

# Lincoln County Indivisible

## Gubernatorial Candidate Questionnaire

April 2026



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Lincoln County Indivisible (LCI) is dedicated to strengthening our democracy through local, peaceful action. Our aim is to get more community members involved in shaping decisions that affect us all, and to back leaders and policies that reflect fairness, inclusion, and equal rights.

To support that goal, we invited those gubernatorial candidates who share our values (five Democrats and one independent) to complete this questionnaire. All the candidates except for Angus King III responded, sharing their views and priorities. Their submissions follow in alphabetical order.

We hope this resource helps you—and those you share it with—make thoughtful choices in the Democratic primary and general election.

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# **LCI Gubernatorial Questionnaire**

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# Shenna Bellows

## SECTION I: Please Outline Your Top Three Priorities If You Are Elected Governor of Maine.

I know the challenges we face are large. Our rights are under attack, our institutions are failing, and too many Mainers are just one emergency away from disaster. We need a bold new vision for what Maine could look like, not just three years from now but 10 or 50 years down the road. That's why I proposed A New Deal for Maine. As governor, it will be my mission to make Maine the most affordable state in the nation.

1) Lowering the cost of living: Too many Mainers are working harder and harder to see the future they want slipping further and further away. I want to build a Maine where folks who work hard can pay their bills, have a roof over their head and be able to provide for a better future.

2) Universal healthcare: Whether it's the kerosene lamps we used when I was a kid, Maine being at the end of America's "tailpipe" or genetic luck of the draw, I have severe asthma, and the emergency room saved my life more than once. I'm deeply concerned about healthcare infrastructure and access to healthcare in the wake of federal cuts and a broken payer system. I'm committed to finding creative ways to fund healthcare for all and investing in healthcare infrastructure particularly in underserved and rural areas.

3) Quality, public education for every child: When I was a kid, Maine's schools were some of the best. I would not be Maine's first female Secretary of State or a candidate for governor without the quality public education at Hancock Grammar School and Ellsworth High School. Today, Maine is scoring in the bottom quartile nationally. We need strong state investment in education to make sure every student in Maine has a chance at a great future, no matter where they live or how much money they have.

## SECTION II: Please Describe Your Position on the Following Issues, As Well As Your Plans for Achieving Them:

### **A. Protecting Mainers from discrimination based on race, ethnicity, sex, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identification (including healthcare for trans youth).**

Over the last 20 years, from my time as head of the ACLU to my work at the Holocaust and Human Rights Center of Maine, as a state senator and now as Secretary of State, I've been proud of the work I've done to protect Mainers from discrimination of all forms. I was a leader on the Maine Won't Discriminate campaign in 2005, ending anti-LGBTQ+ discrimination in employment, education, housing and credit, and I served on the Executive Committee of the marriage equality campaigns for 7 years until we won in 2012. My husband and I did not marry until all of our gay and lesbian friends and family members could legally. I was proud to vote for nondiscrimination in insurance and support the Maine Human Rights Act as a member of the state senate in 2019.

Ending discrimination in Maine requires a blend of community engagement, policy advocacy, education, and structural reform. While Maine is the whitest state in the U.S. by percentage, we have growing immigrant and racially diverse communities, especially in cities like Portland, Lewiston, and Bangor, that deserve to feel safe and welcome. That's why when I was at the ACLU of Maine, I helped start the Maine Immigrants' Rights Coalition. Advancing racial justice and true equality means both confronting systemic inequities and proactively building inclusive structures. As Secretary of State, I advanced training opportunities in social and racial justice for my employees. I mandated training of my employees to ensure that everyone has access to a license or ID that matches their identity and feels safe and welcomed by the BMV. I've spent much of my career as a champion for the rights of everyone regardless of race, sex, sexual orientation and gender identity, and I will continue to do so as Governor. My priorities include educational equity, like expanded access to ESL and curriculum reform; criminal justice reform; increasing health equity; economic and housing justice, including culturally competent job training programs; support for immigrants and refugees in our state; and tribal sovereignty.

## **B. Protecting a woman's right to reproductive freedom including shielding Maine providers who assist women in states where reproductive rights are limited.**

When I was at the ACLU of Maine, I remember a heartbreaking public hearing when Baldacci was Governor and Democrats controlled the legislature on a bill sponsored by then Senate President Beth Edmonds for public funding for abortion. It didn't pass because too many Democrats (and Republicans) lacked courage. Our coalition got to work immediately to plan a campaign for public funding of abortion in Maine. Having worked so hard for so long to get public funding and reimbursements for health services for Planned Parenthood and other reproductive health providers, I am not about to back down in this fight. As Governor, I will use all of my powers of the office to protect the health and well-being of all Mainers, and that includes public funding and reimbursements for Planned Parenthood. Given the opposition from the federal government, it's never been more important for the states to step up, and I have proven myself to be a leader who is not afraid of a fight and also has deep experience negotiating budgets. I would see it as a responsibility and a moral obligation to defend Planned Parenthood against any attacks, and I promise to veto any legislation that would cut public funding or reimbursements for health services.

As Secretary of State, I partnered with EqualityMaine, Planned Parenthood and the Legislature to strengthen the Address Confidentiality Program, which I oversee, to include providers of reproductive healthcare and gender-affirming care. When I was at the ACLU of Maine, we represented an abortion provider against a bogus challenge to her license from anti-abortion activists. These are two examples of how important it is to me that we safeguard providers from harm – and that includes safeguarding them from legal action or other actions by out-of-state actors where care is banned. It's important that Maine be a safe haven for providers who provide crucial reproductive and gender-affirming care, and I will do everything in my power to defend that status. With my background in strategic litigation at the ACLU, I understand better than any other candidate how the state can do that in court, and as Secretary of State, I have unique experience in resisting federal government interference in elections and with license plates through strategic noncompliance. I will veto any attempts to weaken Maine's shield laws. I will use my executive power to refuse any extradition requests from any entities seeking to extradite providers to their jurisdiction. I will use my executive power to make sure no state or local law agency cooperates in any

investigation of providers in Maine because they are providing abortion care or gender affirming care.

### **C. Protecting the environment for ourselves and future generations through science- and research-driven policy making.**

My top three environmental priorities will be:

- **Clean Energy Transition Through Solar Energy and Responsible Wind:** Maine continues to spend billions of dollars on fossil fuels while we experience the devastating impact of accelerating climate change. We need even bolder and decisive action on clean energy to meet the target of a clean energy transition by 2040 and benefit Maine's rural economy. I'd like to do for solar energy what Governor Mills has done for heat pumps. We can and must make Maine a national leader in investment in residential solar, especially for low-income and middle income households. That includes legalizing balcony solar to make portable solar panels available for renters; stabilizing the grid through public investment; implementing connect and manage mandates for utilities; and direct investment in renewables. For example, the state should be doing direct investment in heat pumps and solar panels for LIHEAP-eligible homes to keep those residents warm and transition them away from dependence on costly fossil fuels. We also need to be collaborative and creative to advance responsible wind energy and other renewable forms of energy.
- **Increase Clean Transportation Options:** Transportation remains the highest source of emissions in our state. The lack of investment in public transit, safer streets conducive to bikers and pedestrians, and more thoughtful build-out of EV chargers is not only harming our climate goals but also hurting poor people, seniors, people with disabilities and other folks with limited transportation options. The state makes enormous investments in transportation each year - we need to build climate goals and equity into that planning.
- **Protect Our Farms and Water from Toxic PFAS:** Our water is one of our most precious and potentially threatened resources, so we need to do everything we can to safeguard it in the years to come. One of the greatest threats to our groundwater is more widespread PFAS contamination. We need to address treatment of municipal sludge; identify and manage sources of potential toxic spills like Brunswick; and establish a collection system to remove sources of PFAS that could bring about another devastating toxic spill. We also need to make polluters responsible for the harm they cause to our communities.

#### **D. Protecting Maine elections from Trump Administration interference and federal legislative overreach such as the SAVE Act.**

As Secretary, protecting our democracy has been the mission of my office every day. I'm proud of the work my office has done to make democracy more accessible in Maine. From online and automatic voter registration at the BMV, tens of thousands of Mainers have used these resources to register and participate in our elections.

One of my proudest accomplishments as Secretary was the rejection of question 2 by almost 2/3s of Mainers in November. Using my position to draft a question that showed the true extent of the changes that the GOP was proposing set up our state for such a strong win.

My leadership on elections hasn't stopped there. When the Trump administration came after Maine's voter data I told them to "jump in the Gulf of Maine" and I've been leading a bi-partisan group of more than 20 states in resistance to overreach from the DOJ. Earlier this month, I also signed on to a letter pushing the Trump administration to commit to not having ICE agents at polling places during the mid-terms. But make no mistake- election officials are the world's best contingency planners, and every day, I'm working with other states and leaders in Maine to make sure that we're prepared, including engaging the national guard if needed.

#### **E. Legislative efforts that would restore self-determination and treat the Wabanaki Nations like all other federally recognized tribes.**

On Day 1 of my administration, I'll introduce a governor's bill, written in collaboration with Wabanaki leaders, to amend the Maine Implementing Act, ensuring that Wabanaki Nations have the same rights, privileges, powers, duties, and immunities as the other 570 federally recognized tribes. Recognizing tribal sovereignty is not only the right thing to do to restore historic wrongs, but it is also good for Maine, as it will unlock benefits for all Mainers. I have seen this firsthand in my work with Wabanaki Public Health and Wellness, whose work in detox and recovery has benefited Native and non-Native people alike in greater Bangor, Millinocket and Washington and Aroostook counties.

I've already visited with the tribal councils and chiefs of the Houlton Band of Maliseet, Mi'kmaq Nation, and Passamaquoddy tribes in person to discuss what this would look like and make my pledge to them that this is a top priority for my administration. I've been backing tribal sovereignty for over twenty years, working closely with tribal

nations when I served on the Judiciary Committee of the Legislature, and I look forward to finally ending this injustice when I am Governor.

### **F. Responsible efforts to reduce gun violence.**

Earlier this year, I received a death threat from a Mainer who was mentally unwell, had a history of violent threats, and had just recently had his firearm returned to him because his yellow flag warning had expired. I was proud to advocate for LD 1312 and Question 2 on the ballot and grateful to see it pass. It showed that Mainers positions on gun violence are nuanced. While political insiders had long assumed that sensible gun control couldn't fit in Maine, it shows that what we were missing wasn't political support but instead political will from leaders to make the case for genuine change. As governor, I will do everything to make sure the red flag law is implemented to the fullest extent of the law, and I will work with the legislature to pass additional common sense gun legislation to make Mainer safer.

### **G. Addressing Maine's affordable housing crisis.**

Maine is one of the most beautiful places in the world– it's not a surprise that so many people want to live here. But it's forced housing prices to be unaffordable and it's making life untenable for too many of our neighbors. As Maine's next governor I'm going to:

- Expand the housing fund to support construction of new units and rehabilitation of derelict properties to put more housing stock in the market
- Create a housing corps modeled after AmeriCorps to pay people to train in the trades and put those skills to use in new home construction and rehabilitation of existing structures to train the next generation of carpenters, electricians and plumbers and help support the highly skilled labor needs of construction projects.
- Boost investment in the state's first time homebuyers program to help folks who could afford a mortgage but can't afford a down payment buy their first home and begin building equity
- Lower property taxes for families who live and work in Maine by calling for a moratorium on property taxes for Maine residents paid for by significantly increasing property taxes for non-resident people living out of state.

