainers in today’s workforce, and those entering in the future,” **said Jeremy Payne, Executive Director of Maine Renewable Energy Association.** “Clear, consistent policies will allow clean energy companies to create hundreds and hundreds of jobs next year, five years from now, and a decade down the road.”

“Maine’s hospitals are thankful to Governor Mills for making health care workforce a priority in the Maine Jobs & Recovery Plan,” **said Steven Michaud, President of the Maine Hospital Association.** “Shortages in key health care jobs abound and it is critical we work together to address them. Everyone wins when we invest in our workers, because it preserves and improves access to health care and good paying, highly satisfying jobs for Maine people, especially in rural communities.”

“Maine is one of the best places in the world to start a company and the clean tech sector is growing fast with intense investor demand,” **said Martin Grohman, Executive Director, E2Tech.** “Maine can only gain by increasing partnerships and state support that foster innovative startups and create clean energy jobs.”

### **On Investments in Heritage Industry and Innovation & Research and Development:**

“The Maine Forest Products Council is appreciative of Governor Mills support of the forest economy in her Maine Jobs & Recovery Plan,” **said Patrick J. Strauch, Executive Director of the Maine Forest Products Council.** “My members have invested in Maine with past support of the MTI Maine Technology Asset Fund, providing jobs and business growth in Maine’s rural economies. The opportunities for encouraging investment in emerging wood technologies and in training the workforce of today and tomorrow are imperative for a growing forest economy. We appreciate her leadership through difficult times and into a more prosperous future.”

“FOR/Maine (Forest Opportunity Roadmap) applauds Governor Mills for advocating forward-thinking investment for forest sector economic development opportunities,” **said Steve Schley, Chair of FOR/Maine Executive Committee.** “These ideas fit within the framework of our multi-year, unique, and diverse, industry-led coalition that includes communities, government, education, and non-profits, which have come together to realize the next generation of Maine’s great forest economy. Investments of innovation capital, and within workforce systems expansion/development, are critical to driving success toward our goal of expanding and diversifying Maine’s rural Maine forest industry job opportunities and economy from \$8.5 billion to \$12 billion in the next few years.”

“Governor Mills’ decision to allocate \$20 million to farm and food processing infrastructure will have a direct, dramatic, and far-reaching positive impact on Maine agriculture. It gives me great hope for the future of the Maine wild blueberry industry,” **said Eric Venturini, Executive Director of the Wild Blueberry Commission of Maine.** “This funding will spur needed growth and innovation and will empower wild blueberry farms and businesses to innovate, grow, and achieve economic sustainability.”

“Over the last decade farmers and food entrepreneurs have launched value added food businesses, food processing companies, and distribution solutions throughout Maine, creating quality jobs in rural communities and expanding markets for farm goods in Maine and beyond,” **said Sam May, Co-founder and Board Chair, and Linzee**

**Weld, Board Member, Maine Harvest Federal Credit Union.** “New funding from Governor Mills’ Maine Jobs & Recovery Plan will help these businesses on their innovation and growth trajectories and will further strengthen Maine’s growing food economy.”

“Investing in offshore enforcement is critical to sustaining the Maine lobster fishery by ensuring compliance with lobster conservation laws and right whale protections,” **said Patrice McCarron, Executive Director of the Maine Lobsterman’s Association.** “This new, highly efficient platform will replace a small, aging Marine Patrol vessel, ensuring that law enforcement can operate effectively and safely offshore to protect the health and safety of both our fishermen and our fishery.”

“The State’s support of Ready Seafood’s lobster processing plant helped us invest in equipment and infrastructure that has led directly to the development of new lobster products, new jobs and new revenue right here in Maine,” **said Curt Brown, Marine Biologist with Ready Seafood.** “Investments that support businesses like ours will support the lobster industry, help hire more Maine people, and result in a stronger economy.”

“Shellfish aquaculture is a true bright spot of growth in Maine’s marine economy, but warming ocean temperatures pose some challenges to the sector,” **said Sebastian Belle, Executive Director of the Maine Aquaculture Association.** “This funding from the Maine Jobs & Recovery Plan would increase the Department of Marine Resources’ biotoxin testing capabilities and dramatically improve the agency’s ability to make fine scale decisions regarding biotoxin closures on a real-time basis. This ensures that public health is top priority while continuing to ensure the Maine brand represents the highest quality in the marketplace.”

“State support through R&D bonds and Maine Technology Institute funding has helped us develop our innovative wall containment product and quickly scale our operations,” **said Chris Vickers, President & CEO of STARC Systems.** “We now employ over 80 people and are one of the fastest growing manufacturing companies in the nation. We applaud the investment in innovation from the Maine Jobs & Recovery Plan, which will help other Maine companies like ours grow and thrive.”

