



Senator Rebecca MILLET

DISTRICT 29

Proudly representing Cape Elizabeth, South Portland and part of Scarborough

Dear Friend,

After speaking with community members throughout our district, I was honored to return to Maine's State House to keep working on your behalf. This session, it was refreshing to have Democrats and Republicans in the Senate seated beside each other instead of divided by a partisan aisle. Bringing back respect and civility to Augusta was long overdue. We refocused on supporting working Mainers, investing in small businesses, advancing renewable clean energy, protecting our environment, laying the groundwork for the success of our children, and helping Maine's aging population.

“No one should worry about losing their job or paycheck if child care is unexpectedly canceled.”

Now that the first year of our work has come to a close, I'm proud of what we were able to accomplish for the people of Maine.

- **We passed a budget that provides \$130 million in property tax relief.** We expanded the Property Tax Fairness Credit, increased the Homestead Exemption and made significant steps toward fully restoring revenue sharing. This means more Mainers can afford to stay in their homes and make ends meet.

- **We fought to make health care more affordable and more accessible.** We passed laws to prevent insurance companies from discriminating against Mainers with preexisting conditions and stood up to “Big Pharma” by passing our sweeping prescription drug reform package.

- **I sponsored the first-in-the-nation statewide earned paid time off policy,** which passed with strong bipartisan support in the Senate. No one should worry about losing their job or paycheck if child care is unexpectedly canceled, or if their aging parent has a health scare. This bill provides Mainers with some breathing room if and when the unexpected happens, while also protecting small businesses.

These are just the highlights. Looking back, I believe we made a lot of progress in making Maine a better place to live, work, raise a family and eventually retire. But I know there is still a lot of work left. I promise to keep fighting for our health, environment, families, and better jobs next year.

Please don't hesitate to reach out to me about the issues that matter to you. Thank you for all your input. It's an honor to serve you in Augusta.

Sincerely,

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Putting Maine workers and jobs first

In Maine, working families and small businesses are at the core of our communities and economies. This session, we prioritized legislation that makes it easier for both to not just make ends meet, but thrive.

I was proud to sponsor a first-in-the-nation statewide earned paid time off policy. Under this new law, more Mainers won't have to choose between their paycheck and dealing with an unexpected emergency. This includes caring for a sick child, bringing an aging parent to a doctor's appointment or dealing with a flat tire. This new law provides earned paid time off to 85 percent of all Maine workers, while also helping our businesses reduce employee turnover.



Taking a break during session to speak with reporters and Mainers about earned paid time off

Investing in the next generation of Mainers

This session, lawmakers made serious investments in young Mainers' education so they can become successful leaders and workers.

The state budget provides \$111 million in new funding for K-12 education and \$18 million for the School Revolving Loan Fund to repair aging buildings. It also builds a bridge to a \$40,000 minimum teacher salary by 2022. While I wish it was more to reflect what teachers truly deserve, it's a good start.

I sponsored bills to expand the community school model, ensure counselors and social workers spend most of their time with children, and improve school attendance. The goal is to make sure our children are getting the support they need at school to become successful adults.

I also sponsored a bill to require lead testing in Maine's public schools, as well as one that will make it more difficult for minors to get access to tobacco products. These new laws together will help the next generation stay healthy.

We Took on "Big Pharma" and we won

Too many Mainers are struggling to afford the prescription drugs they need to survive. Meanwhile, drug companies and middlemen are making outrageous profits on the backs of hardworking people. It doesn't have to be this way. This year, I joined my colleagues to support a suite of prescription drug reform bills, which earned unanimous, bipartisan support in the Senate. **These new laws will make medicine more affordable and more accessible, increase price transparency, and hold corporate middlemen accountable.**

The first law allows Maine to wholesale import prescription drugs from Canada, which are both safe and more affordable. The second creates a Prescription Drug Affordability Board that will give consumers a voice in drug pricing, curb public spending, and help drive down costs. The third law holds accountable middlemen corporations that have pocketed savings meant for consumers. The final piece of this puzzle requires drug companies to share information on costs related to drug production, marketing, advertising and consumer price.

Fighting for equality

All Mainers — regardless of who you are or where you're from — deserve fair treatment. Mainers deserve equal pay for equal work. That's why we passed a law to ensure one act of pay discrimination won't hurt workers through their entire career. This will help more Maine workers achieve financial stability. We also made sure references to the Governor and Maine Supreme Court Justices are gender-neutral in official documents. These changes are some of the key steps we took toward achieving real equality.

