

MAINE NOW PAC 2006 CANDIDATE GUIDE

Maine National Organization FOR
Women - Political Action Committee,
1978-2006
ELECTING FEMINIST CANDIDATES
FOR THE 123RD MAINE
LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCTION

Greetings Feminists & other progressive thinkers! Here is your Guide to electing Legislators to send to Augusta! Legislators who will work for YOU!

WHO IS MY CANDIDATE?

The Guide lists, by Legislative District, all candidates for the Maine House & Senate. This allows for easy comparison of opposing candidate's records. To find out what District you live in, your candidates & voting place, call your town hall, or Maine Elections Division 207-624-7650, or go to www.maine.gov/portal/government/edemocracy/lookup_polling_place.php

PLUS IS ALWAYS GOOD!

Plus (+) under an issue always indicates agreement with NOW. Minus (-) means disagreement. The candidates' positions on issues were determined primarily by roll calls of incumbents, and NOW Questionnaires to all candidates. You will also see "E" & "B." "E" is for Equivocal, generally meaning the candidate's answer cannot be condensed to a + or -. "B" is for Blank. Sometimes this is a space-holder, sometimes it means the candidate left an answer blank on the Qaire.

RATINGS

The Maine NOW PAC Candidate Guide has been helping feminists & other progressives for over a quarter of a century! In the 1990s we added a feature called "Ratings." Just as it sounds, we select a number of issues. We give each issue so much weight to arrive at a percentage of agreement with NOW. We also add or subtract points depending on whether we know a candidate's stand on, for example, the federal Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) for women. Ratings are given only to incumbents.

R2006 is the most recent rating, for the 2005-6 Legislature (122nd).

R2004 is for the 2003-4 Session (121st), & so on.

STATUS

Maine NOW PAC has two levels of support for candidates: "Endorsement" & "Support." A candidate's STATUS is determined almost entirely on their positions on issues.

ENDORSEMENT requires:

Support for the federal Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) for women

Support for the rights of other people who face an extra burdon of discrimination.

Support for the law that added "sexual orientation" to the Maine Human Rights Act. And some indication of support for the right to marry & civil unions.

Support for a woman's Right to Choose full-term pregnancy or abortion, free from government interference. And, universal access either through universal health care, or, at least equal availability of services through Medicaid funding.

These are MINIMUM requirements & do not guarantee Endorsement. We also closely consider any positions relating to violence against women & girls, economic & educational justice issues, healthy

environment, civil rights issues, separation of church & state, and issues or policies that open doors for girls and women.

SUPPORT is given to "Endorsement Near Misses." The candidate may be off on the issues slightly, or we may make a leap of faith on less than complete information. **If a candidate has NOW PAC's SUPPORT, they are not just better than their opponent. They are definitely NOW allies!**

MONEY & RESOURCES

Both Endorsed & Supported candidates deserve our help getting elected! But, only Endorsed candidates qualify for a monetary contribution. Of course, many of our candidates don't accept PAC money. What they really hope for is our vote and campaign help!

JAMMERS are the main funding source for Maine NOW PAC. Our "Sustainer Program" asks for a minimum \$5/month contribution (to Maine NOW PAC or Maine NOW). In return, **Sustainers of Feminism receive a monthly newsletter called Jo's Action Message – JAM!** If you'd like to become a JAMMER, send your contribution to NOW 87 Sunset Strip, Brewer ME 04412, and request the JAM!

HOW TO READ the HOUSE & SENATE CHARTS

(If formatting goes as planned) Across the top of each page of each chart there is a row of **CATEGORIES**. Categories are listed below with brief explanations. Brief, until you get to the **ISSUES**. Here there is sometimes more detail. So to make it easy to find – within the longer commentary – the short version of what the **ISSUE plus & minuses mean look for the DIAMONDS**.

Following the DIAMONDS are the details of what each plus & minus means in that category. The commentary adds context and feminist analysis to the issues.

OVERVIEW of SYMBOLS & COLUMN HEADINGS

R2006, R2004, etc. – RATINGS of Incumbents running in 2006. "R2006" is the rating for the most recent 2005-6 Session, the 122nd Maine Legislature. In addition to votes, we add up to 16% if a candidate is on our records as supporting ERA/CEA, universal or Medicaid funding for abortions, & sexual oriaitaon in the Maine Human Rights Act.

Status – Status of candidate with Maine NOW PAC. These are the possibilities:

E = ENDORSED by MNP

S = SUPPORTED by MNP

Z = Opponent is Endorsed or Supported. SOME, in another situation, or if we had more info on them, Might have been Endorsed or Supported. Some are unknown to us.

X = OPPOSED by MNP

X! = STRONGLY OPPOSED by MNP!

Party – Political Party of the candidate. In Maine this year, we have:

D = Democrat

G = Green

R = Republican

U = Unenrolled [including SE = Socialist Equality Party]

Candidate – Name of candidate.

District – District running for.

Inc – **INCUMBENCY** tells who is (or has been) in office. The pluses & minuses for incumbents often mean **VOTES**. For, those with no incumbency listed, pluses & minuses are usually Qaire answers.

S paired with a number = Number of Senate terms

H paired with a number = Number of House terms

F preceding anything = Former term(s)

SYMBOLS

+ = **Agreement** with MNP

– = **Disagreement** with MNP

E = **EQUVOCAL**. It is not possible to condense the candidate's position to a plus or minus. In some cases, the position is clear, but not condensable. In other cases the candidate is unclear or undecided.

B = **Blank**. Not in office when vote was taken, or did not answer the Qaire question, or a blank may be a placeholder.

A = **Absent or Excused from the vote**. (Incumbents only)

MULTIPLE SYMBOLS

See each **ISSUE Category (Look for the DIAMONDS)** for detailed explanations. Usually, several plus or minus symbols represent the candidate's position on several issues in that category.

BEFORE THE SLASH (/) = Votes from the most recent Legislative Session or 2006 Qaire answers.

AFTER THE SLASH (/) = Votes or Qaire answers from previous Sessions or previous runs for office. This is often a reflection of how the candidate usually voted in this category. Sometimes it is a specific vote.

COLUMN HEADINGS & ISSUES

MNP SUPPORTs LDs (bills) & Issues unless stated otherwise

RCs – Roll Calls are used when available.