## **H. Bolstering healthcare access for rural people and those who rely on MaineCare.**

Throughout the last year, I've had the joy of traveling all over the state to hear about what is on people's minds— and one of the most pressing issues is the closing of rural hospitals, birthing centers and other medical practices. How are our communities going to thrive as it becomes harder and harder to access a doctor? Whether you're an older Mainer, thinking about how you're going to be able to stay in the town you've lived in for decades to access the care you need as you age, or you're a young family trying to figure out where you want to settle, the ability of our towns to stay open, let alone grow or thrive, requires access to medical care.

When I am governor, I am going to work with physicians, public health leaders, and other community leaders to identify critical services that must exist— things like birthing centers, community health centers and emergency rooms— that will allow communities in every corner of Maine to thrive. Then we're going to work with the state's hospitals, and other medical providers to provide block grant funding to ensure that these critical services are accessible on every corner. We're facing critical cuts coming from the federal government for health care funding. [Nearly half of Maine's rural hospitals are at risk for closure.](#) As hospitals close, they also put additional burdens on the remaining infrastructure— which will mean serious impacts on access in our cities. And more Mainers will go without care, making our state sicker and their care in the future more expensive. As governor, I look forward to working with providers to make sure we're filling these gaps. We want to make Maine the best place to live and that means the healthiest place to live. By expanding care we're creating economic opportunities, saving our rural communities, and more importantly, helping Mainers access the care.

## **I. Addressing the high cost of electricity for Maine households.**

Utility costs are too high. [Our utility costs have risen by 36% in the last year.](#) Central Maine Power made [over 150 million dollars in profit](#) in just the first 9 months of 2025. We need to hold predatory utility companies accountable while expanding clean energy in our state. As governor I will cap the rate of return to 6% for utility companies, so that they are not making record breaking profits on the back of struggling Mainers. Right now, the Mainers who are paying the least for electricity are those who could afford the upfront investment for solar panels. I will work to install solar panels for LIHEAP eligible homes so that Mainers who could really benefit the

most from lowered utility costs can access those savings. Finally, I would streamline permitting and procurement for clean energy projects so that we're doing more to hit our climate goals while bringing down costs.

### **J. Support for public education**

When I was growing up at Hancock Grammar School in Ellsworth High School, Maine was in the top quartile in the nation. We led the nation in educational achievement and now we're in the bottom quartile. We're behind Mississippi. Our teachers are doing extraordinary work and they're underpaid. We need to pay teachers more, and we need to invest in education and that's going to help grow our economy and support our students. I believe the state needs to increase direct funding to Maine schools including funding for special education and English language learning because raising property taxes is not an option with so many families struggling to afford to stay in their homes. I also think the state needs to expand funding for better school infrastructure, fund school-based health centers and mental health counselors for students, and expand training opportunities for teachers.

### **K. Policies to ensure fair wages and reduce wealth inequality.**

I grew up downeast, without electricity or running water until the 5th grade. No one has to tell me about what it means to make Maine more affordable because I've lived it. As governor, I want to make Maine the most affordable state in the nation. But right now, nurses and plumbers are paying the same tax rate as billionaires. That's unacceptable. We need bold new leadership with big ideas to make our state better. That's why I introduced a New Deal for Maine, and why I'm proposing a millionaires tax of 4% that would generate more than \$200 million a year in additional revenue to help Mainers who are just one emergency expense away from disaster.

## **SECTION III: Please Describe How You Would Use Your Position as Governor To:**

### **A. Protect Mainers from the excesses and abuses of ICE, CBP, and other federal agencies.**

We are in a constitutional crisis. We have to fight back. I have a proven track record of standing up to Trump and the battle scars to show it. When ICE surged in Maine, I refused to give them undercover license plates because there are no secret police in

democracy. When the DOJ came after Mainer's voter data, I was one of the first Secretaries to refuse and am now leading a bipartisan coalition of Secretaries to fight back. I'm the only candidate in the race who has managed law enforcement agents and I've got the experience to ensure that they are keeping our neighbors safe not promoting inhumane federal policy.

As Governor, I will organize a coalition of partner states to fight back through strategic noncompliance, litigation, public education and communications. I'll utilize the Office of New Americans to track where detainees are held and fight to get them back to our state. I'll deploy legal observers from my office to monitor ICE operations. And I'll direct my Departments to provide direct support to people afraid to leave their homes, so they can access food and services. Finally, I will work with the Attorney General to prosecute federal law enforcement agents who break the law. I have a long record of leading strategic organizing and bringing smart lawsuits to fight back against abuses of power when I was at the ACLU of Maine, and I'll bring that strategic, solution-focused approach to fighting back against federal agencies that harm our residents.

**B. Respond to federal overreach in demands for policy changes, Maine residents' personal information, changes to our educational systems, and threats of defunding Maine programs.**

I'm running for governor because we need a leader who will never back down from holding the Trump administration accountable for their unlawful and unconstitutional acts. At a time when too many institutions have caved, and too many people who should have known better have folded, we need tested leadership. I've been sued, doxxed, swatted and received death threats, and I will never fold when it comes to protecting Mainer's.

I've used the leadership skills I honed under leading the Maine ACLU around resistance and protection of civil liberties as Maine's Secretary of State. I'm the only candidate in this race who has been actively holding Trump accountable— and winning.

As Secretary, I'm leading dozens of states in resisting the nationalization of elections and protecting voter data. We're fighting in court – and in the court of public opinion. I serve on the state's Cybersecurity Advisory Council, and I chaired the national Election Infrastructure - Information Sharing and Analysis Center, a federal/state/local election security and cybersecurity collaborative in 2024. In 2025 when the federal government

defunded the EI-ISAC, I helped organize a membership structure for the states, so we could continue our work without federal funding – and without federal interference. We've established structures of mutual protection including a Sit Room to share information with each other about threats. I will use those skills working with other state leaders to find ways to fight back against the federal government and protect the work, no matter what the federal government throws at us. As governor, I will lead through non-compliance, coalition building, communications, organizing, public education, and bringing aggressive proactive lawsuits whenever we can.

**C. Respond to inappropriate federal mobilizations of the Maine National Guard for assignments within the United States (as opposed to mobilizations related to natural disasters or actual war declared by Congress).**

The governor is the Commander in Chief of the national guard. I will not allow for Maine troops to be mobilized without the express consent of my office. Oversight of the national guard in these trying times is why we need tested leadership. You don't have to question how I'll handle challenges with the Trump administration. I've shown it.

# Rick Bennett

## SECTION I: Please Outline Your Top Three Priorities If You Are Elected Governor of Maine.

Maine's next governor should answer to the people of this state and no one else — not parties, not donors, not special interests. That is what I intend to do.

My priorities are 1) Making life more affordable for Mainers, 2) Growing our economy, and 3) Restoring trust in government. You can read more at [bennettforgovernor.com/vision](https://bennettforgovernor.com/vision), and I will be announcing policy details for each of these areas over the coming months.

## SECTION II: Please Describe Your Position on the Following Issues, as Well As Your Plans For Achieving Them:

### **A. Protecting Mainers from discrimination based on race, ethnicity, sex, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identification (including healthcare for trans youth).**

Every Mainer deserves to be treated with dignity and fairness. I support Maine's Human Rights Act and will enforce it. That means I support the freedom to live without fear of being treated as less than what it means to be American, and that includes healthcare for transgender youth.

### **B. Protecting a woman's right to reproductive freedom including shielding Maine providers who assist women in states where reproductive rights are limited.**

I am committed to protecting a woman's right to reproductive freedom, and shielding Maine providers from assisting any women in practicing those rights. Thirty-three years ago, I was one of the original cosponsors of the 1993 bill to codify Roe v. Wade into Maine law. Maine law protects reproductive freedom, and I will defend those protections. During the 132nd Legislature, I was proud to earn a 92% rating from

Planned Parenthood Maine Action Fund, reflecting strong and consistent support for reproductive health access and patient protections.

### **C. Protecting the environment for ourselves and future generations through science- and research-driven policymaking.**

I believe in science and using data to make informed policy decisions. Protecting Maine's clean water, healthy forests, and working lands isn't just good environmental policy – it's economic common sense. We must limit pollution and confront climate change with practical solutions that strengthen resilience, create jobs, and safeguard what makes Maine special. Environmental stewardship means meeting today's needs while ensuring future generations can also meet theirs. I will be rolling out my full environmental platform in the coming months.

### **D. Protecting Maine elections from Trump Administration interference and federal legislative overreach such as the SAVE Act.**

I will protect Maine elections from any interference.

### **E. Legislative efforts that would restore self-determination and treat the Wabanaki Nations like all other federally recognized tribes.**

The Wabanaki Nations are essential partners in Maine's past, present, and future. It's long past time to ensure they have the same rights as every other federally recognized tribe. Restoring trust begins with respect—listening to tribal leaders, honoring their traditions, and working together to build a more just future.

### **F. Responsible efforts to reduce gun violence.**

I never had to worry about my children's safety at school the way parents do today. That change is real, and it troubles me. The Second Amendment is a fundamental right, but I also support responsible efforts to keep weapons out of the hands of people who shouldn't have them.

### **G. Addressing Maine's affordable housing crisis.**

Please see my [plan to make housing affordable here](#).

### **H. Bolstering healthcare access for rural people and those who rely on MaineCare.**

Please see my [plan to make health care more affordable and accessible here](#).

### **I. Addressing the high cost of electricity for Maine households.**

Energy costs touch every part of Maine life—from home heating to small businesses to the price of goods. We need to put affordability first while moving toward true energy independence. That means investing in efficiency, reliability, and locally controlled power that keeps Maine’s energy dollars working here at home. I will be announcing my full plan to lower the cost of electricity for Maine households this spring.

### **J. Support for public education.**

A strong education system is the foundation of Maine’s future and prosperity. We need to invest for the long term to keep young people here and inspire families to put down roots. I will be announcing my full plan to support public education for Maine households this spring.

### **K. Policies to ensure fair wages and reduce wealth inequality.**

My entire platform — making Maine affordable, growing the economy, and restoring trust in government — starts from one premise: working people deserve a fair shot. Life has become too expensive for too many people. From housing and heating oil to healthcare and taxes, families are being squeezed from all directions. We need an economy that works for all Mainers – not just those who are well connected. That means creating conditions where people can afford to live, work, and retire here. Maine should be a place where hard work leads to stability and where people can plan for the future with confidence.

## **SECTION III: Please Describe How You Would Use Your Position as Governor To:**

### **A. Protect Mainers from the excesses and abuses of ICE, CBP, and other federal agencies.**

We must protect Mainers from federal overreach, and I was proud to support LD 1971 to clarify how the State and municipal law enforcement engages with ICE, which the Governor has finally allowed to go into law without her signature. As Benjamin Franklin warned at the founding of our country: “They who can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety.”

**B. Respond to federal overreach in demands for policy changes, Maine residents' personal information, changes to our educational systems, and threats of defunding Maine programs.**

I will not comply with directives that violate our laws and our Constitution, and will use every legal tool available to protect personal information and educational systems.

