



MAINE ADVOCACY REPORT

FROM: Denise Vachon dvachon@leadingagemnh.org

April 21, 2026

Maine Government Affairs Committee members:

Leanne Fiet - CHAIR - Piper Shores

Rob Hemenway – Birch Bay Retirement Village

Cheryl Dobbelsteyn – Cove’s Edge

Katharine O’Neill – The Cedars

Sheldon Brett – Phillips-Strickland House

ADVISORS:

Lisa Trundy-Whitten - BerryDunn

Olga Gross-Balzano – BerryDunn

The 2nd Session of the 132nd ME Legislature is complete, just in time for Statutory Adjournment.

During the 2nd Session (January to April), LeadingAge ME NH closely watched three pieces of legislation on behalf of its Maine members:

- **LD 1932: An Act to Support Essential Support Workers and Enhance Workforce Development -**
- The bill includes 3% COLAs for MaineCare providers following its being **unanimously** moved into the budget by HHS and Appropriations Committees. The bipartisan support was notable and appreciated, and a testament to the advocacy efforts by a number of advocacy groups. The partnership among the various groups worked to create a groundswell of focus on the issue and the bill. It passed in both chambers and is on the Governor’s desk for signature.
- **LD 2131: Resolve, Regarding the Nursing Facility Reform Transition Fund** was passed in both chambers, It is now on the Governor’s desk for signature. This is great news for our Nursing Care providers!
- **LD 2177 An Act to Update and Improve the MaineCare Reimbursement System**
This bill was sponsored by The Department of Health and Human Services, was very complex, and intended to create greater latitude and authority for DHHS to create new regulations and reimbursement methodologies with reduced oversight by the Legislature, and with reduced opportunity for public comment in the process.

Following significant discussion to "clean up" the language, and to assure that the language that allowed for funding contingent upon "available funding" was struck, as well as the provision for public comment was preserved, the bill was passed out of committee, and adopted in both the House and Senate on 3/31 and 4/2, respectively and signed by the Governor on April 13.

At a surprisingly fast pace, the Senate passed the Supplemental Budget on 4/11. With its passage the day before in the House, it is now on its way to the Governor for her signature.

While the Legislators in both Chambers had significant differences of opinion about some (perhaps many) of the measures and initiatives being funded, the COLAs remained intact, and our MaineCare participating members can expect to see a 3% COLA effective January 1, 2027. LDs 1932 and 2131 were funded. Votes in both chambers were realized with slim margins, with a bright line of division across party lines.

With that, the work of the Maine Government Affairs Committee is complete for 132nd ME Legislature. Next, we will watch for the results of the November elections, which will bring Maine a new Governor and a new legislature. The work of the Committee will rest until January, 2027, when the majority and minority parties will be determined, the new committees populated, and we can begin the efforts to educate the new HHS Committee on who we are, what our members do and how they do it.