For some LDs without RCs, we offer commentary. Some issues are from MNP Questionnaires.

PLUS is ALWAYS considered agreement with MNP.

◆ **Indicates Column Heading**

◆ **ERA** – **Qaire** (for a rare candidate this is a vote): **Equal Rights Amendment**. Proposed 1972 FEDERAL ERA to the U.S. Constitution: *Equality of rights shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any state on account of sex.* (Ratified by Maine, failed by the U.S.) Also reflects info we have on **CEA – Constitutional Equality Amendment**. Some newer “ERAs” include race, sexual orientation, weight, or other categories. All versions explicitly include a woman's right to choose.

◆ **W** – **Qaire: Women**. Support creation of a Maine Commission, Department, or Agency for **Women** and the promotion of Diversity.

◆ **HRC** – **Qaire: Increase funding & personnel for the Maine Human Rights Commission.**

◆ **FAT** – MAINE NOW'S philosophy on fat people is reflected in the **Health at Every Size Movement** – **HAES** www.cswd.org/HAES.html Any markers here **before the slash** are from the 06 Qaire. We reduced answers to a dozen questions to 2 indicators of the candidate's knowledge & level of agreement. **Beyond the slash**, markers

may reflect votes& or qaire answers. See also “FAT & FIT” for more commentary.

◆ **LGBT** – **RC on LD1194 (&/or earlier “Lesbian & Gay Rights bills”) or Qaire** RThis category relates to the rights of Maine's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender community. For incumbents, the first marker is the vote to cover *sexual orientation* in the Maine Human Rights Act. For non-incumbents, Qaire support for the same. Additional markers indicate positions on related issues such as civil unions. (LD1194 passed)

◆ **Mar** – **Marriage: RC on LD1294** proposed Constitutional resolution, **OPPOSED BY NOW**, defining **marriage** as valid in Maine, only if between one man & one woman. (did not pass) **Qaire:** Supports the right of same-sex couples to marry.

◆ **AB - ABORTION Restriction VOTES on the following 3 LDs in this order:**

LD1575 – Require **parental notification** of teenagers' abortions. **OPPOSED BY NOW** This would have repealed Maine's current Adult Involvement Law, which gives teens the option to consult another trusted adult, such as another family member or a trained counselor. (did not pass)

LD25 – Impose a **24 hour waiting period**, and biased, state-scripted counseling, before an abortion. **OPPOSED BY NOW**. In Maine over 80% of counties have no abortion provider. So, in addition to the bill's general burden, 2 trips impose extra burdens on the health & privacy of working women, abused women, poor women, ill women, handicapped women, & young women (did not pass)

LD262 – Create a separate crime for harm to “**Unborn Children.**” **OPPOSED BY NOW** (did not pass)

◆ **CH & S** – Up to 3 markers on Choice & Abortion Funding from current Qaires, &/or previous sessions' **votes & Qaires**. **First**, are they “pro-choice” (could be by their own definition tho). **Second**, how they are on abortion restrictions. **Third**, do they support restoring funding for abortion. Beyond the slash, this repeats if older info is available.

LD884 – [no RCs] Attacks on pregnant women were addressed in a “compromise” bill. **LD884, which passed unanimously in the House, had only 6 opposed in the Senate** – They were **Mary Andrews, Jonathan Courtney, Paul Davis, Debra Plowman, Lois Snowe-Mello, & John Martin**. LD884 directs judges to give special weight in sentencing if the crime victim was pregnant. Many abusers prefer to abuse pregnant women. The law also requires the **Maine Commission on Domestic and Sexual Abuse** to collect & review data relating to the deaths of pregnant women when death results from criminal conduct. (passed)

VIOLENCE

Domestic violence arrests shot up by nearly a third over the past decade in Maine... 5,364 domestic-violence assaults in 2003 was the highest number in a decade, and an 11.4% increase over the previous year... Crime, overall, decreased by 17%.. – According to a 3/25/05 AP story, their source was The 2004 Crime & Justice Data Book, published by the Maine Statistical Analysis Center.

(Sexual harassment, rape, and domestic assaults are still not considered “hate crimes.”)

LD182 – [no RCs] This bill would have dedicated \$1 from marriage license fees to **Domestic Violence Shelters**. (did not pass)

LD1699 – [no RCs] Create a Task Force coordinated by the Dept. of Labor, to **Study Workplace Violence** and the effectiveness of various attempts around the U.S. to reduce it. Among the groups represented on the TF are Maine Women’s Lobby, Maine Coalition to End Domestic Violence, & the Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault. (passed)

LD1778 – [no RCs] Require courts to consider who lives in a child’s residence, & allows courts to prohibit a child’s residence from including a **convicted sex offender**. (passed)

LD2116 Got unanimous support. This law requires that when the Dept. of Public Safety learns of an individual subject to a **Protection From Abuse** order trying to illegally purchase a firearm, the individual intended to be protected by that order be **notified**. [See LD 1938 below]

◆ **GUN** – RCs related to GUNS

(or *Whose afraid of the NRA?*) include these LDs in this order:

LD333 – Would have required a national background check prior to the sale or transfer of a firearm at a **gun show**. (did not pass)

LD1938 – **Second House RC** [no Senate RC]. This was the original bill that eventually became LD2116 [see above]

After an NRA-urged amendment (to protect the guns) killed LD1938, legislators split LD 1938 into two separate bills. (both passed) This RC shows how House members voted on adding the NRA Amendment. **House Reps who opposed the NRA Amendment got “PLUS”** because while NOW Supported the bill, **NOW OPPOSED the NRA Amendment**. (Am passed. LD failed)

LD310 – **Second Senate RC** [no House RC] Would have required a 10-day waiting period before a firearm could be sold or transferred to any person under age 22. (did not pass) Note: For House incumbents running for Senate, the 2nd vote is LD1938.

WORK ISSUES

(See also LD1699 under “VIOLENCE” and LD1044 under “HEALTH”)

◆ **WORK**

Votes on two bills in this order:

LD309 – Extend the Sunset for **Part Time Workers on Unemployment Benefits** from 2005 to 9/30/08. (passed) The Senate RC used was on the original bill that removed (rather than just extend) the Sunset.