**C. Respond to inappropriate federal mobilizations of the Maine National Guard for assignments within the United States (as opposed to mobilizations related to natural disasters or actual war declared by Congress).**

As Governor and Commander in Chief of the Maine National Guard, I will not allow Maine's Guard to be deployed in ways that are inconsistent with our Constitution.

# Troy Jackson

## SECTION I: Please Outline Your Top Three Priorities If You Are Elected Governor of Maine.

I'm running for governor because the status quo isn't working. I'm tired of laws that aren't enforced. I'm tired of good bills that would help lower prescription drug costs, protect workers, stop the spraying of harmful chemicals and so much more get vetoed. I'm tired of folks being told to hold on, wait a little longer or that now is not the right time. All thanks to the work of special interests, high-priced lobbyists and corporate greed. My top priorities as Governor:

1. Child Care
2. Health Care
3. Housing

Starting day one, I will introduce legislation to restore tribal sovereignty and create a commission to look at skyrocketing property taxes. By the end of my first term, Maine will have free child care for everyone under 125 percent of the median income, we will have a new Department of Affordable Housing, state employees will have a fair contract, public employees will have binding arbitration and we will have led the nation on prescription drug price reform.

## SECTION II: Please Describe Your Position on the Following Issues, As Well As Your Plans for Achieving Them:

### **A. Protecting Mainers from discrimination based on race, ethnicity, sex, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identification (including healthcare for trans youth).**

I will protect all Mainers from all discrimination. Discrimination based on race, ethnicity, sex, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identity has no place in our state. This includes protecting access to health care. Health care should be decided between a patient and their health professional — not the whims of politically appointed

judges, wealthy conservative megadonors, or politicians. In the Legislature, I voted to strengthen the Maine Human Rights Act and protect access to care. I stand by those principles and will continue to protect Mainers from discrimination as governor.

Not only will I continue to protect Maine's shield law and access to health care in Maine but I voted to pass this measure into law. I served as Senate President when Rep. Anne Perry of Calais and Sen. Donna Bailey of Saco brought this bill forward. I am proud to [have voted](#) in support of it and to have played a role in passing it into law.

Maine law also guarantees a minor's right to access certain confidential health care services including reproductive and sexual health care. The law and medical guidelines developed by health care professionals have long supported the medical privacy rights of adolescents. I will protect those laws and protect access to care.

### **B. Protecting a woman's right to reproductive freedom including shielding Maine providers who assist women in states where reproductive rights are limited.**

It's simple: reproductive freedom is a human right. Health care is a human right. And abortion care is health care.

To protect access to reproductive care, I am prepared to invest state dollars in the wake of federal cuts to ensure Planned Parenthood and other health care providers targeted by the federal government remain open and caring for patients. More than a thousand patients in Aroostook County lost their preferred primary care provider when Maine Family Planning was forced to cut primary care services due to political games in Congress. Access to primary care is already an issue in Maine, especially in rural places like Aroostook County. The state must step up in the wake of federal leadership.

In addition, my plan included addressing stagnant funding for family planning services in the baseline budget. With widespread attacks on reproductive freedom, access to quality, affordable reproductive care across Maine is more important than ever. However, this last week, the Legislature decided it was time to fund family planning services sustainably so access to care isn't in jeopardy every two years. This is long overdue.

I was Senate President when the Supreme Court overturned the precedent set by *Roe v. Wade*. Though it marked a dark day in our nation's history, I'm proud to live in a state and be a part of a Legislature that didn't wait for *Roe* to be overturned to take

action to protect and expand access to abortion care. Then after the fall of Roe, I cosponsored one of the most progressive reproductive rights laws in the country - LD 1619 - and fought to ensure its passage. It was the first post-Roe law passed in the U.S. to expand abortion access.

In 2019, I was proud to [support legislation](#) (LD 820) to ensure abortion care was covered under MaineCare. Access to the full spectrum reproductive health care, including abortion care, should not depend on income, insurance type or insurance status. It's critical that we protect not only Mainer's right to an abortion but also their ability to exercise it.

Since the law was enacted, I have regularly voted to reject efforts to repeal MaineCare coverage for abortion care, which has come up every legislative session. I voted against LD 424 in 2023. I voted against LD 748 and LD 915 in 2021.

In addition, when it became clear that Republican state lawmakers would not support a biennial budget that funded the 2019 law, I reinstated a two-part budget process: passing a majority budget funding the baseline budget, including MaineCare coverage of abortion, earlier in the legislative session, and then negotiating additional spending and new programs afterward to ensure healthcare was never a bargaining chip

Look, I have a long track record of bipartisanship. I'm always willing to find common ground with my Republican colleagues, but I will not compromise on our values and I will not take health care away from Mainer's. And abortion care is health care.

### **C. Protecting the environment for ourselves and future generations through science- and research-driven policymaking.**

Maine's environment and natural resources have defined my life in many ways. Its farmland, forests and waterways have powered my community and much of Aroostook County for generations. It's also home to my best memories with my father, my partner, my sons and my family - hunting, fishing, hiking and camping. So preserving and protecting Maine's natural landscape is important to me.

We must address Maine's affordability crisis by investing in renewable energy, promoting energy efficiency and weatherization. Keeping the lights on and staying warm in the winter remains a huge financial burden for Maine families - it's something that my family experienced firsthand. Investing in renewable energy projects, especially wind, not only creates quality, good-paying jobs but can also be the key to lowering electricity bills. At the same time, we need to respond to the affordability

crisis by helping Mainers with weatherization and energy incentives. Now is the time to build on the work around heat pumps, weatherization and other programs so we can lower costs for working families and show folks in rural parts of the state climate-friendly solutions can be a win for their budget and our environment.

Building climate resilient communities. Climate change and extreme weather poses a threat to communities all across the state. Droughts have affected crops and impacted farmers. The lack of snow has harmed the outdoor recreation economy in northern Maine, even forcing the cancellation of the 2024 Can-Am Races. That's something I've never seen before. And unprecedented wind and rain storms devastated communities along the coast, impacting our tourism and working waterfront. I was proud to support legislation that will help communities rebuild in a way that will make them more resilient to extreme weather events going forward. We need to expand on these programs to help Mainers weather the storms (and droughts) that lay ahead.

We must reestablish a cabinet-level voice for conservation. Governor LePage eliminated the Department of Conservation, casting aside the critical role it served for conservation in Maine and sidelining its responsibilities and purviews within the Department of Agriculture. I intend to enthusiastically reverse this disastrous decision. The Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry is tasked with a tremendous and practically impossible portfolio, and that portfolio suffers because of it. Our state needs a leader whose primary responsibility is the stewardship of Maine's natural resources, working within an administration who recognizes that forests are not farms and conservation does not play second fiddle to business interests.

#### **D. Protecting Maine elections from Trump Administration interference and federal legislative overreach such as the SAVE Act.**

Maine will have a plan to act should the federal government try to interfere with elections. We will pursue and exhaust every possible legal option. This may include consulting with public safety officials, outside legal counsel, constitutional experts, and neighboring states.

The right to vote is fundamental to our freedom, our democracy and who we are as Americans. **I oppose any measures that would make it harder for folks to vote**, which always disproportionately impact working-class people, women, older folks and Mainers living with disabilities.

## **E. Legislative efforts that would restore self-determination and treat the Wabanaki Nations like all other federally recognized tribes.**

Tribal sovereignty is a huge priority for me, and as I announced on May 19, 2025 when I launched this campaign, I will introduce legislation to fully restore tribal sovereignty on Day 1. I'm also proud to have earned the endorsement of Mi'kmaq Nation.

Early into my first term as Senate President, Sen. Mike Carpenter and then-Rep. Donna Bailey came to me with a plan to reopen the Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act. I immediately was on board. The Wabanaki Nations have been getting a raw deal for far too long. Not only do the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians, Mi'kmaq Nation, Passamaquoddy Tribes, and Penobscot Nation deserve full tribal sovereignty, they deserve the same federal benefits as the other 571 federally recognized tribes. It's a disgrace that we haven't rectified this.

As Senate President, I've voted in favor of tribal sovereignty legislation and in favor of overturning gubernatorial vetoes on tribal sovereignty at every turn. Despite the setbacks on full tribal sovereignty, I am proud that we were able to pass laws to support economic development, improve access to clean drinking water, recognize the exclusive jurisdiction of tribal courts, and enshrine protections for Wabanaki children and their families into state law. I was also honored that the Wabanaki Chiefs accepted our invitation to participate in a State of the Tribes - the first joint convention of its kind in more than two decades. But we can do more and we can do better.

Going forward, to improve the state's relationship with the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians, Mi'kmaq Nation, Passamaquoddy Tribes, and Penobscot Nation, they must be treated as true partners. We also must ensure there is a Tribal liaison in every department to advise on policy and improve communication and delivery of services.

## **F. Responsible efforts to reduce gun violence.**

Following the tragic shooting in Lewiston, which took 18 lives, injured 13 others and impacted thousands of families across the state, I worked to pass a series of measures to build a safer Maine. I was honored to receive the marquee 2024 *Fitzgerald Award* from the Maine Gun Safety Coalition for my leadership during my final term as Senate President.

Here are some of the bills we were able to pass:

- I cosponsored Maine's 72-hour-waiting period law, which requires a 72-hour waiting period between an agreement for the purchase and sale of a firearm and the delivery of that firearm to the purchaser.
- I cosponsored legislation expanding background checks laws to cover all advertised firearm sales. The new law closes the gun-show loophole, aligning the requirements for advertised, private sales with commercial sales at federally licensed firearm dealers.
- I cosponsored legislation to establish the Office of Violence Prevention. The Office was created in 2024 to coordinate and promote efforts to reduce violence, including through the creation of a central hub to bring together data about violence-related injuries and deaths that is currently kept separate (such as in police reports, medical examiner files, and emergency department files) to inform public health and prevention measures to reduce suicides and homicides in Maine.

More recently, I spoke out and supported the red flag ballot initiative - [even writing an opinion column](#) in support of the proposal following some concerning statements made by the current governor. I felt a profound responsibility to make clear that Maine's traditions are not at odds with a red flag law and that refusing to change, even after the worst mass shooting in Maine's history, would be the real failure.

One thing I hope to fix as Governor are huge gaps in laws designed to protect survivors of domestic violence. For example, while Maine law temporarily prohibits individuals convicted of domestic violence against an intimate partner, the definition of intimate partner does not include a current or former dating partner. The law only covers current or former spouses, and individuals whom the offender shares a child with. Maine must close this gap.

### **G. Addressing Maine's affordable housing crisis.**

Working families are being priced out of Maine while Wall Street investors and out-of-state millionaires buy up our communities. As Governor, I will create the Department of Housing Affordability and give it the resources to tackle the housing crisis with the speed, scale, and focus folks deserve. Priorities include:

- a. **Stop Wall Street from buying up Maine:** This means clamping down on private equity firms buying up mobile home parks.
- b. **Protect Existing Housing:** Maine must take action to keep existing housing safe, affordable and available. This means assisting both homeowners and

renters with essential repairs and maintenance, preventing units from falling into disrepair and being removed from the market.

- c. **Accelerate construction and cut red tape:** Maine must dramatically increase the supply of diverse, affordable and energy-efficient housing to meet 84,000 total units by 2030. We need to invest in manufactured housing and cut red tape so good projects don't die in endless bureaucracy.
- d. **Expand programs that actually work.** Expanding the low-income housing tax credit, strengthening the rural rental tax credit, funding eviction prevention and removing the sunset on the state affordable housing tax credit.
- e. **Reward Mainers who stay and build their lives here.** Tax credits for renters, incentives for full-time residents, and down payment assistance programs for people committed to living and working in Maine. If you work here, you should be able to afford to live here.

## **H. Bolstering healthcare access for rural people and those who rely on MaineCare.**

Rural health care isn't a talking point for me, it's my life. It's the care my family, my communities and my loved ones rely on. Access to quality, affordable health care shouldn't depend on your zip code. But the reality is, folks in my area and all across rural Maine struggle to get care close to home due to both the shortage of health care workers and affordability.

Last week, I learned the story of a man in Presque Isle who had to get surgery in Bangor. Not only did he have to pay for the gas to get there but he helped pay for his family's hotel so they could be nearby. This is on top of the costly procedure and recovery. Eventually the medical debt piled up and he was at risk of eviction. One health scare almost left him homeless and in financial ruin. Fortunately, he was able to access the eviction prevention program.

Cases like this are why I sponsored legislation to create the Maine Office of Affordable Health Care. It's why I support Medicare for All and believe in universal health care. It's also why I serve on the Board of the Fish River Rural Health Center, a federally-qualified health center that serves folks all across the County.

First, we need to backfill federal Medicaid cuts. I know it will be expensive but budgets are about priorities and with a fair tax system we can make these investments.

Second, we need to clamp down on private equity, look at payment structures and reimbursement rates, and support Maine's health care workforce.

Third, we need to be bold on prescription drug reform. There is so much savings to be had by taking aggressive action. A few years ago, we tried to pass legislation to establish upper-payment-limits on excessive price hikes but the measure was vetoed by the Governor. Colorado just passed that measure and is on track to implement it. The Maine Health Data Organization has found that we could save \$17 million with referenced-based pricing. These are savings Mainers deserve and savings that can also be invested back into access to care.

Finally, I believe we need to invest in more FQHCs and look to them as a model for delivery of quality, affordable preventive care in rural communities. We need to support creative strategies to remove barriers to care. For example, Fish River holds extended hours, providing more opportunities for working people to access care without losing out on a paycheck. We also just purchased three additional vans to help patients get to their appointments.

### **I. Addressing the high cost of electricity for Maine households.**

All Mainers deserve an electrical grid that's reliable. In a rural state like Maine, this means we need serious investments to modernize our grid — investments that have been neglected for far too long. But Maine already has some of the highest electricity rates in the country, and asking ratepayers time and time again to pick up the bill for modernizing our grid and transitioning our state to clean energy is unfair. It's a broken model, especially when working Mainers are already feeling squeezed, and when utilities are making record profits.

We're in the midst of the biggest energy transition since the industrial revolution, and that means we need to think beyond the tired old playbook that pits ratepayers against grid investments and good union jobs for Maine utility workers. We need a bold vision that puts fairness for workers and ratepayers at the center. We need an energy plan that keeps money in the hands of ratepayers and not Wall Street. That makes our grid more reliable and less prone to outages. That makes Maine energy independent by tapping into our abundant clean energy resources. And that creates thousands of good union jobs for Mainers.

You can find my energy plan [here](#).

## **J. Support for public education.**

I am proud to be the only Democratic candidate for Governor to have attended a public university. I am also the product of Maine's K-12 public education system, and growing up my Mom put food on the table as a teacher in the district. I believe in the power of a quality public education system because I've lived it. I know it's the greatest asset we have as a state to help folks get ahead and build good honest lives for themselves. It's also critical to the strength of our workforce, the health of our people and the foundation of our economy. Honestly, it is amazing what Maine's public education system, primarily teachers, have been able to do given the lack of resources provided while the responsibilities and expectations continue to pile up.

I've fought tooth and nail to push both LePage and Mills to fund public K-12 education at the 55 percent threshold as mandated by Mainers at the ballot box in 2004. I advocated for binding arbitration, increased starting salaries for teachers and support staff, free community college, and more. Unfortunately, we are still woefully behind on some of those initiatives. I was however proud that we were able to pass my bill to make school meals free for all children. As someone who relied on the school meal program as a kid, I feel strongly that no kid should have to learn on an empty stomach or feel ashamed to receive a free meal.

As Governor, I will prioritize raising the wages of teachers and school support staff, providing critical resources so teachers don't have to use their wages to buy supplies for the classroom and additional in-classroom support. In my administration, educators won't just have a seat at the table - they'll have several.

The state has not been the best steward when it comes to education but teachers have proven their value and risen to the occasion despite increased demands and challenges. As Governor, I intend to be a true partner with teachers on education policy.

## **K. Policies to ensure fair wages and reduce wealth inequality.**

First, I believe strong labor laws are key to support fair wages, benefits and workforce safety. I believe the right to strike is an inalienable right for workers. It is one of the few tools workers have when the deck is stacked against them and management isn't playing fair. That's why I've fought to protect the right to strike and collectively bargain throughout my time in the Legislature. I've also fought to make arbitration binding for public employees. What is the point of going through the arbitration process if the

results aren't binding? I think it is in the best interests of both workers, management and taxpayers. It is one of the many reasons that I've sponsored the bill in the Maine Legislature, secured its passage in both chambers and shepherded it to the Governor's desk not once but twice. As Governor, I can promise you that we will finally get binding arbitration across the finish line.

Second, I believe the state as an employer should set the standard for wages, benefit and safety. The state also ought to set the standard for fair labor negotiations and contracts. However, the state is not living up to its responsibilities as an employer - the widening wage gap between public and private sector workers, and the current administration's hostile approach to contract negotiations with MSEA-SEIU. In fact, as of May 1, 2026, state workers will have gone ten months without a contract.

Third, labor laws are only effective if they are enforced fairly and regularly. This is not always the case and it is shameful. The Maine Legislature had to pass a series of laws to strengthen enforcement in the Department of Labor after a report found that enforcement was lacking.

Finally, Maine's tax code is upside down. For too long, working and middle-class families have carried too much of the load while the very wealthy have been allowed to skate by. It's time for a fair tax system - one that rewards hard work and asks successful corporations and those at the top to pay their fair share. As Governor, I'm going to repeal the 2011 LePage tax breaks for the rich, make our tax code fair and invest in housing, child care, long-term care, health care and education. Maine's working families, economy and future depend on it.

Asking the wealthy to pay their fair share will help reduce wealth inequality and fund critical programs, like the free child care plan I unveiled in March.

## SECTION III: Please Describe How You Would Use Your Position as Governor To:

### **A. Protect Mainers from the excesses and abuses of ICE, CBP, and other federal agencies.**

Shortly after President Trump announced increased ICE activity in Maine, I worked with my team and unveiled a bold plan to defend Maine families from Donald Trump's

escalating immigration raids. The plan takes a two-pronged approach to protecting Mainers from the excesses and abuses of ICE, CBP and other federal agencies. First, it establishes, enforces and supports protected zones. Second, it holds bad actors accountable for violating the law and Mainers rights and liberties.

There was a time when the French language was banned in Maine schools – when Francos and Acadians were the targets of hate. We have a responsibility to learn from our history. We cannot allow powerful bigots to scapegoat vulnerable groups and pin economic hardships on them. What we saw with ICE in Maine and across the country was not about public safety, it was about power, retaliation and fear. And it only makes Maine less safe.

### **Troy Jackson's ICE Action Plan**

#### **ESTABLISH, ENFORCE & SUPPORT PROTECTED ZONES**

- **Issue an Executive Order Creating Protected Zones:** Jackson will ban ICE enforcement on state property unless agents have a warrant signed by a judge. He will create a hotline for Mainers to report unlawful ICE activity, with each complaint triggering investigation by Maine State Police.
- **Rapid Response Around Schools, Hospitals & Churches:** Jackson will create red line zones around schools, hospitals, churches, and social service centers. If ICE agents show up, Maine State Police will respond immediately. The Attorney General and Public Safety Commissioner will be notified every time.
- **Protect Mainers' Fourth Amendment Rights:** Troy will direct the Attorney General to take legal action against unconstitutional ICE searches, defending Mainers' rights against illegal raids and detentions.

#### **HOLD BAD ACTORS ACCOUNTABLE**

- **Appoint a Public Safety Commissioner Who Works for Mainers:** Troy will appoint a commissioner committed to holding ICE agents accountable under Maine law. When ICE agents break the law, they will be charged and held accountable under state law - just like anyone else.
- **Create the Maine ICE Accountability Commission:** Troy will create a "truth commission" that will be tasked with investigating and documenting abuses committed during "Operation Catch of the Day," and ensure it never happens again.

- **Launch an Online Complaint Portal:** Troy will create a simple reporting system for Mainers to report federal agent misconduct. Every complaint will be investigated by the Attorney General's office.
- **Form a Civil Rights Action Team:** Troy will create a new legal unit in the AG's office that will be ready to take swift legal action when ICE violates civil rights in Maine.

## **B. Respond to federal overreach in demands for policy changes, Maine residents' personal information, changes to our educational systems, and threats of defunding Maine programs.**

As Governor, I will stand up and protect the rights and liberties of everyone who calls Maine home. I have already committed to implementing a fair tax system that includes a 4 percent surtax on Mainers earning upwards of a million dollars in income a year. I've committed to reversing the 2011 LePage tax cuts for the wealthy and taxing unearned passive income. The added revenue will help ensure that Maine is able to backfill federal Medicaid cuts to ensure folks can continue to get the care they deserve. It will also help create a safety net so Maine can act swiftly in the wake of punitive and political federal funding cuts.

At the same time, **we will not take these political attacks sitting down.** I will work with the Attorney General and outside counsel to pursue any and all legal action against threats to withhold federal funding. We've already seen this strategy work.

I feel a deep responsibility to speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves because I know what it is like to not have a voice in your own life, to have your livelihood threatened and taken away from you because you dared step out of line. It's why I blocked the border with 15 fellow loggers in 1998 to protest the exploitation of loggers by greedy corporate landowners in the woods of northern Maine. Those landowners were importing cheaper Canadian labor despite the availability of local workers in clear violation of the H-2A visa program; adversely affecting the wages and working conditions of all loggers in the Maine woods.

The landowners ended up having us arrested, but not before we got the attention of our elected officials, including newly elected Sen. Susan Collins. They thought they'd broken us; that we would fold but that only made me more motivated to change the system.

After that experience, I took the fight to Augusta because I saw no one in government was willing to fight for my community. My career in the legislature is marked by several huge achievements, but all too often I found bills that would make systemic change to better the lives of working families were killed or vetoed by special interests.

So whether it was standing up to Gov. Paul LePage and defying my leadership by voting against the 2011 tax cuts for the wealthy (and by extension the state budget) or standing up to Governor Mills on issues like Tribal Sovereignty, prescription drug reform and binding arbitration, I never wavered. When Republican lawmakers pulled stunts to block the passage of bills like LD 1619 or roll back abortion rights, I acted swiftly to get the good bills passed and soundly defeat bills that sought to undermine access to care. When hateful politicians targeted Black and brown Mainers, going after thoughtful legislators like Rep. Deqa Dhalac, I spoke out and showed up in solidarity with Maine's Somali Community.