#### **On Investments in Infrastructure:**

“Governor Mills’ Maine Jobs & Recovery Plan includes investment priorities for local government,” **said James Bennett, Maine Municipal Association Vice President, Legislative Policy Committee Chair, and Biddeford City Manager.** “Investment in roads, bridges and broadband will help Maine communities grow and prosper. Investments in wastewater and drinking programs and climate adaptation support our efforts to protect the natural resources that make Maine a vacation destination and support our heritage businesses. Investments in home weatherization and municipal energy efficiency will help residents cut heating costs and help communities make the best use of taxpayer resources. Maine municipal officials support these initiatives in the proposal as a means for sustaining Maine’s economic vitality.”

## Roads and Bridges:

“The transportation funding in the Governor’s plan to use federal recovery funds provides a critically-needed offset to reductions in state Highway Fund revenue and allows MaineDOT to continue to deliver planned highway and bridge projects across the state this year,” **said MaineDOT Commissioner Bruce Van Note**. “This not only provides good-paying jobs now that will help Maine continue to recover from the pandemic, but also improves the safety of the traveling public and helps maintain an essential foundation for long-term economic prosperity.”

“Maine has been a standout for allowing construction work to continue during the pandemic, and that’s attributed to hard-working, skilled craft workers and their companies who quickly adapted safety protocols,” **said Matt Marks, CEO of Associated General Contractors of Maine**. “Now that we are turning a corner on COVID-19, it’s imperative that Maine continue to invest in our infrastructure backlog and keep Mainers working. The physical infrastructure funding designated in the Governor’s package using American Rescue Plan (ARP) funding helps accomplish that.”

## Broadband:

“The pandemic has shown how real the digital divide is in our great State, and how important it is to ensure that every home and business has a robust broadband connection,” **said Susan Corbett, Founder & Director, National Digital Equity Center**. “We need to advance digital equity and inclusion by increasing access to broadband, computers and devices, and expanding digital literacy training for every Maine citizen.”

“High speed internet is extremely important to daily life and the pandemic highlights how important broadband is to helping people work remotely, making sure students can attend schools, keeping people connected with their families, and allowing government to continue to function,” **said Nick Battista, Senior Policy Officer at the Island Institute and Chair of the ConnectMaine Authority Board**. “Governor Mills commitment to expanding broadband in Maine recognizes the important role state leadership plays in closing the digital divide.”

“When it comes to expanding high speed broadband in Maine, Governor Mills’ leadership has been extremely important. The Governor’s support for the \$15 million ConnectME broadband bond in 2020, as well as her decisive action to secure and authorize use of the federal CARES Act funding to improve high speed broadband access to rural students in Maine, has made all the difference,” **said Shirley Manning, President of LCI Fiber Optic Network and Tidewater Telecom**. “As the owner of several small communications companies in Maine, I truly appreciate the Governor’s willingness to think creatively and work in partnership with the private sector to meet our shared goal of bringing fiber optic broadband to as many homes and business in Maine as quickly as possible.”

## Energy Efficiency

“When Mainers invest in weatherizing their homes and buildings, there is a cascade of benefits from lower heating costs, to better comfort, to less greenhouse gas emissions,” **said Michael Stoddard, Executive Director of the Efficiency Maine Trust.** “Receiving an injection of federal funds from the Maine Jobs & Recovery Plan to promote insulation and clean heating systems will provide a major boost to the many small businesses across the state that deliver these services.”

### Child Care and Early Childhood Education

“Today’s announcement is just the latest example of Governor Mills’ prioritization of education during her tenure,” **said Pender Makin, Commissioner of the Maine Department of Education.** “This significant investment in the expansion of pre-K programming allows communities to equitably address barriers so that, together, we will reach our goal of universal access to high-quality early childhood education.”

“The Maine Association for the Education of Young Children appreciates the Governor’s recognition of early education and child care as essential for children, families, and our economy,” **said Tara Williams, Executive Director, MaineAEYC.** “Expansion of child care facilities, publicly funded pre-K, and the early childhood workforce initiatives in our state’s 10-year economic development plan will work together to build a strong early care and education system in Maine.”

“We know that many Maine families struggle to find child care and early childhood education for their young children. Investments in child care infrastructure grants for new and expanding programs will improve access for Maine families by increasing the number of safe, healthy, and developmentally appropriate early education environments for young children,” **said Stephanie Eglinton, Executive Director of Maine Children’s Alliance.** “We also applaud the Governor’s decision to invest in public pre-K with incentives for schools to partner with Head Start and community programs.”

“In Franklin County, like other rural parts of our state, many working parents are struggling to find quality, affordable early care and education for their young children. As an early childhood education professor who works with many different types of child care providers, I am aware of the challenge of starting a new child care facility and making it work financially,” **said Donna Karno, Associate Professor of Early Childhood Education from Franklin County.** “The Governor’s proposal for public pre-K and child care infrastructure grants provides for a critical investment in our early care and education system. The child care infrastructure funding, in particular, will support the opening and expansion of child care facilities that will increase access for working families, particularly in the rural parts of Maine.”