LD435 – Would have repealed Maine’s **Overtime** law. **OPPOSED BY NOW** (did not pass)

WAGES

◆ **MW** – **LD235** Increase the Maine **Minimum Wage** to \$6.75/hr. October 06, & to \$7 October 07. (passed) **Qaire**: Increase the Minimum Wage.

◆ **LWC** – The **Living Wage Commission** was created by the Legislature to Study the concept & goal of *liveable* wages in Maine. It later made a number of

recommendations, some of which received **RC** votes. **The LWC RCs listed are on the following LDs in this order:**

LD2023 – Vote to require the Dept. of Labor to calculate or **Define “Liveable Wages”** for various family sizes, & report back to the Legislature. (did not pass)

LD2025 – Vote to increase the maximum refund amounts under the “**Circuit Breaker**” Program, from \$2000 to \$5000 for property owners & 22% for renters. (did not pass)

LD2027 – Vote to increase from 5% to 30% the State **Earned Income Tax Credit** & make it refundable. How much homeowners owe in property tax is calculated by valuation of property minus this %. (did not pass)

LD2032 - Vote to direct the Dept. of Labor, in consultation with several other Departments, to create a **Plan** to increase the wages of Maine workers. (did not pass)

Note: The LWC also recommended to direct the Dept. of Health & Human Services to annually report to the Legislature on the Department’s efforts toward meeting the goal of **ensuring that at least 70% of eligible children have access to child care subsidies**. (ignored to death? – er, I mean: did not pass) No roll call votes.

LD493 – On another bill a RC found only **8 Senators in favor of requiring Public School Employees be paid a Liveable Wage**. (Pro: Bartlett, Brennan, Bryant, Gagnon, Martin, Schneider, Strimling, Edmonds)

CARING COMMUNITY

Maine does relatively well providing education & access to young women, as reflected in declining teen pregnancies & infant survival rates. Yet, 55% of single mothers with children under 5 live in poverty.

Poverty is the worst possible indicator for kids – Elinor Goldberg, President, **Maine Children’s Alliance**. For lots of Maine kid info, <www.mekids.org>

Maine is lucky to have many thoughtful groups working on poverty & kid issues. The **KEY** Maine groups who work tirelessly to improve life for low-income Mainers work in harmony. They are: **MAIN Maine Association of Interdependent Neighborhoods & MEJP Maine Equal Justice Partners** <www.mejp.org>

FEMINISTS are often motivated by a moral compass that puts children & other vulnerable neighbors first. Community is measured by the strength of our Safety Nets, access to & effectiveness of programs & interventions, and progress toward our dreams of human rights and equal respect & opportunities.

The economist in us will be happy to know putting children first also builds the community economically. Pre-school programs, **high-quality early childhood development programs**, show “an 8-to-1 dollar return” [High/Scope study]. They save money upfront [less grade retention, lower special ed costs] & we nurture smarter, healthier, more skilled youngsters for school & the global challenges ahead.

◆ **CARE RCs** on these LDs in this order:

HOUSE & SENATE

LD1044 – Use sick leave if family member sick.

LD1420 – Established a Maternal & Infant Death Review Panel

LD1247 – **OPPOSED BY NOW** Would've eliminated labor protections for minors.

LD2046 – Homelessness of crime victim may be considered in sentencing.

(2 additional) **HOUSE ONLY RCs** are 5th & 6th indicators there:

LD321 – Would've alleviated housing discrimination against recipients of public assistance.

LD1293 – Increases family & child access to courts. The final vote found only 10 still opposed: Reps. Austin, Clough, Collins, Curley, K. Davis, Hamper, McKane, Nass, Pinkham, Sherman. RC used was an earlier "Ought to Pass" vote. More details below on these 6 LDs.

Beyond the slash – Up to 2 markers indicate votes or Qaire answers from prior sessions.

Vulnerable Neighbors:

LD1044 – **Empowers workers**, with already accrued paid leave, **to use leave** either for their own illness or **for an ill family member**. It applies only to workplaces with 25 or more employees. Employers may limit leave hours to care for family members to 40 hours/year. (passed)

LD1420 – Directs DHHS to establish a **Maternal & Infant Death Review Panel**. The Panel is directed to generate annual reports identifying factors contributing to maternal & infant deaths, weaknesses in Maine's maternal & infant health delivery system, & **make recommendations to the Legislature**. (passed)

LD1247 – **OPPOSED BY NOW** Would have eliminated protections for **minor workers** by, among other things, increasing from 20 to 35 the number of work hours allowed during a school week. (did not pass)

LD1348 – [no RCs] Increased funds for Meals on Wheels (passed)

LD1854 – [no RCs] This law expands the TANF-connected **Alternative Aid Program** from one time to once/year. It assists those who need help to obtain or retain employment. (passed)

Equal Respect:

LD2046 – Implements the Rec's of the Maine AG's Working Group [created by LD1659] to change the general sentencing provisions of the Maine Criminal Code. It **added homelessness of the victim to the list of factors** (i.e., age, religion, sexual orientation) **the court can use for sentencing**. (passed)

LD 321 – [Hs RC only] Would have provided the same **protections against housing discrimination to recipients of public assistance** as to all other protected classes. Tho it got 81-52 favorable vote, it needed 101 as an "emergency" bill. (did not pass)

Staying Warm:

• **Nearly 51,000 Mainers**, 48% of them elderly homeowners, **qualify for Low Income Home Energy Assistance - LIHEAP**, based on an **average income of \$12,000**. Last year, each LIHEAP household received \$480.

• **Oct. 19-22/06** hundreds of **Operation Keep Maine Warm** volunteers hope to winterize 3000 LIHEAP homes. To volunteer 287-5649.

• **Oil dealers** are being asked (not forced) to help by giving a discount to those who qualify for LIHEAP. Jamie Py, Oil Dealers spokesperson said, "It's bureaucracy gone wild."

• **Other things "gone wild" are average household heating bills, which have more than doubled since 2001, to \$1474.**

• Of course, the federal funds for LIHEAP dropped from \$5 billion to \$3 billion [\$1 billion "shifted" from the 2007 budget – dontcha wish you could do that!]. Maine gets \$9.7 million.