As Governor, I will stand up for Maine people. I won't fold to bullies like Donald Trump and his D.C sycophants. I've been standing up to bullies like Paul LePage my whole career, and I am not one to back down from a fight.

**C. Respond to inappropriate federal mobilizations of the Maine National Guard for assignments within the United States (as opposed to mobilizations related to natural disasters or actual war declared by Congress).**

I am prepared to take action to prevent Donald Trump from weaponizing the Maine National Guard. The brave men and women of the Maine National Guard raised their right hand and took an oath to support and defend the constitution. They answer the call every time we need them to respond to emergencies, natural disasters, and conflicts abroad. As their Commander in Chief I will not allow the politicization of this vital force within our state. Governors must work together and ensure the mission of the National Guard is not co-opted into a domestic occupation and policing force.

# Hannah Pingree

## SECTION I: Please Outline Your Top Three Priorities If You Are Elected Governor of Maine.

For nearly 25 years, I've been a champion for Maine people—leading successful efforts to expand health care coverage, protect our environment, take bold climate action, invest in infrastructure, strengthen housing and education, grow our economy, and safeguard our democracy. Serving as the Speaker of the House, serving on my local school board, and leading the state's "Office of the Future," I've had the opportunity to bring people and communities together to deliver results.

In this race for Governor, I've outlined a vision built around three urgent priorities that reflect both the affordability challenges families face and the need to stand strong against Donald Trump's dangerous agenda, while still charting a hopeful path forward for Maine's future:

1. Housing that is affordable for all Mainers—so young families can put down roots in the communities where they grew up, seniors can stay in their homes, and we can meet the workforce needs of our economy.
2. Accessible, affordable health care that is easy to navigate no matter where you live and focuses on improving the health of Mainers, and is strong enough to withstand relentless attacks and cuts from the Trump Administration.
3. Affordability and economic opportunity in every community—so families can manage rising costs, workers and businesses can thrive, kids have great public schools, communities have the resources they need to care for their neighbors, and we're prepared for the storms ahead.

## SECTION II: Please Describe Your Position on the Following Issues, As Well As Your Plans for Achieving Them:

### **A. Protecting Mainers from discrimination based on race, ethnicity, sex, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identification (including healthcare for trans youth).**

Since my earliest days in the Legislature, I have been a strong supporter of LGBTQ+ rights and civil rights protections, and I would be a clear and consistent advocate as governor. In 2009, as Speaker of the Maine House, I was the lead co-sponsor of Maine's landmark marriage equality bill. I stood up to members of my own party to help pass that law, making Maine the first state in the nation to pass marriage equality through the Legislature and have it signed by a governor. Throughout my career, I have never wavered in standing up for marginalized communities.

Two years ago, I created the Office of New Americans in state government to better welcome immigrants and connect them with workforce and community opportunities. At a time of increasing attacks on immigrants—from the President and even leaders in Maine's GOP—I have spoken out clearly, including against ICE's surge in Maine, and pushed for stronger protections for immigrant communities. I have also spoken out against increasing racist and anti-Semitic attacks, and I believe the governor must aggressively implement hate-crime statutes and lead by example by ensuring diverse leaders are represented in state government.

We are seeing growing misinformation and political attacks targeting LGBTQ+ people, especially transgender youth, as well as immigrants and other vulnerable communities. Upcoming elections and referendums threaten to worsen these attacks. Maine's next governor must be both an ally and a leader. That means supporting access to health care, particularly as federal actions threaten funding for essential providers like Maine Family Planning and Planned Parenthood. I have a 100% voting record with Planned Parenthood and believe state funding must backstop essential coverage. With the Trump Administration targeting the LGBTQ+ community and cutting health care access for trans people, Maine must act to protect access to care and prevent discrimination by providers and insurers. My record of leadership and advocacy shows that I will work every day to ensure Maine is a place where everyone is treated with dignity, respect, and fairness.

## **B. Protecting a woman’s right to reproductive freedom including shielding Maine providers who assist women in states where reproductive rights are limited.**

I have never wavered in my commitment to reproductive freedom. As a mother of two teenage children, including a daughter, these issues are deeply personal and central to who I am as a person and as a public leader. Early in my career, I worked at Planned Parenthood, and I have continued to publicly support their work and that of similar organizations as a citizen, Speaker of the House, and candidate. At a time of urgent attacks on reproductive rights, I remain steadfast in standing with these organizations and the people they serve.

I would absolutely work to protect Maine’s recently passed “shield law” and as governor, I’d introduce a constitutional amendment to permanently protect reproductive rights in our law.

## **C. Protecting the environment for ourselves and future generations through science- and research-driven policymaking.**

Climate is an urgent and existential challenge for Maine, our people, economy, and communities and I believe the next governor must have a commitment to bold action. From launching and co-chairing Maine’s Climate Council to envisioning the Community Resilience Partnership, and through my years of strong environmental leadership in the Legislature, I have led on every front. And as governor, I’d continue that leadership and ensure we continue bold action, while also ensuring affordability and community benefits.

I’ve always valued and prioritized data, science and transparency in Maine’s climate and environmental work. When we started the Maine Climate Council, the first thing we did was assemble a group of Maine’s top scientists and technical experts and we asked them to deliver a comprehensive report on the data related to climate changes in Maine to ensure our work was guided by facts and science. Their results were essential to our work and their updates continue. A commitment to the truth and listening to scientists and experts guides my policymaking on everything from environmental protection to public health.

As governor, my administration will:

### **1. Lead the Nation on Climate Action and Resilience**

Strengthen Maine's capacity to withstand climate impacts by continuing to expand community-centered strategies for storm resiliency in both coastal and inland areas, investing in locally led adaptation and infrastructure, and modernizing energy systems to prepare for future extreme weather. We'll build on our highly successful community programs and grow our work in schools and businesses. At the same time, we'll continue the urgent work to drive down emissions through energy efficiency, electrification of transportation and heating, and the commitment to affordable clean energy deployment—ensuring Maine meets its bold goals while lowering costs for families and businesses.

### **2. Meet Maine's Clean Energy Goals While Improving Affordability**

Ensure the state delivers on its statutory 100% clean energy targets while reducing costs for ratepayers. This includes stabilizing electricity prices by holding utilities accountable for performance, deploying innovative grid modernization investments, and prioritizing cost-effective, homegrown clean energy resources that enhance equity, reliability and affordability.

### **3. Protect Maine's Natural Lands While Growing Sustainable Economic Opportunities**

Pursue an agenda that expands land conservation investment and land-use planning to protect working lands, forests, and coastal resources for both our state's climate goals and the future of our heritage industries. We'll also improve the integration of conservation efforts with smart housing and economic development strategies to address affordability, strengthen rural economies, and sustain Maine's natural resource-based communities. In addition to advancing Tribal Sovereignty legislation, I'd look to support conservation efforts in partnership with Tribal Nations.

## **D. Protecting Maine elections from Trump Administration interference and federal legislative overreach such as the SAVE Act.**

Mainers have shown time and again that we believe in free and fair elections and the next governor must fight both state and federal efforts to threaten our voting rights - from the federal SAVE Act to state referendums. Voting is fundamental to our democracy and protecting it is essential to safeguarding all other rights.

Maine leads the nation in voter turnout and we have continually reaffirmed our commitment to making elections as transparent and accessible as possible. As a young legislator I worked to advance voting protection and election safeguards, like the requirement for paper ballot backups. I was proud to speak out forcefully against Question 1 last year and worked with fellow Mainers to defeat that referendum last fall. As governor I would lead the fight against any attempts by Republicans in the Legislature or in Congress to make it harder for people in Maine to exercise their right to vote.

I would also work with aligned governors, secretaries of state and attorney general to improve our collaborative efforts to fight this administration through legal and other means on voting rights, but other basic protections of the rights of Americans.

### **E. Legislative efforts that would restore self-determination and treat the Wabanaki Nations like all other federally recognized tribes.**

I would introduce a Governor's Bill, developed in partnership with the Tribal Nations, to amend Maine's Implementing Act and restore full Tribal sovereignty, ensuring that Tribal Nations have the same rights and authorities as the other 570 federally recognized tribes across the country. I would urge the Legislature to pass this legislation within my first 100 days in office. This issue has gone unresolved for too long, and I would use the full authority of the governor's office to move it forward quickly in close partnership with Tribal Chiefs.

In my work in state government, I have successfully collaborated with Tribal leaders and staff on issues such as climate resilience and children's wellbeing. Once full sovereignty is restored, I look forward to building a stronger government-to-government relationship between the State of Maine and Tribal Nations—one grounded in regular consultation, mutual respect, and collaboration on shared priorities such as environmental protection, wildlife management, health, and economic opportunity.

### **F. Responsible efforts to reduce gun violence.**

I have always believed in and supported common-sense gun reforms. During my time in the Legislature where I served as Majority Leader and as Speaker of the House, I voted for background checks at gun shows, supported gun-free schools, opposed a bill to allow guns on college campuses, and co-sponsored legislation to ban the sale of guns to 16- and 17-year-olds. This was fifteen years ago, when passing measures like these was often an uphill battle.

This past year, as a candidate for governor, I was a strong and public supporter of Question 2, the “Red Flag Law”. As governor, I would work not only to uphold that law but, just as importantly, to ensure it is implemented effectively. Successful implementation will require strong state leadership and coordination among our courts, public safety officials, and mental health providers. I have a track record of collaborative leadership to implement state policy and get results. The team I led at the Office of the Future successfully coordinated across systems to address complex challenges like opioid addiction and recovery, and I would bring that same approach to ensuring Maine’s Red Flag law is implemented successfully to save lives.

At the same time, there is more work to be done. Achieving further progress will require stronger Democratic majorities in Augusta, and I’d support efforts to strengthen background checks and limit large-capacity magazines and military-style weapons. I would also convene leaders from across Maine to address our state’s high rate of domestic violence homicides and pursue policies that could prevent these tragedies.

I’m proud to be endorsed by leaders of the Legislature’s Gun Safety Caucus, Senator Anne Carney and Representative Vicki Doudera, as well as organizations like Vote Mama, which works to elect more moms who are committed to protecting kids.

At the heart of this issue, I’m a mom. I’ve chaired my local school board, and I’ve seen firsthand how state policy can help protect families. As governor, I would advance policies that keep Maine people safe in every way I can.

### **G. Addressing Maine's affordable housing crisis.**

Housing affordability has been one of the main policy priorities of my campaign since day one. I announced I was running for governor at a newly completed senior housing facility in Rockland and embarked on a statewide tour to bring together renters, homeowners, builders, developers, municipal and business leaders, and housing advocates to listen, talk about challenges, hear about innovative housing projects, and drive real solutions to Maine’s housing crisis.

As Speaker, I championed long-term, sustainable funding for new housing production. After leaving office, I directed a community-based housing organization that expanded homeownership opportunities, developed rental housing, and provided weatherization support for local families.

As Director of the Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future (GOPIF), I led the effort to secure the largest pipeline of funding for affordable housing production in state history, including funds for rural rentals, affordable home ownership, mobile home park preservation, opportunities for veterans and seniors, homelessness prevention, and home weatherization.

My leadership has always been about pressing for solutions, including overseeing the creation of two key state reports: the [2023 Housing Production Needs Summary](#) that declared Maine is short about [84,000 homes](#), and the [2025 Housing Production Roadmap](#), that provided detailed recommendations to the Legislature for addressing the state's housing challenges.

This push to find solutions and deliver results is a part of my campaign, too. After meeting with hundreds of Mainers in their communities, I was the first candidate in the race to release a comprehensive [Housing Affordability Plan](#). As governor, I pledge to:

- Invest \$100 Million a Year in Housing: Provide consistent funding for the development and preservation of homes across Maine that are affordable and attainable.
- Take on Private Equity and Corporate Greed: Stop out-of-state corporations from displacing families from existing homes and driving up rents.
- Accelerate Permit Approvals, Cut Red Tape, and Reduce Barriers to New Housing: Streamline and simplify state and local permit approvals and support land use reforms that allow homes to be built faster, smarter, and more predictably.
- Grow the Workforce and Industries that Build Our Homes: Invest in apprenticeships, training programs, business supports, and tuition-free community college to ensure Maine has the skilled workers, materials, and businesses to build the housing we need.
- Reduce Evictions and Address Rising Homelessness in Maine: Expand permanent housing solutions for Maine's most vulnerable residents and invest in efforts to help households avoid evictions.

Maine needs these bold strategies to rapidly build new units, protect existing units, lower construction costs, and grow good-paying jobs. Predictable, ongoing state investments must support affordable rentals and home ownership opportunities, while also better utilizing vacant, historic and commercial properties, and USDA

foreclosure properties that are currently sitting empty. Keeping Mainers housed also requires weatherization, repair programs, eviction prevention, and more support for mobile home park resident co-ops.

Partnership with communities to modernize zoning and streamline permitting will speed the pace of housing development. And Maine must increase its support for the trades and construction workforce through training, apprenticeships, and partnerships with unions and businesses.

As governor, I will work every day to expand housing options, protect affordability, and ensure that every Mainer has a place to live with dignity and security.

With Maine companies already producing lumber, insulation, windows, and whole homes — and as the nation’s most forested state — we should lead the nation in innovative wood products for home construction, growing good-paying jobs, and a stronger rural economy in the process.

## **H. Bolstering healthcare access for rural people and those who rely on MaineCare.**

I recently [released a comprehensive health care plan](#) that has a strong focus on rural access.

Maine people often struggle to find a doctor, get appointments, and access critical services – especially in rural Maine. This will become worse with upcoming massive spending cuts to Medicaid and the expiration of Affordable Care Act premium tax credits. My plan outlines ways to ensure affordable coverage, improvements in access, and a focus on community health.

I propose a new public option in Maine’s insurance market, to help small businesses and individuals find coverage they can afford, and the plan also seeks to stop private equity companies from buying up rural health care facilities and diminish patient outcomes for profits, reign in insurance company abuses, and lower prescription drug prices.

With a specific focus on our rural access, I will utilize the state’s \$190 million a year Rural Health Transformation grant, a program designed to support rural hospitals and improve access to care, to make sure it serves Maine people effectively and maximizes these funds for long-term improvements to our fragile systems. I’ll support diligent enrollment efforts to ensure MaineCare recipients maintain access to the program,

while the Trump administration attempts to kick people off through bureaucracy and roadblocks.

Additionally, I will:

1. Improve access to primary care by increasing incentives for primary care practitioners and community health centers, and expand programs to train, recruit, and retain additional health providers including free community college, supporting residencies and loan repayment programs, and expanding technology such as virtual urgent care and connecting local practitioners in real-time to specialists outside their communities;
2. Ensure all Maine people can access and afford the full range of reproductive health care, including maternity and postpartum care especially in rural Maine, through new models for delivering, regulating, and paying for such care;
3. Make better use of health professionals in a variety of settings at every level, such as by supporting community paramedics that can provide home health in rural areas, offering dental services in places like schools, daycares, and nursing facilities, expanding the role of pharmacists, and supporting trained family caregivers for individuals with disabilities and older Mainers;
4. Continue to expand access to mental health care by increasing certified community clinics, fully staffing crisis hotlines, establishing crisis receiving centers to avoid unnecessary hospitalizations or incarceration, and deploying mobile crisis teams that provide urgent care directly in homes and communities; and
5. Support a strong network of substance use recovery community centers, recovery coaches, peer-support training, and resources like community liaisons to continue Maine's progress in saving lives from substance use.

## **I. Addressing the high cost of electricity for Maine households.**

Mainers deserve clean, reliable, and affordable power, not endless rate hikes and excuses. I will hold utilities accountable and put Maine people — not corporate profits — first. I will expand homegrown clean energy, and make sure the transition to a clean economy lowers costs for families and businesses while creating good-paying jobs for Maine workers. I'll protect Maine ratepayers from reckless AI data centers that threaten to drive up costs for our communities. Electricity is a basic necessity, not a luxury — and I will make sure Mainers can count on reliable, affordable and increasingly cleaner power for their homes and businesses.

My Policy Priorities are:

1. **Hold Utilities Accountable:** Tie utility profits to lower bills, better performance, reliability, and customer satisfaction — and require the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) to penalize poor service and reject unjustified rate hikes. Oppose excessive rate hikes from CMP and Versant Power, hold corporate parents like Avangrid accountable for service failures, profiteering, and demand fair, transparent utility budgets that prioritize Maine people over profits.
2. **Lower Electricity Costs:** Require the PUC to use every tool available to drive down electricity bills, including by ensuring electric utilities are incentivized when customer bills go down, not up; facilitate electrification and efficiency that brings down rates; maximize grid utilization to get the most out of the infrastructure we've already paid for; and ensure that needed investments to modernize the grid and make it more resilient are made with the lowest-cost financing available.
3. **Deliver 100% Clean Energy:** Deliver 100% clean energy by 2040, reducing reliance on costly imported fossil fuels, investing in responsibly sited clean energy that benefits communities, and using regular competitive auctions to rapidly deploy local solar, wind, and energy storage that lowers costs for Maine people and businesses. Maine must pursue a "least cost" electricity supply through reform and modernization of the standard offer and other procurement processes.
4. **Enforce Guardrails Against AI Data Center Impacts & Costs:** Speculative, power-hungry data center projects are looming across the country, and too often households are left paying the price – through higher electricity bills. Maine must enact a moratorium until we can ensure any new data centers pay their own way up front, offer benefits to host communities, and do not jeopardize the environment, health and wellbeing of their neighbors.
5. **Modernize Clean Energy Permitting:** Remove unnecessary red tape and reform outdated processes to get more clean energy built and connected faster to lower electricity costs, while ensuring community benefits.
6. **Invest in the Clean Energy Workforce:** Grow programs that create pathways to good-paying green jobs, expand apprenticeships and training opportunities, and open up clean energy careers to more Mainers.

7. Target support to Moderate and Low-Income Households: Expand heat pump, energy efficiency, and local solar programs that reduce costs and ensure the benefits of clean energy reach every Mainer.

For more details on my Climate and Energy plan, please visit [hannahforgovernor.com](https://hannahforgovernor.com)

### **J. Support for public education.**

As a public school graduate, a mom with two teenage kids in public school, and a school board Chair, I have been a steadfast supporter of public education throughout my entire career in public service. Quality public education is essential to Maine's future and the success of our economy and communities.

As governor, I will partner with communities and teachers to ensure every child has access to a high-quality education. Maine needs to invest in proven reading and math programs to support kids and their teachers, take cell phones out of classrooms, increase mental health supports, strengthen career and technical education, and make free community college permanent. I'd also implement universal Pre-K and continue to support improvements in early childhood programs, in partnership with schools and Head Start programs, to ensure more Maine kids have access to quality early childhood programs.

Maine needs to continue its commitment to 55% funding for education, it should support a \$50,000 minimum teacher salary, and it should seek to modernize aging facilities. To maintain quality public education will require engagement with schools and communities to both invest in kids and schools, while also maintaining property taxes that Mainers can afford. It will require re-looking at the fairness of the school funding and school construction formulas and processes, and seeing where efficiencies can be found in regional administration and collaboration across districts.

### **K. Policies to ensure fair wages and reduce wealth inequality.**

Mainers are struggling with the rising cost of health care, housing, childcare, education, food, and utility bills. For many families, getting by and raising a family has become harder than ever. Throughout my 25 years in public service, I have fought for working families by advancing affordable health care, expanding housing programs, increasing education funding, raising the minimum wage, and strengthening support for workers and communities. During my time in the Legislature, I earned a 100% rating from the AFL-CIO for my consistent support of workers' rights and labor protections.

At a time of historic inequality, when many families are already struggling and Donald Trump's policies are worsening the affordability crisis through tariffs, trade wars, and cuts to health and food programs to fund tax breaks for billionaires, I have put forward specific plans to tackle these challenges in Maine. I believe a strong economy starts with stable housing, access to quality education and health care, and childcare families can afford. That's why I've proposed investing in affordable and workforce housing, cracking down on private equity firms buying mobile home parks, and creating a public option in Maine's health insurance marketplace. I've outlined these and other policies to support Maine families at [www.hannahforgovernor.com](http://www.hannahforgovernor.com).

We also need a more progressive tax system to support these investments. Low and middle-income families in Maine are often paying too much in state and local taxes, while the wealthiest households are not paying their fair share. Ideally, federal policy would address extreme wealth inequality through measures like a federal wealth tax, but in the absence of federal action, Maine should take steps of its own. I support increasing the progressivity of our tax system, including adding additional income tax brackets and enacting a "millionaires tax." At the same time, we should provide direct relief for struggling households through tools like property tax relief, child tax credits, and other targeted programs.

Maine also sees a large influx of wealth each summer through tourism and second-home ownership. While seasonal residents contribute to our economy, they also place demands on infrastructure and services without contributing in the same way full-time residents do. Asking seasonal visitors to pay more through lodging taxes, and requiring out-of-state second-home owners to contribute more through their property taxes would help fund investments in housing, education, infrastructure, and property tax relief. Other states successfully use these tools, and they would help Maine meet urgent needs without asking struggling Mainers to shoulder more of the burden.

## SECTION III: Please Describe How You Would Use Your Position as Governor To:

### **A. Protect Mainers from the excesses and abuses of ICE, CBP, and other federal agencies.**

We've recently seen states like New Jersey pass sweeping legislation to better protect against the overreach of federal immigration officers, upholding due process rights, requiring officers to unmask and show badges, and safeguarding access to places like schools, hospitals, and courts. Maine can and should do more to protect citizens, passing similar legislation, and urging federal action to stop these agencies.

I will assemble a top legal team and work closely with the Attorney General's Office and other governors to aggressively push back against federal overreach and protect our communities from harassment and unjust enforcement. Additionally, I'd support accountability measures to hold federal agents and agencies accountable for illegal actions that occurred in Maine and make it easier for those harmed to also seek remedies.

I will use every tool of my office to protect our communities, keep ICE and their terror out of Maine, and increase broader protections from federal overreach in our state.

### **B. Respond to federal overreach in demands for policy changes, Maine residents' personal information, changes to our educational systems, and threats of defunding Maine programs.**

Maine needs to continue to say no at every level to the Trump Administration's requests for voting information, private data about our children, and other breaches of privacy - like DOGE's access to our social security data - that impacts every Maine person. I'd pursue legal action with other states and governors, and aggressively advocate to Congress that there needs to be accountability and oversight over federal abuses.

In addition to the actions above, I would pursue a constitutional amendment to protect privacy.

Trump has attempted to threaten and illegally target Maine's federal funding, and while we've won repeatedly in court in some areas, the attacks have impacted our state and communities. I've worked on several successful legal actions with the

Attorney General's to reverse federal defunding decisions in areas like climate, emergency management and more. It requires diligence and legal action.

Some federal funding actions have been successful and while all the devastating cuts can't be easily remedied, I'd work closely with the Legislature to backfill funding where possible, to areas like reproductive health care and food programs.

**C. Respond to inappropriate federal mobilizations of the Maine National Guard for assignments within the United States (as opposed to mobilizations related to natural disasters or actual war declared by Congress).**

As Commander of the Maine National Guard, I would take immediate action to block any inappropriate federal mobilization of Maine's Guard that is not tied to natural disasters or a congressionally declared war. I would lead decisively, relying on a team of experienced attorneys and coordinating with the Attorney General's Office to challenge federal overreach and protect Maine's sovereignty, resources, and people.

# Nirav Shah

## SECTION I: Please Outline Your Top Three Priorities If You Are Elected Governor of Maine.

My top priority as Governor will be to make Maine a place where every person, no matter their ZIP code, can afford to live, work, and build a future. That starts with tackling the cost of living head-on: expanding access to affordable housing, lowering energy costs, and ensuring that good-paying jobs are available in every corner of our state. Too many Mainers are being priced out of their communities, and we need a comprehensive, urgent response that brings together state, local, and private partners to meet this moment.

Second, I will strengthen our health care system and protect the health of Maine people. My experience leading the Maine CDC showed me both what's possible and where the gaps are. We must expand access to primary care and mental health services, address workforce shortages, and continue leading on public health challenges – from the opioid crisis to environmental threats like PFAS. Health care should be accessible, affordable, and grounded in prevention, not just treatment.

Finally, I will stand up for Maine by pushing back against harmful federal overreach and defending our values in the face of the Trump administration. That's why I've put forward my Safeguarding Maine Against the Trump Administration plan, the only Democratic candidate to have such a plan. The plan serves as a clear roadmap to protect reproductive freedom, defend access to health care, safeguard our environment, and ensure that Maine people, not politicians in Washington, are making decisions about our lives. Maine has always led with independence and common sense, and as Governor, I will make sure we continue to do just that.

## SECTION II: Please Describe Your Position on the Following Issues, As Well As Your Plans for Achieving Them:

### **A. Protecting Mainers from discrimination based on race, ethnicity, sex, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identification (including healthcare for trans youth).**

As the only person of color in this race, I will never need to be convinced that structural racism is real, that it is measurable, and that it demands the sustained attention of a governor who treats closing these gaps as a core measure of whether Maine is succeeding.

Maine people believe in treating others with dignity, keeping our communities safe, and holding law enforcement to the highest standards. But instead of working toward real, comprehensive immigration reform, Donald Trump has unleashed chaotic, deadly, and often illegal ICE operations that target families, workers, and people with no criminal records. If the federal government intends to carry out these kinds of operations in our state and terrorize our communities, we will make it clear where Maine stands. To that end, I would like to call out three points in my plan that seeks to safeguard Maine against the Trump Administration:

#### **End all voluntary state cooperation with ICE**

We will fully enforce Maine's existing law limiting state and local participation in federal immigration enforcement, and direct all state agencies to end any voluntary cooperation with ICE beyond what federal law strictly requires.

#### **Ban all law enforcement officers from wearing a mask**

I would ban law enforcement officers—whether federal, state, or local—from wearing masks during interactions with the public or while conducting operations in Maine, except under very narrow circumstances.

#### **Strengthen Maine's limited-cooperation law**

Work with the Legislature to strengthen Maine's existing law by banning additional forms of state and local cooperation with ICE, prohibiting state personnel from assisting in civil immigration enforcement, and closing loopholes that allow indirect support for federal deportation operations.

Trans people, and especially trans children, are under attack by the current federal administration. Every day there are new threats to their right to exist. This is wrong. My stance on trans rights is unequivocal: the Maine Human Rights Act as currently written is clear in its protection of trans people's rights. We need to ensure that it is upheld across our state. As governor, I would veto any legislation that stripped these protections from the Maine Human Rights Act. It is also incumbent upon all of us to understand and actively practice the belief that community is a group project. We all have a role to play in making sure that everyone feels safe here in Maine.

Finally, systemic racism in health care is real, and it is deadly. When rural hospitals are underfunded, maternity wards close, and access to preventive care is limited, it disproportionately harms Black, Indigenous, and people of color – especially in communities already facing historic inequities. It is incredible to see how Mainers are stepping up to fill these gaps caused by hate and politics. For example, a January article from the Maine Monitor cited how Wabanaki Public Health and Wellness trained, for the first time, about 30 doulas to help families leading up to and during birth as other birthing services across the state have ceased. But it should not be incumbent upon localities to lead this effort.

As governor, I will ensure that Maine's policies are informed by the expertise and guidance of Black, Indigenous, and people of color. [My Health Care Plan](#) lays out concrete steps to address these inequities: stabilizing and protecting rural and community hospitals, expanding prenatal, postpartum, and preventive care through clinics, telehealth, and mobile services, and broadening access to contraception statewide. I will also invest in training and recruiting OB-GYNs, midwives, and women's health nurse practitioners for rural and underserved communities, and support team-based care models that safely expand maternal and reproductive health access. Maine's policies must reflect the lived experiences and expertise of those most affected.

## **B. Protecting a woman's right to reproductive freedom including shielding Maine providers who assist women in states where reproductive rights are limited.**

After *Roe v. Wade* was overturned, millions of women across the country lost the fundamental right to make their own reproductive health decisions. Donald Trump and his allies made that possible and now they are pushing even more extreme restrictions from Washington. Maine has chosen a different path, one that respects

women, families, and doctors. As governor, I will protect both Maine's status as a safe haven for reproductive freedom as well as a woman's right to choose, making sure every Mainer can access the care they need, no matter what happens at the federal level. To that end, below are the policy areas that I proposed in my recent plan, Safeguarding Maine from the Trump Administration. I am the first democratic candidate to propose such a plan:

### **Keep Maine a safe haven for reproductive care**

Ensure Maine remains a place where women can safely access legal reproductive services, regardless of where they live.

### **Ensure that reproductive health clinics can continue to serve patients**

Given the Trump Administration's devastating cuts to reproductive health clinics, I will work with the Legislature to ensure stable funding for providers like Maine Family Planning and Planned Parenthood of Northern New England. Doing so will help ensure patients can still access mammograms, cancer screenings, birth control, and reproductive care in their own communities, regardless of federal defunding efforts.

### **Protect reproductive health data privacy**

Direct state agencies to limit the sharing of reproductive health data to protect patient privacy from out-of-state investigations.

### **Create a strategic mifepristone stockpile**

In the event that FDA were suddenly to rescind approval of the abortion medication mifepristone, Maine will have already purchased and stored a multi-year supply of the drug at the state level. This physical supply, already within Maine's borders, would remain legal for distribution under state law.

Protecting reproductive freedom must go hand in hand with making care accessible across Maine. That means safeguarding the full range of reproductive and preventive services under state law while strengthening how that care is delivered. As governor, I will stabilize maternity services at rural and community hospitals so families aren't forced to travel hours for care, and expand prenatal, postpartum, and preventive services through community clinics, telehealth, and mobile care in underserved areas. I will also broaden access to birth control by enabling pharmacist prescribing statewide and pursuing additional over-the-counter options as federal rules allow. At the same time, we must invest in the workforce by expanding training and residency opportunities, increasing loan repayment and scholarships for providers in rural

communities, and supporting team-based maternity care models that help more Maine families get the care they need, close to home.

### **C. Protecting the environment for ourselves and future generations through science- and research-driven policymaking.**

I think about this in two ways: how do we protect ourselves from the environment, as climate change wreaks havoc on that environment, and how do we protect the environment from us. It is also critical for us to recognize that climate change and environmental degradation impact disadvantaged communities disproportionately.

As a public health leader, I've spent my career studying patterns. Who gets sick, why they get sick, and how underlying systems help or harm people's health. Climate change follows a similar pattern: it does not impact everyone equally, nor does environmental degradation. In Maine, environmental justice is not an abstraction, it is about who floods first, who cannot afford to heat their home, whose well water is contaminated or runs dry, and who waits longest for recovery support after a storm.

Low-income families, rural communities, tribal nations, older Mainers, and people with disabilities face what researchers describe as a "compounding effect" of climate risk, economic vulnerability, and limited access to resources and resilience planning. Stronger storms, coastal flooding, increased risk of infrastructure damage, and extended heat events intensify these historical disparities.

The rollback of the EPA's endangerment finding undermines a critical tool for protecting communities from pollution and climate harm and should be seen as a flagrant betrayal of the federal government. As groups including the Natural Resources Council of Maine and partners have pointed out, weakening federal safeguards increases the burden on states and leaves frontline communities with fewer protections. That is one of the reasons why I recently released a plan to Safeguard Maine Against the Trump Administration. As governor, I would take decisive steps to protect our environment, prepare for natural disasters, and lead the transition to clean, affordable energy – because it MUST be state governments and the governors who lead them that push back. Below are the steps I propose we take as a state.

#### **Take state-level action to cut pollution and reduce emissions**

As the Trump administration rolls back federal climate protections and abandons the tools the federal government once used to regulate greenhouse gases, states are

being left on their own while corporations set the rules. Maine will step up by using state authority to set strong emissions standards, invest in energy efficiency, and protect public health instead of waiting for Washington to act.

### **Protect Maine's clean water and natural resources**

As the Trump administration rolls back federal clean water protections and weakens safeguards for wetlands, streams, and coastal areas, Maine will step up to defend the natural resources that support our fisheries, tourism, and way of life. This includes strengthening state water quality protections, investing in watershed and coastal resilience, and ensuring corporations cannot pollute the lakes, rivers, and ocean Maine families depend on.

### **Prepare Maine for growing disaster response needs**

With Donald Trump threatening FEMA funding and playing politics with disaster aid for states he doesn't like, Maine cannot afford to rely on Washington to have our back. Strengthen Maine's emergency preparedness and resilience planning in case federal disaster response is delayed, weakened, or politicized, and invest in state-level response capacity, emergency shelters, and rapid recovery programs so communities can rebuild quickly after storms, floods, or other climate-driven events.

### **Protect Maine families from PFAS contamination**

While the Trump administration drags its feet on toxic chemical regulation and weakens federal environmental safeguards, Maine will lead the way. I will continue and expand Maine's nation-leading PFAS protections by strengthening testing, cleanup, and support for affected communities, farmers, and water systems so no family has to worry about toxic chemicals.

### **Accelerate wind power and clean energy development**

With federal policies making it harder to build clean energy, I will streamline state permitting, invest in grid upgrades, and work with communities to responsibly expand onshore and offshore wind—lowering energy costs and creating good-paying jobs in Maine.

## **D. Protecting Maine elections from Trump Administration interference and federal legislative overreach such as the SAVE Act.**

Maine's elections belong to Maine people, full stop. What we've seen from Donald Trump and his allies is a direct threat to that principle: spreading disinformation, pressuring state officials, and now pushing federal overreach like the SAVE Act that risks disenfranchising eligible voters under the guise of "security." As governor, I will not allow goons playing politics to undermine our state's authority or erode trust in our elections. Maine has a long tradition of free, fair, and locally administered elections, and I intend to protect it.

That's why I've put forward a plan that seeks to [safeguard Maine Against the Trump Administration](#) – the only candidate to issue such a plan. It includes a Maine Election Sovereignty Act to ensure no federal directive can alter our election procedures without clear legal authority and legislative approval, strict protections against sharing Maine voters' personal data with federal entities, and the creation of an Election Protection Task Force to monitor and respond to interference. We will also strengthen cybersecurity across our election infrastructure and prepare a coordinated legal defense to push back against any unconstitutional federal intrusion.

Just as importantly, I will stand with the people who make our elections work. That means passing an Election Worker Protection Act to criminalize threats against election officials, providing real security support for local clerks, and making it clear that intimidation has no place in our democracy.

## **E. Legislative efforts that would restore self-determination and treat the Wabanaki Nations like all other federally recognized tribes.**

I am in full support of tribal sovereignty and would enact this legislative effort on day one. But protecting tribal sovereignty means moving beyond recognition to real, sustained investment in Wabanaki self-determination. As governor, I will work in partnership with tribal nations to expand access to housing, education, and infrastructure—priorities identified by Wabanaki leaders themselves. That includes supporting tribally led housing development, strengthening education pathways from early childhood through higher education, and investing in broadband and digital sovereignty so communities can build and control their own economic futures.

At a time when federal protections are being rolled back, including efforts to weaken tribal authority over water and environmental safeguards, states must step up. I will

ensure Maine works with, not around, tribal governments to protect natural resources, strengthen climate resilience, and uphold public health.

## **F. Responsible efforts to reduce gun violence.**

I strongly and publicly supported the red flag referendum in November 2025. Recent legislation (LD 1312) only works if we implement it as the public health intervention it was designed to be. That means building a system where clinicians, families, and law enforcement can recognize risk, communicate clearly, and act before a moment of crisis becomes irreversible. We know most gun deaths are suicides, and that access to a firearm during a crisis significantly increases fatality risk. What is predictable is preventable and this law must function as prevention: timely, coordinated, and grounded in science and care.

Gun violence is a public health crisis shaped by access, trauma, and gaps in behavioral health care, with measurable impacts on mental health, especially for young people. Firearms are now the leading cause of death for children in this country. A comprehensive response requires investing in behavioral health systems, strengthening crisis response, promoting safe storage, and reducing the chronic stress and anticipatory trauma that are reshaping how communities experience safety.

## **G. Addressing Maine's affordable housing crisis.**

Maine's housing crisis is fundamentally about supply, cost, and whether people can build a life here at every stage. Right now, we are simply not building enough homes, and the ones we do have are increasingly out of reach. That's why my plan starts with a clear, urgent goal: build significantly more housing, faster, and make sure it's actually affordable. Through my [Maine's Affordable Future plan](#), I will set statewide production targets, create a housing fast-track to cut through permitting delays, expand MaineHousing's ability to finance new units, and invest in the workforce needed to build homes at scale. We will also support first-time homebuyers with down payment assistance and mortgage guarantees, preserve existing affordable housing, and stabilize rental markets so people aren't pushed out of their communities.

But building more alone isn't enough. We have to lower the cost of living that makes housing unaffordable in the first place. That means property tax relief for Maine residents, investments in energy efficiency to bring down heating and utility bills, and smarter development – like “missing middle” housing and walkable communities –

that reduces costs while strengthening local economies. My plan is about aligning housing, energy, and tax policy so working families, young people, and essential workers can actually afford to stay in Maine and put down roots.

And we must do this in a way that works for older Mainers, too. Too many seniors want to downsize or stay in their homes but don't have options. Another [plan that I have shared prioritizes aging in place](#) by expanding in-home services, supporting family caregivers through initiatives like the Maine Caregiver Corps, and investing in community-based housing and care so people can remain in the communities they love. We will strengthen long-term care infrastructure, expand transportation options, and create housing and service models that reflect the reality of an aging state. Housing policy isn't just about units. It's about dignity, independence, and making sure every generation can live, stay, and thrive in Maine.

#### **H. Bolstering healthcare access for rural people and those who rely on MaineCare.**

Health care in rural Maine is at a breaking point, and for the nearly 400,000 Mainers who rely on MaineCare, it's a lifeline we cannot afford to weaken. Too many communities are losing providers, hospitals are under strain, and people are being forced to travel hours just to get basic care. My plan takes this on directly: we will stabilize rural hospitals by making large insurance companies pay their fair share, expand and strengthen MaineCare so it better supports providers and patients, and invest aggressively in recruiting and retaining doctors, nurses, and mental health professionals especially in underserved areas. That means expanding residency programs, growing loan repayment incentives tied to rural service, and cutting red tape so qualified providers can practice here and stay here.

At the same time, we have to protect access to care from federal attacks that would undermine MaineCare and destabilize our system. I've been clear: if Washington politicians try to cut coverage, impose new barriers, or inject politics into public health, I will fight back using every tool available to the state – and as the only lawyer on the Democratic ballot, I know which levers to pull. My plan ensures we defend science-based care, expand telehealth and community-based services so people can get care closer to home, and keep medical decisions where they belong, which is between patients and providers, not insurance companies or politicians. But at the end of the day, this is about more than policy. It's about Mainers, hardworking Mainers and

making sure that whether you live in a rural town or rely on MaineCare, you can get the care you need, when you need it, where you need it.

### **I. Addressing the high cost of electricity for Maine households.**

Energy costs in Maine are too high and families are feeling it in real time. In fact, [a recent article from the Portland Press Herald](#) shared that heating oil prices spiked more than 20% in a single week, with the statewide average climbing to nearly \$5 a gallon, driven by global events far beyond our control. That's the reality for too many Maine households: when fossil fuel prices swing, we pay the price. There's no single switch to flip, which is why [my plan focuses on immediate relief](#): fixing the rules that let utilities profit off unnecessary spending, expanding energy assistance and efficiency programs to lower bills now, and working regionally to prevent the kind of winter price shocks that keep happening.

But if we want lasting affordability, we have to stop being at the mercy of volatile global energy markets. That means building a more stable, modern system here in Maine. I will invest in upgrading our grid, accelerate the transition to clean, low-cost energy like wind, and position Maine to lead in offshore wind, creating good-paying jobs while delivering long-term price stability.

### **J. Support for public education.**

I am who I am because of public education, and I know how transformative great schools can be. Maine's teachers and students are incredible, but too many kids are struggling with reading, writing, and the critical thinking skills they need to succeed in school and in life. Literacy today isn't just reading; it's interpreting data, understanding the world, and making smart decisions for the future. Donald Trump's education policies are making that harder by cutting support for students, threatening school nutrition programs, and pulling back on the federal commitment to public schools. As governor, I will stand up for Maine's students: protecting and expanding special education funding, defending free school meals, and keeping Washington politicians out of our classrooms so every child, no matter their needs or ZIP code, has access to a complete, accurate, and respectful education that prepares them for the Maine we want to build.

### **K. Policies to ensure fair wages and reduce wealth inequality.**

Economic fairness in Maine is about dismantling the systemic barriers that have kept too many Mainers from getting ahead. For too long, structural racism and inequities in

access to education, health care, affordable child care, and career opportunities have meant that hardworking people of color and historically marginalized communities face higher costs, lower wages, and fewer pathways to build wealth. We cannot talk about fair wages without talking about opportunity, and we cannot achieve real economic justice without confronting the policies and practices that have locked too many families out of prosperity.

As governor, I will take a comprehensive approach that expands opportunity while reducing costs for working families. That means making quality, affordable child care available so parents aren't forced to choose between caring for their kids and earning a living wage, and investing in free community college so every young person and adult has the chance to gain skills without being burdened by debt. It means strengthening worker protections and supporting wage growth, expanding MaineCare so health care isn't a barrier to employment, and targeting investments in communities that have historically been overlooked.

## SECTION III: Please Describe How You Would Use Your Position as Governor To:

### **A. Protect Mainers from the excesses and abuses of ICE, CBP, and other federal agencies.**

As the only person of color in this race, the terror that we were forced to endure hit very close to home. Maine will not be a playground for federal overreach. Under Donald Trump, ICE, CBP, and other federal agencies have carried out violent, chaotic, and often illegal operations targeting families, workers, and people with no criminal records. Mothers, fathers, and children are being ripped from their homes while being told this is "enforcement." It's inhumane, it's illegal, and it has no place in Maine. As governor, I will make it absolutely clear: we will not allow federal actors to terrorize our communities, and we will use every tool available under state law to protect Maine people. I am the only Democratic candidate with a fully fleshed-out plan to defend Mainers against these abuses.

[My plan is direct and uncompromising.](#) We will end all voluntary state cooperation with ICE beyond what federal law strictly requires, strengthen Maine's limited-cooperation law to close every loophole, and block any state contracts that could support deportation operations. Every law enforcement officer operating in Maine,

whether federal, state, or local, will be held to Maine's standards: visible ID, active body cameras, first-aid training with a duty to render aid, and adherence to Maine's use-of-force and conduct rules. Masked officers will be banned except under extremely narrow circumstances. Transparency, accountability, and respect for human life will be non-negotiable.

We will hold ICE and federal actors accountable when they violate Maine law or civil rights. No federal agent will enter non-public state facilities such as schools, hospitals, or other state-run spaces, without a judicial warrant. The Attorney General and state agencies will investigate abuses, pursue legal action, and ensure that Maine's families, workers, and communities are protected. This is a promise: Maine will stand as a shield for its people, not a tool for federal intimidation. To date, no other candidate in this race has a plan this comprehensive. I will lead Maine in defending justice, dignity, and the rule of law.

### **B. Respond to federal overreach in demands for policy changes, Maine residents' personal information, changes to our educational systems, and threats of defunding Maine programs.**

Maine will not be pushed around by federal overreach. Whether it's demands to change our policies, requests for residents' personal information, interference in our schools, or threats to defund programs that Mainers rely on, we will stand firm. As governor, I will protect the authority of our state, safeguard the privacy of our people, and ensure that Maine's education system and public programs remain under local control. Using every legal and legislative tool available, we will push back against Washington politicians who try to dictate Maine's priorities, defend the integrity of our institutions, and make it clear that the people of Maine, not federal bureaucrats, set the rules for our state.

### **C. Respond to inappropriate federal mobilizations of the Maine National Guard for assignments within the United States (as opposed to mobilizations related to natural disasters or actual war declared by Congress).**

Maine's National Guard exists to protect our communities, respond to disasters, and serve when our country faces war, not to carry out political agendas or enforce federal overreach at home. Any attempt to mobilize the Guard for domestic operations unrelated to emergencies or a declared war undermines both our democracy and the trust Mainers place in these brave men and women. As governor, I will make it clear

that the Maine National Guard will only be deployed in ways that serve the public good, protect our citizens, and uphold the law