As we reflect on 100 years of women's suffrage, we can acknowledge how far we've come, while looking forward to the work we still have to accomplish.



With a group of South Portland students who helped educate me on the prevalence of vaping in their school

“Rebecca is a legislative grand slam: She works tirelessly on behalf of children and families, ensures funding for our schools, makes public health a top priority and is determined to give all Mainers a fair shot.”

**- Megan McConagha and John Christie,
South Portland residents**



I was happy to welcome Sam “The Bottle Man” Rideout to the Senate. Sam raised \$6,300 from bottles and cans last year in order to buy Christmas gifts for children in the hospital.

Protecting Maine’s natural resources

From working waterfronts to forest and agricultural products, Maine’s natural resources contribute billions to our economy each year. This session, I worked hard to keep it that way.

I took action to protect the water quality of our rivers and the Gulf of Maine. I supported efforts to continue restoring the Penobscot River and protect sustenance fishing rights of Maine tribes. And I voted to ban offshore drilling. These measures will help ensure the long-term health of our inland fishing and marine resources.

Earlier this year, South Portland learned a company had been violating the federal Clean Air Act for more than 10 years, but the EPA never told the city. To make sure this never happens again, I submitted legislation, which is now law, to make sure municipalities are notified of such violations.

I proudly supported the bill to create the bipartisan Governor’s Climate Council, which will lead efforts to reduce greenhouse gas pollution, achieve 100% renewable energy by 2050, and create good-paying green energy jobs.

I also supported new laws that will incentivize more solar power projects in Maine and help small- and medium-sized groups move forward on solar projects.

Keeping our promise on property tax relief

Rising property taxes have caused hardships for Mainers all over the State. It’s why lowering property taxes has remained at the top of our agenda for years. In 2017, we increased the Homestead Exemption Program. In 2018, we increased the Property Tax Fairness Credit. This year, we built on that success.

Under Democratic leadership, lawmakers crafted and passed a strong, bipartisan budget that provides \$130 million in property tax relief for hardworking Mainers, seniors, families, and small businesses.

- **We expanded the Property Tax Fairness Credit to provide relief to an additional 13,000 Mainers.** Seniors can save up to \$1,200 in property taxes, and eligible working Mainers and families can save up to \$750 on property taxes or rent.
- **We increased the Homestead Program to \$25,000 — a \$5,000 increase from the previous year.** This means Maine homeowners can take \$25,000 off the value of their home when calculating their property tax bill.
- **We began restoring revenue sharing,** which means municipalities will have more funds to help stabilize property tax rates and fund essential services.

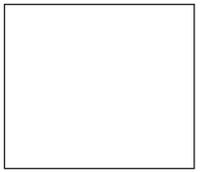
In addition, we added \$111 million in education funding, which will reduce the amount of school funding raised through property taxes. Outside of the budget, we also passed a law that provides a direct refund of \$100 to those who qualify for the Homestead Exemption.

Reducing property taxes is the number one concern for many community members, and I’m pleased we were able to help more elderly and working families afford to stay in their homes.



Gov. Janet Mills signs my earned paid time off bill into law.

2019 Legislative Update
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Serving as Senate President
Pro Tempore

SURVEY: Your voice and your ideas matter!

1. What should be our biggest priority next year?

- Making health care more affordable
 - Improving our economy
 - Supporting education, especially career tech
 - Protecting Maine's natural resources
 - Investing in good-paying, green energy jobs
 - Other (please specify)
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2. What do you think Maine needs to do to strengthen our economy?

- Invest in career and technical education
 - Support companies to create good-paying jobs
 - Support new emerging industries
 - Retain and grow manufacturing jobs
 - Other (please specify)
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3. What is the biggest challenge you and your family face when it comes to health care?

- Cost of prescription drugs
- Cost of health care coverage
- Lack of transparency and accountability
- Lack of medical professionals in our area

Other (please specify)

4. What do you think presents the largest challenge for education in Maine?

- Student debt
 - Inadequate funding for public schools
 - Inadequate funding for career tech
 - Lack of support for teachers
 - Other (please specify)
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5. Which of the bills we passed this year was most important to you or your family? If none, do you have any bill ideas for next year?

Thanks for your feedback. Please reach out if you ever need assistance.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Please visit mainesenate.org to sign up for my email updates.