Legal Help:

In Maine today as many as 3 out of 4 people don't have access to legal services. Mainers in more than 93,000 households are living at 125% or less of the federal poverty level. It's estimated that less than half of their legal assistance needs are addressed.

Survivors of domestic abuse, parents of handicapped children, & elderly citizens would all benefit. More than one group is working to increase access, including the **Justice Action Group** composed of judges, lawyers, social service providers & reps from advocacy groups. To learn about legal aid see <HelpMELaw.org> and ongoing efforts to secure it for all <www.mbf.org/justice.htm>

LD1293 – [Hs RC only] Assist families & children by **increasing access to courts**. Would have given the Judicial Dept. 2 family case managers, 2 assistant clerks, & 2 security officers to reduce the backlog. (in spite of majority support in both Houses, it was "left on the Table," so did not pass)

LD715 – [no RCs] Support **legal services for low-income Mainers**. This law proposed both fee changes & general fund

appropriations for the **Maine Civil Legal Services Fund**. An amendment expanded the number of legal services providers eligible for MCLS funds, to include certain nonprofit groups. (LD715 passed, but the General Fund appropriation was cut.)

That IS my Business!

What's good for the community is good for business. Feminists don't have that backwards, do we? Looks as tho the Maine Legislature agrees - sometimes. For more on Walmart, see NOW's state & national web sites! This first LD & the 2002 Code of Conduct flowed directly from Bangor's Clean Clothes Campaign, originally a small coalition of groups in which Maine NOW was an active partner.

◆ **BIZ** - Includes 2 RCs in this order:

LD1769 – Purchasing Code of Conduct

LD1481 – Inadequate notice to citizens of Big Box development. **OPPOSED BY NOW**

Details below:

LD1769 – **RC to strengthen the State Purchasing Code of Conduct**. In 2002 Maine passed landmark legislation toward ensuring that purchases in Maine's name were not made in sweatshops. LD1769 strengthened the law's procedures, monitoring potential, & penalties for contractors. (passed)

LD1481 – The "**Big Box**" or "Walmart" bill, **OPPOSED BY NOW**. Would've made backdoor development of Big Box stores (or any large-scale development) harder to stop. It restricted citizens' right to petition, giving citizens only 75 days notice. (passed, but vetoed by Gov.)

LD1758 – [no RCs] **Maine State Retirement System Trustees pulled all**

direct Sudan investments, as directed by a new Maine law. Since 2003, pro-government forces have been fighting a civil war with rebels in the Darfur region. Many are alarmed at widespread reports of rapes, brutalities, atrocities, & the displacement of millions of people. Not in Maine's name. (passed)

A couple of bills [no RCs] flew under the radar this time, but raised **Issues that deserve more attention.** **LD1474 would have required directors & officers of corporations to act in a manner that is not injurious** to the environment, human rights, public health or safety, the welfare of the communities in which they operate, or the dignity of their employees. (did not pass)

LD1495 would have changed the definition of "person" to mean only a human being, not a corporation or other entity. Generally, this would change the political rights of a corporation from using corporate funds for political speech or activity, unless those funds are from a separately established political account. (did not pass)

BETR Off? - The business community was happy to pass **LD2056. NOW HELD NO POSITION on the LD.** (RCs were lopsided in favor of this hard-to-reach compromise, & not included here.) Since 1995, communities have taxed (as property) business equipment. The State then reimbursed businesses through BETR – Business Equipment Tax Reimbursement. This law will phase out the communities' right to that tax, except for storefront retail businesses (i.e., Walmart, Rite Aid). Communities have long opposed ending BETR, fearing the loss of corporate revenue would have to

be made up by individual property tax payers. A slow phase-in, and compensation measures from State revenue sharing programs (income tax) promise to ease the burden & fears of communities. Let's hope.

BUDGET

No tax reform will resolve the revenue shortfall from the loss of millions of federal dollars cut from programs for the neediest because of the costs of war and tax cuts for the wealthy. – Ilze Petersons, Peace & Justice Center of Eastern Maine (as quoted 1/05, *Bangor Daily News*)

◆ **Bud** – Two **Budget** votes in this order:
LD1011 TABOR – Sen. Andrews **2005 Taxpayers' Bill of Rights. OPPOSED BY NOW!** Growth in expenditures would be limited by population & inflation; and, for education, by inflation & student enrollment. There could be no increase except by 2/3rds vote of the Legislature (or the legislative body of a local district or the governing body of a quasi-gov. agency) and the approval of the voters of the jurisdiction, if applicable. **The bill reappeared in 2006 as LD2075, with a Senate RC only.** (Andrews, Raye & Rosen switched to "against" in their 2006 votes. I don't know if this was for parliamentary reasons only?) **The vote here is a "clean" vote on LD1011.** (did not pass either Session) A version of **TABOR** is on the November 2006 ballot.

LD1 –Governor Baldacci's Budget bill, overshadowed the first session of the 122nd. The final roll call votes 95-49 for passage in the House, 23-10 in the Senate, is a reflection of a relatively cordial Legislature. **The final version created property tax relief without borrowing, and it caps spending.** It's instructive to

note who & how many Republicans felt the final version was supportable. Plus means a vote for the final version. (passed)

EDUCATION

Part of the debate on **LD1** was about increasing the **State's share of Education** funding to 55%, and how fast. The final version increased it to **55% over 4 years.** It also revamped the formula for which schools get how much money, called the **Essential Programs & Services** funding model. There is much debate about this, mostly about how to ensure fairness.

◆ **EDUC** – **Three votes in this order:**
LD1381 – Increase teachers' minimum salaries to \$30,000. (passed)

LD1639 – OPPOSED BY NOW Allow an **abstinence-only-until-marriage** program as an alternative to comprehensive sex-education in public schools (did not pass)

LD1194 – A third RC in the Senate only was on the "**Academic Bill of Rights.**" **OPPOSED BY NOW** This proposed legislation is from a national Rightwing Movement (135 campuses have chapters) to rid campuses of "Liberal Bias." The "balance" they seek is to muzzle liberal teachers, require more conservative teachers, & insert rightwing propaganda such as "intelligent design" & "maybe there was no holocaust" in science & history classes [instead of a study of Rightwing propaganda where these issues belong].

Many other education issues were discussed or acted on in the 122nd, but without RCs, or MNP.

NOW also notes:

- Maine "**Sports Done Right**" is a call to action to improve sports programs for students. [see also "FAT and FIT"]
- **Vouchers** - The ban on State aid for **religious schools** was again upheld in April 06 by a 6-1 majority of the Maine Supreme Judicial Court.
- **Affirmative Action for boys?** MNP asks on every Qaire whether candidates would support a Commission, Dept., or Agency for Women & to promote Diversity. The Governor has created an entity promoting (racial & ethnic) Diversity. And Karen Baldacci chaired a task force **created to investigate boys' underperformance** in school. (To her credit, the **Gender Equity TF** addressed the needs of both boys & girls. Gender & poverty have a powerful influence on students, as does sexual harassment.)
- "**Charter Schools**" didn't pass again. There are red flags, such as: only 50% of teachers have to be certified; the schools don't have to follow as many regulations as other public schools; will they compliment or detract from current public schools; what is it they can provide that current public schools can not? Maine is one of 9 states without them. The questions will be back.
- **Underfunded No Child Left Behind**
- **Military recruiting in high schools** is mandated by **No Child Left Behind.** How ethical is it to pitch joining the military to 14-18 year olds?
- Testing, SAT, & "**Learning Results**"
- **Shrinking numbers of students** – one suggestion (realistic – I don't know, but intriguing) has been to entice students from crowded city areas to small schools, with an eye toward more diversity as well.)
- To consolidate &/or to save small community schools & libraries (& how to pay for either).

- UM, community colleges, & another whole set of issues!
- Challenges of a rapidly changing technological world: laptops, broadband, & oh-so-much more!

ENVIRONMENT

[Rep. Henry] Joy, who does not believe that global climate change as a result of human activity is occurring, also included in his bill a requirement that all climate legislation be based on "sound science."
- Bangor Daily News 3-23-05

[Environmentalists] have infiltrated our state government and are adopting policies against us. – Millinocket Councilor Jimmy Busque, according to BDN 8-30-06

◆ ENV – Three RCs in this order for both the House & Senate. Plus 2 additional House-only RCs.

LD2015 Katahdin Lake acres aquired for Baxter State Park (passed)

LD1435 Attempted to set energy-efficient standards for appliances (did not pass)

LD1379 Promotes Wind Energy in Maine (passed)

LD2077 [Hs Only RC] **OPPOSED BY NOW** Management of the Allagash Wilderness Waterway (passed)

LD1789 Criminal Mischief? (passed)

Details on the LDs, & comments, follow.

Ecofeminism (Is there another kind of feminism?) values Earth & beyond, its critters & its bounty. Maine feminists are grateful to live in the most beautiful place on Earth! The State House has gone solar, many State buildings are heated with biodiesel fuel, and promotion of clean energy is State Policy. But we have a long way to go before we approach "green."

In Maine, incentives for clean energy continue to increase, but more progressives - especially women - in the Legislature would speed things up. Of course, there are a million environmental groups in Maine, but for info on the Maine Legislative votes, check out www.mlcv.org/ the Maine League of Conservation Voters. The 2005 MLCV "Honor Roll" of 29 outstanding Legislators was nearly 50% progressive women, tho women comprise only 23% of Maine's Legislature!

Feminists secure & preserve wilderness & coast, prevent "too much" or thoughtless development, create affordable cleaner energy. Feminists search for affordable energy-efficient cars & appliances. We clean our sea & air & land & schools & homes from toxic waste & misused pesticides, from lead & mercury. One in six women has blood levels of mercury that threaten fetal health, and most babies are born with over 200 toxins already in them. The 122nd passed at least five laws to reduce mercury in the environment. Coal-fired power plants are the largest source of mercury emissions.

Feminists explore the safer cleaner energy sources of wind, solar, & biofuels - corn! We know we cannot save Maine unless we save the world from global warming & other threats to Earth. Taxpayers currently subsidize "dirty" power plants with \$35 billion/year. Let's redirect our money to clean energy!

The automobile industry has been "test driving" vehicles that get 60 to 90 miles per gallon of fuel for more than 25 years. – Jane Livingston, BDN 7-31-06

There are arrogant greedy profiteers who would kill us all for trinkets. But, many

threats to our health & environment come wrapped more subtly: a farmer uses pesticide, but it does not contain itself to just her crops, nor harmlessly disappear; a tourist doesn't check the bottom of her boat before launching it into our lake; energy efficient cars, appliances, solar panels & such are nice for the rich, but can we make clean energy affordable; town boosters have a great development idea to draw tourists & create jobs, but does it thoughtfully consider the environmental legacy.

Maine NOW PAC works to elect legislators who will always keep our environmental legacy in mind. Of course, they must also keep in mind the farmers, tourists, middle-income & low-income Mainers, & boosters. It's necessary to elect lawmakers who know where to draw the line, and where to compromise. We need to elect legislators who will collaborate with us on ideas, because lobbying those who put profit & business ahead of community is like begging for porridge. For example, the recent fuel economy rules out of D.C. prohibit States from enacting rules to limit greenhouse gas emissions from tailpipes. It matters who we elect! A loose coalition of 26 Maine pro-environment groups advocated in the 122nd with mixed results.

LD2015 – Gov. Baldacci's bill was to create a land swap, securing for Maine 6000 acres surrounding Katahdin Lake for Baxter Park. The sanctuary deal was financed thru private donations, but required selling Maine land, so a 2/3rds vote was needed. So Sportsman Alliance of Maine (SAM) supporters had increased influence. They pushed for hunting & snowmobile rights. Weeks of marathon

meetings were held to broker a compromise.

The law secured 4000 acres as a wildlife sanctuary around Katahdin Lake as a new addition to Baxter State Park. Almost 2000 acres nearby will be managed by the Bureau of Parks & Lands for multiple use, to include constructing & maintaining a trail from the east to connect with trails in Baxter Park to Katahdin Lake. The Dept. of Conservation is also required to develop a plan for increased snowmobiling in the Katahdin region. In spite of the concessions, **the 4000 acre Baxter State Park expansion was well won.** (passed)

LD1435 – Sought to set minimum energy efficiency standards for 18 new appliances sold or installed in Maine. This modest-sounding bill had the unanimous support of the Climate Change Stakeholders Group, consisting of over 100 reps from business, environment, & other interests. This pro-health & environment proposal was killed by the Maine Oil Dealers Association [Who ARE these people?] & others. (did not pass)

NOTE: Later, in the 2nd Session, the Governor's bill, **LD2041, attempted to direct the PUC to establish minimum energy standards for appliances sold in Maine. The entire section of the bill was struck!** Instead, the law that passed created The Maine Energy Council to evaluate matters affecting electricity supply and costs to consumers in this State and to provide recommendations.

Background:

Ah, but you may as well try to catch the wind! Like a breath of fresh air, Maine explores many ways to generate clean

energy & be more energy efficient. Wind is the fastest-growing way of creating electric power in the world. It is free & forever. Maine has good wind energy potential, ranked 19th compared to California ranked 17th.

Putting the windmills in less controversial sites [ironically, the sites for towers are often opposed by environmental groups], leads to rural Maine where the boost to local economies is welcome. In addition to the original construction jobs, a NY study found wind energy produces 27% more jobs per kilowatt hour than coal plants, 66% more than natural gas plants. Putting cellular phone repeaters & wind turbines on the same towers [tastefully done in Europe] would achieve two goals for rural Maine.

Another smart move might be to put them on ski resorts, where lift towers, & access roads already exist.

Several sites in Maine have been proposed. Currently, Mars Hill (south of Presque Isle) Wind Farm has 28 turbines going up, expecting to begin generating power in Aroostook County this fall. There is a single wind turbine in Orland, powering the Allen Blueberry Plant.

Aside: The Electric Power Research Institute contends underwater turbines powered by tidal movement, including a site in Passamaquoddy Bay, could produce electricity at a cost that competes with wind or natural gas. Tests are ongoing to make sure the designs are not a threat to ocean life. (6-6-06, *BDN*)

LD1379 – Creates a comprehensive statutory scheme to encourage development of properly sited & designed wind energy projects. Designed to enhance electricity generation in northern & eastern Maine for transmission to New England markets,

it provides streamlined permitting & tax credits. (passed)

The RCs here are actually on the amended Minority report (& “community wind” & cell-tower-combo ideas). HsRC 287, Sen RC224

Background:

The Allagash Wilderness Waterway is part of the National Wild & Scenic Rivers System, but managed by Maine. Gov. Baldacci has appointed a Task Force to recommend (in December 2006) better ways to manage the waterway. This seems to be the one thing almost everyone agrees on. You can send comments about management ideas to Kelly Arata, Office of the Governor, 1 State House Station, Augusta 04333-0001 or email kelly.arata@maine.gov

The Allagash has been protected by Maine for 40 years. But, it is often the hot spot for debate between conservationists, locals wanting better access, and those who want to hunt, snowmobile, & do other not-so-wilderness activities. Since 2003, a consensus-based “River Drivers Stakeholders Agreement” was meant to guide management decisions, but all heck broke loose in the 2005-6 session, particularly over LD2077.

LD2077 – [Hs RC only] OPPOSED BY NOW Basically, ignoring the River Drivers Stakeholders Agreement, it transforms six bridges into permanent structures, locks into statute 11 summer vehicular and 19 snowmobile access points, & requires legislative approval of amendments to the waterway’s management plan. (passed)

State police have asked about a dozen environmental activists in Maine to provide samples of their DNA as part of

an ongoing criminal investigation, police said.

Most of those asked did not comply... The DNA request is raising concerns about whether government is trying to stifle activism and free speech. - June 2006 AP story

LD1789 – [Hs RC only] OPPOSED BY NOW The original title was “*To Deter Environmental Terrorism in the State.*” The title was changed to something less alarming. But the version of the bill that became Maine Law still gives us pause, in a time when protesters are confused with terrorists, media is increasingly monolithic, and civil disobedience might be confused with thoughtless mischief. **In the category of Aggravated Criminal Mischief it creates a new Class C crime** of intentionally damaging, destroying or tampering with someone else’s property to cause substantial harm to the victim’s reputation or financial condition. (passed)

ENV/HEALTH - These Toxic LDs go under Env & Health discussions.

GET THE LEAD (&Mercury) OUT!

LD1034 – Creates the Lead Poisoning Prevention Fund to educate workers, tenants, homeowners, & the general public about lead hazards in old paint, etc. **The Senate RC for enactment found only Davis opposed.** There were Hs RCs also. (passed)

LDs1532 & 1306 [no RCs] – Added further protections from lead poisoning. (both passed)

LD1338 – [Hs RC only] One of several bills to **limit human exposure to Mercury.** This one requires the elimination of mercury from dental offices over 3 years. (passed)

HEALTH

◆ HLTH RCs in this order for the SENATE & HOUSE:

LD1845 – Allow the Dirigo Health Board more flexibility & autonomy. (did not pass)

LD1945 – Establish a High Risk Insurance Pool. **OPPOSED BY NOW.** (did not pass)

Third & 4th SENATE Health RCs:

LD1935 – Prohibit passing on the *SOP* fee (discussed below) to insurance policyholders. (did not pass)

LD539 – Facilitate the establishment of more community walking trails. (did not pass)

Third, 4th & 5th HOUSE Health RCs:

LD1927 – Study how Maine subsidizes health care for businesses that either don’t insure or underinsure employees. (passed)

LD84 – Facilitate implementation of the *Sports Done Right Program* (discussed below). (passed)

LD885 – Discourage the sale of tobacco to minors. (passed)

Maine NOW is a member of the **Coalition for Affordable Health Care** www.mainecahc.org/coalition/ groups that advocate for universal health care, and for Dirigo as a hoped-for path to that goal.

Feminists also advocate for the 270,000 Mainers served by Maine Care (Medicaid). Maine Care is insurance for citizens who are low-income, disabled, or in need of long-term nursing care. Maine is part of an alliance with VT & Iowa called the **Sovereign States Drug Consortium**, saving us millions in Medicaid costs.

There is also a **Drugs for the Elderly Program** serving low-income & disabled

Mainers who do not qualify for Maine Care.

And the now infamous **Federal Medicare Part D** program provides drug benefits to those 65 & over. The conservative 2003 Congress expressly prohibited DHHS from negotiating lower drug prices for Part D, tho all other developed countries do this for their citizens. [Oddly, the U.S. does negotiate lower drug prices for the military, veterans, & some cancer patients. Shhh. Maybe Congress doesn't know.]

Meanwhile, Maine is moving to **Managed Care** (by July 2007) for providing **Maine Care Mental Health Services**, separating these services from the rest of Maine Care. Nearly 1/4th of Mainers depend on these services. Due to tight budgets & some misplaced sentiments, Maine is among the States that essentially has no "chronic" beds & way too few "acute" beds. Community services cannot meet the needs, & many of those who try (police, shelter directors...) are untrained or under-trained in mental health care. So, those are all parts of the big picture. Much of what's happening in Health Care, as in so many things these days, is driven by reckless federal spending.

According to a report of the Maine Peoples' Alliance on 12-27-05, Rep. Jonathon McKane even went so far as to accuse the *Portland Press Herald* of *fighting an all-out jihad against Dirigo Health nonbelievers*.
(Ouch.)

Maine has 130,000 uninsured and underinsured people.

Feminists & other supporters of **DirigoChoice Health Care** long for immediate universal health care for all Mainers. We hope Dirigo, created in 2003, might lead us there one step at a

time. It is a work in progress, and it has both friendly critics & powerful enemies. Designed to appeal to small businesses, the Plan is also open to sole proprietors & some individuals. Because too few Medicaid-eligible Mainers have enrolled so far, DirigoChoice is dependent on the **Savings Offset Payment (SOP)** for funds.

The SOP is an assessment (on self-insured employers & on insurance companies) **of savings achieved thru Dirigo**. Last year Dirigo Health reform measures saved the insurers \$43.7 million, which by law was owed back to Dirigo Choice. Perfect! [Whew! Are you still with me?]

Then, instead of paying the citizens of Maine what they owed, insurance bills were sent out to policyholders with an additional fee identified as the SOP, implying it was Dirigo costing policyholders extra money! Actually, it was the insurers pocketing millions of dollars of our money! And, they are suing Maine to get out of paying!

So we start our Health bills adventure with Dirigo & Health Insurance:

LD1845 – Would have allowed the Dirigo Board greater autonomy & flexibility. In the event of a cancelled or unrenewed contract with Anthem (or other for-profit insurance carrier), the Board could've **set DirigoChoice up as a self-insured group. This would cut out the profit-driven insurance company.** (did not pass)

LD1935 – [Sen RC only] Prohibit insurers from passing on the SOP fee [see above commentary] to policyholders. (did not pass)

Needless to say, LDs1845 & 1935 made Anthem profiteers & a lot of other powerful people cranky. Democratic leaders met over several weeks with insurers, hospital & Chamber reps to forge a compromise.

Now, if you love good drama, you have to love this. They reached a compromise that, among other things, reduced the amount owed Dirigo to \$23 million (tho the lawsuit was still pending). So, the stakeholders & Dem's were OK, but the Republican leaders say no. Just because they usually support the insurers-hospital-Chamber combo, they explain, they want even more to kill Dirigo.

In August, 2006, Superior Court Justice Roland Cole ruled that the savings brought about by DirigoChoice are appropriately calculated, and an appropriate mechanism for funding the Plan.

In just 2 years, Dirigo has saved the health care system more than \$78 million.

Two other LDs with RCs relate directly to Insurance Coverage:

LD1945 – OPPOSED BY NOW. Would've established a High-Risk Insurance Pool. This would've eliminated basic protections especially for those with chronic illnesses and many elderly, by requiring them to pay higher premiums for reduced coverage. It would've eliminated a number of consumer protections such as guaranteed coverage, & continuity of coverage for those who switch jobs. (did not pass)

LD1927 – [Hs RC only] To prevent taxpayers from subsidizing large employers (such as Walmart), this law requires Maine to collect data on the costs to Maine of providing health care to employees of companies that don't

insure or who underinsure their workers. It would give us a clearer picture of the true costs of enticing such businesses to Maine. (passed)

FAT AND FIT

The U.S. has also "declared war on obesity." Mainers, more sensibly, have at least sometimes used the "war" to promote **pro-health initiatives, not anti-fat people initiatives**. Cleverly disguising the "ob war" does nothing to ease the pain of bullied fat kids. But, driving the money are those who benefit from our fear & hatred of fat people (manufacturers of drugs, diet foods, diet scams; surgeons & other doctors; writers & publishers of endless useless diet books...).

If we can use the money to improve nutrition in places such as schools & the Women & Infant Nutrition programs; if we can increase the activity of our citizens by creating community walking trails & sidewalks, fashioning pro-health (not anti-fat) workplace programs, & creating smarter communities, we all benefit.

Feminists work to move the focus from making everyone thin, to creating universal access to opportunities & information about sustainable enjoyable healthy eating & behaviors for kids & adults. For fat & thin people, health is enhanced by happy healthy eating and fun sustainable lifelong activity.

All Maine schools are now required to adopt new anti-bullying policies. Most Maine students will find healthier food offerings, nutrition education & more physical activity at their schools in 2006. The Legislature banned soda & candy, & many schools are partnering with local farmers to add more fresh fruits & vegetables to the school offerings.

Maine businesses are promoting employee health too, with a variety of programs (unfortunately many reward weight loss rather than healthy habits).

And community walking trails are popping up all over!

LD796 – [no RCs] Implement the Recommendations of the Commission to Study Public Health That Concern Schools, Children & Nutrition. The original LD contained many good (& a couple of not-so-good) proposals. The final version was much more modest, recommending: Dept. of Ed. encourage nutrition ed. in public schools; require caloric info on a la carte items; directs the Dept. of Ed. to establish standards for food & beverages sold outside the school meal programs; pilot program of milk vending machines; implement the National Farm to School Program. (passed)

LD134 – [no RCs] Implement the Recommendations of the Commission to Study Public Health. OPPOSED BY NOW. This well-meaning proposal put the emphasis squarely on fat people, & therefore was opposed as counter-productive. It would've created the Maine Obesity Prevention Fund (but failed to offer how to fund it). It directed numerous Departments, Divisions & Bureaus to implement anti-obesity programs, policies, & potential incentives. If many of the directives here were changed to promote health at every size, they would have the potential to help many Mainers (of all sizes) get active & become more nutritionally savvy. (did not pass)

LD645 – [Hs RC showed only 4 opposed – Babbidge, Mazurek, W. Smith, & Twomey] Let's call this the "Burger King Bill." OPPOSED BY NOW. It protects with immunity. The manufacturer, distributor, or seller of a food product is not liable for personal injury or death **to the extent the liability is based on the person's weight gain or obesity resulting from the person's long-term consumption of the food product.** Plan ahead? We knew that lung cancer rose with the popular rise in smoking. We know that (voluntary) nicotine consumption turned out to be a real bad idea, & we hold the tobacco companies partly responsible (especially for their promotion to kids) for the health consequences.

We know that diabetes & childhood obesity rose with the popular rise in soda pop, fast food, & processed foods. We may someday find that (voluntary) consumption of foods containing, just for example, high fructose corn syrup or refined oils (found in many products promoted to kids & adults) is unhealthy to the same extent nicotine is. Will we all sleep better now, knowing Burger King is safe from the fat children? (passed)

LD84 – [Hs RC only] To facilitate implementation of the *Sports Done Right Program*. The final version encourages schools & community sports programs to collaborate with the Maine Center for Sport & Coaching at UM to promote healthy, positive & safe sports, valuing "sportsmanship," health & fitness, play, & more. (passed)

LD539 – [Sen RC only] Would've facilitated the establishment of more community walking trails. (did not pass)

LD885 – [Hs RC only] Discourage the sale of tobacco to minors, including prohibiting entrance to a tobacco specialty shop unless accompanied by an adult or legal guardian. Women, especially young women have been intensely studied by tobacco companies, way beyond simple marketing research, for over 30 years. Fear of fat prompted such efforts as cigarettes with unique flavors that decrease appetite. (passed)

LD239 – Resolve to take a look at services for people with eating disorders passed. But **LD2094** to appropriate funds & generate a report for the 123rd Legislature did not pass. No RCs for either LD.

◆ **Child – Support for child care**

◆ **AA – Support for Affirmative Action**

◆ **Eq\$ - Support for Pay Equity**

◆ **CC – Opposition to a Constitutional Convention.**

◆ **SS – Social Security.** This was a plea to Congress to not privatize Social Security.

◆ **Dem – Democracy.** NOW pushes for easy access to voting, civil liberties and an "open" democracy. For incumbents, a number of votes in prior sessions were judged as in agreement (or not) with that philosophy.

This newsletter was not paid for by any candidate. This newsletter was paid for by Maine NOW, 665 Saco St Box 172, Westbrook ME 04092.

This newsletter was authorized by Maine NOW PAC, JoAnne Dauphinee, Treasurer, 87 Sunset Strip, Brewer ME 04412.

END NOTES:

It is 9am on the day this Guide was due at the printers at 8am. It's a long story about dead computers, starting over, a new (unfamiliar) computer with totally unfamiliar software, requiring a new printer-scanner-copier (with way too many features AND compatibility issues), many trips with new & old computers & printers to MAC Computer Connection, an entire day trapped at Staples, & on & on.

All this is to say, my usual brilliant tributes to women legislators, analysis & history of legislative & election facts & foibles, witty comments on the cast of characters – ALL MISSING from this edition of the GUIDE. I also had no time to figure out the cool new graphics & formatting tools at my currently inadequate command. ALSO MISSING – 2006 RATINGS! The ratings will be listed in the Citizen's Guide to the 123rd Maine Legislature (& 2004 Ratings are here!).

On the other hand, I got enough data entered to make the CHARTS as useful as ever. I'm told if I beg (& I'm willing to beg) Dwayne at the Ellsworth American, many of you may get to read this as early as Common Ground Fair weekend on Sept 22-4!

I sincerely hope you find the GUIDE more useful than confusing. There is much room for improvement – maybe next election!

PLEASE VOTE NOVEMBER 7, 2006!!

Many Thanks! JoAnne Dauphinee

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FOR WOMEN**

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JOIN US!

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

Our vision: to empower women to take
feminist action to
effect feminist social change. Our top five
priorities: ERA, economic justice, lesbian
rights, reproductive freedom,
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Sign me up for (a) Greater Bangor NOW
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Dues rate includes membership at the
national, state and, if chosen, local level.
\$ _____ dues enclosed. \$35.00
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A sliding scale of \$20.00-\$34.00 is
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check made payable to Maine NOW, to
Maine NOW, 665 Saco Street, Box 172,
Westbrook, ME 04092.

**Membership application is for new
members only. If you are renewing OR
reinstating a recent lapse in membership,
please send your renewal to NOW, P.O.
Box 1848, Merrifield, VA 22116-9899
and include your member number (found
on your label) with your renewal.

Who: Maine NOW!

What: Annual Meeting and
election of Officers

When: October 29, 2006
12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Where: SPACE Gallery
538 Congress Street
Portland, ME

Why: Celebrating 40 years
of our
National Organization
and 35 years for Portland
NOW

*Let's celebrate, educate &
generally have lots of fun!*

Our packed schedule
includes:

A talk by Rachel Maddow
of Air America radio!

A dramatic reading of
JoAnne Dauphinee's play,
"The Feminist Zone!"

Drumming by the women's
drum band, Harambe!

And a pizza party to wrap it
all up in!

The suggested cost of this
event is \$25 and we do offer
it to everyone as a "pay
what you can" event. The
important thing is to come
and join in!

For more information, call
Jennifer at 871-0618 or
email

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VOTE NO ON TABOR!
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It's Our Maine Legislature!
Elect Candidates Who Care!!**

ON NOVEMBER 7, 2006, YOU
HAVE A CHANCE TO **DEFEAT**
TABOR – The SO-CALLED
TAXPAYORS' BILL OF RIGHTS
*TABOR IS TABOO! It is a
taxpayers' bill of OFFENCE! It
offends our kids, our communities,
& our dreams for a better future!!*

INSIDE:
MAINE NOW PAC
Candidate GUIDE!!

MAINE NOW Annual Gathering
Invitation! Oct. 29th – Don't miss it!
Space Gallery, Portland

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Membership Application inside!