### Protecting Natural Resources:

“Maine’s State Parks are hosting visitors in record numbers, and the Governor’s proposed investment in infrastructure improvements comes at a pivotal moment,” **said Amanda Beal, Commissioner of the Maine Department of Agriculture,**

**Conservation and Forestry.** "And like our parks, our agriculture and forestry sectors play an important role in our economy and everyday lives, which has come into even sharper focus during the pandemic. Through the Governor's Maine Jobs & Recovery Plan, Maine can strengthen our forest products industry and food system, along with our rural communities."

"Governor Mills has chosen a path forward that will open up opportunities for Maine people, strengthen our clean energy economy, and help us emerge from the pandemic stronger than before," **said Pete Didisheim, Advocacy Director, Natural Resources Council of Maine.** "The investments laid out in the Maine Jobs & Recovery Plan will deliver cleaner air and water, lower electricity bills, newly trained employees, and additional jobs for Maine people, especially in our rural communities. We are particularly excited about the proposed investment in Maine State Parks and in energy efficiency improvements for businesses, municipalities, and homeowners. These are critical, positive investments that will deliver dividends for decades to come."

"These targeted investments in State parks and natural lands, workforce development, and community infrastructure will result in healthier people and a stronger Maine economy," **said Maureen Drouin, Executive Director, Maine Conservation Voters.** "We applaud Governor Mills' leadership in advancing climate solutions that will have an immediate impact on our economy and ensure a better future for our kids."

"This plan represents a critical investment in Maine's economy and environment and a significant step toward a climate-ready future," **said Kate Dempsey, state director of The Nature Conservancy in Maine.** "With bold investments in clean energy jobs, modern and resilient transportation infrastructure, healthy communities and access to the outdoors, this is a plan worthy of the Maine we need to build if we are to meet the challenges ahead."

"The Maine Recovery and Jobs Plan represents a major step forward in the State's commitment to, and investment in, resilient and climate ready infrastructure. Disaster damages are only expected to worsen with rising sea levels and changing climate conditions. This financial assistance will give Maine communities the ability to address susceptible infrastructure in the most proactive and economical way possible," **said Anne Fuchs, Director of Mitigation, Planning, and Recovery at Maine Emergency Management Agency.** "With a recent National Institute of Building Sciences (NIBS) [study finding that \\$1 invested in mitigation avoids up to \\$14](#) in disaster damages, this investment is an absolutely massive win, and a really exciting time for communities across the State of Maine."

"Fishing is at the fabric of nearly ever Mainer, and during the pandemic we have seen a surge in the number of people who are fishing Maine's waters. These funds not only will allow us to modernize our hatchery facilities but also safeguard the health of our fisheries while protecting Maine's waters," **said Judy Camuso, Commissioner of the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife.** "Recreational fishing



contributes over \$300 million to Maine's economy, and these funds will allow us to continue to enhance Maine's fisheries, solidifying Maine's reputation as a premier fishing destination for residents and visitors alike."

"This relief package isn't just about recovery — it's about how we build a strong foundation for the future," **said Pat Keliher, Commissioner of the Maine Department of Marine Resources.** "This plan will help businesses to grow and become more resilient by developing new markets through increased seafood processing capacity here in Maine. It will make investments in state infrastructure that will save taxpayer dollars for decades to come by reducing energy and fuel costs. Improved public access to the waterfront at state facilities will enable Mainers and visitors to get out and enjoy all that our coast has to offer. Governor Mills' plan truly reflects the many ways the marine economy and environment are of critical importance to our state."

"We are thrilled that the governor recognizes the importance of Maine's fisheries, and flattered by her support for the Maine's outdoors," **said David Trahan, Executive Director of the Sportsman's Alliance of Maine.** "Maine's hatcheries are at the core of Maine's fisheries, and these funds will modernize the department's facilities, allowing the department to produce more fish, keep our waters clean, and continue to enhance our fisheries. The needed improvements will continue to bolster Maine's outdoor recreational economy, and anglers of all ages will benefit for years to come."

#### Making Government More Accessible:

"As we modernize and create digital citizen interfaces and retrofit our capital infrastructure, allowing citizens to safely and efficiently access the essential programs and services of State government, we can improve the efficiency and availability of government, at a time when it is needed more than ever, while also reducing long-term operational costs," **said Kirsten Figueroa, Commissioner for the Department of Administrative & Financial Service.** "Federal relief continues to be a significant resource as we navigate the stormy waters of the COVID-19 pandemic, and these Federal relief funds are no exception. We will continue to be good stewards, administering the programs and related reporting with an eye toward compliance and transparency — and with a focus on addressing the needs of those most adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic."