

50+ Bills That Could Weaken or Undermine Maine's Environmental Safeguards

Sponsor	LD = Bill LR = Title	Title	Bill Impacts [Legislative Update] NP = Bill not printed , so sponsor's intent not fully known
AYOTTE	LD 671	An Act To Amend the Laws Governing the Ground Water Oil Clean-up Fund	[Amended to eliminate worst provisions] Would weaken Maine's ability to clean-up contaminated sites, resulting in increased pollution of ground and surface water. Provided new powers to a clean-up oversight board, and changed appointments to stack the deck with oil industry representatives.
AYOTTE	LR 1404	An Act To Clarify the Law Governing Product Stewardship in the State	NP: appears to weaken product stewardship law, which would increase waste to landfills, increase costs to municipalities, prevent reduction of some hazardous wastes
AYOTTE	LD 1031	An Act To Amend the Laws Governing Significant Wildlife Habitat	Eliminates protection of significant wildlife habitat from forest management activities, even if the habitat has been mapped by the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife.
BRIGGS	LD 333	Resolve, Directing the Department of Environmental Protection to Amend Its Rules Regarding Snow Dumps	[Amended; Sent to new rulemaking] Would increase pollution in Maine lakes, rivers, and coastal waters
CHASE	LD 387	An Act To Amend the Natural Resources Protection Act Regarding Coastal Sand Dune Systems	Could weaken protection of ecologically sensitive sand dunes
CHASE	LR 1386	An Act Concerning the Natural Resources Protection Act and Existing Structures	NP: could weaken protection of ecologically sensitive sand dunes
CHASE	LD 256	An Act To Amend the Law Regarding Repairing a Structure in a Coastal Sand Dune System	Weakens protection of ecologically sensitive sand dunes
CLARK	LD 379	An Act To Stop Unfunded Mandates Concerning Waste Discharge Licenses	[Defeated] Attorney General ruled it would be illegal. Would have blocked DEP from requiring municipalities to meet certain improvements in their wastewater discharge operations.
COLLINS	LD 339	An Act to Prohibit Municipal Ordinances More Stringent than State Guidelines	[Withdrawn] Would block towns from protecting water quality, shoreland, and habitat with high values
COLLINS	LD 872	An Act To Change Setbacks in the Natural Resources Protection Act	Weakens protections for vernal pool habitat, high and moderate value waterfowl and wading bird habitat, and shorebird habitat.
COLLINS	LD 434	An Act To Exempt Wetlands Created by Obstructions or Barriers from the Shoreland Zoning Laws	Major weakening of shoreland zoning; blocking shoreland zoning protection for "non-original" wetlands -- a definition that could preclude all wetland protections
CRAY	LD 930	An Act To Clarify Maine's Phaseout of the "Deca" Mixture of Polybrominated Diphenyl Ethers	Creates a loophole in the law phasing out the toxic chemical deca, so that other toxic flame retardants could be used. Result would be an unnecessary increase in human exposure to toxics
CRAY	LD 485	An Act To Ensure the Greatest Possible Public Benefit from Energy Efficiency Spending	Eliminates allocation of energy efficiency funding to low income households and small business consumers, potentially shifting all funds to large consumers
CURTIS	LD 888	An Act To Allow Flexibility under Municipal Shoreland Zoning Ordinances	Allows 30% expansion of "nonconforming" structures within shoreland zone, weakening shoreland protections of habitat and water quality
DAVIS	LD 17	An Act To Reform the Land Use and Planning Authority within the Unorganized Territories of the State	Abolishes LURC, which would result in less protection, more scattered development, fragmentation of Maine's forestlands
DAVIS	LD 55	An Act to Restore Hunting to the Katahdin Lake Region	[Withdrawn] Threatened independent management of Baxter State Park and the complex agreement providing for protection of Katahdin Lake and access to other lands
DAVIS	LR 1653	An Act To Make the Maine Uniform Building and Energy Code Optional for Towns with Fewer than 10,000 Residents	NP: would undermine energy codes, resulting in more homes built that waste energy and waste money for homeowners

DUNPHY	LD 502	An Act To Place a Moratorium on Expedited Permitting of Grid-scale Wind Energy Development	Blocks development of clean energy; perpetuates status quo fossil fuel systems; and blocks jobs while moratorium is in place
EDGEComb	LD 228	An Act To Revise Notification Requirements for Pesticide Application	Eliminates registry that allows Maine people to be notified about pesticide applications, so they can take precautions
FLOOD	LD 1043	Governor LePage Budget for FY 2012 and FY 2013; includes Abolishing State Planning Office	Includes proposal to eliminate State Planning Office, directing creation of a working group comprised only of Administration officials (no stakeholders) to develop legislation that would implement dismantlement.
GIFFORD	LR 1640	An Act To Streamline the Maine Land Use Regulation Commission	NP: Appears designed to weaken state management of Maine's unique North Woods
GIFFORD	LR 1863	An Act To Reform Land Use Planning Authority within the Unorganized Territories	NP: Appears designed to weaken state management of Maine's unique North Woods
HAMPER	LD 1129	An Act To Provide the Department of Environmental Protection with Regulatory Flexibility	Would gut the Kid Safe Products Act, drastically limiting the scope of the bill to a narrow range of products that expose children to toxic chemicals.
HARVELL	LD 43	An Act To Repeal the Maine Uniform Building and Energy Code	Blocks energy codes that are projected to save Maine \$100 million in energy costs over next 10 years
HASTINGS	LR 1749	Resolve, to Study Initiatives that Would Increase Recycling in Maine by Replacing the Bottle Bill with a Comprehensive Statewide Recycling Program	NP: Appears intended to begin a process of weakening Maine's bottle bill, with the false promise of a program that would not provide same benefits
MALABY	LR 1121	An Act To Amend the Laws Governing the Application of the Uniform Building Code	NP: Purpose not clear, but likely would weaken energy codes projected to save \$100 million over next 10 years
MARTIN T	LR 1974	An Act To Repeal the Bottle Redemption Law and Restructure the Return of Recyclable Materials	[Sponsor reportedly has withdrawn] Would eliminate one of Maine's most important programs for promoting recycling, reducing waste, and creating jobs
MCKANE	LR 904	An Act To Amend the Laws Governing the Maine Uniform Building and Energy Code	NP: Purpose not clear, but likely would weaken energy codes projected to save \$100 million over next 10 years
MOULTON	LD 789	An Act To Eliminate the Governor's Office of Energy Independence and Security	Eliminates office with important role to help improve Maine's vulnerability to energy prices shocks
MOULTON	LR 1154	An Act To Modify the Requirement To Replace Trees Cut in Shoreland Areas	NP: Appears to weaken shoreland protections, important for water quality, vegetated buffers, wildlife habitat
PRESCOTT	LR 472	An Act To Create Consistency and Fairness in Maine's Bottle Bill	NP: Appears to weaken Maine's bottle bill
RAYE	LR 1321	An Act To Abolish the Maine Land Use Regulation Commission and Transfer Its Duties to the Counties	NP: Abolishes LURC, which would result in less protection, more scattered development, fragmentation of Maine's forestlands
RAYE	LD 1	An Act to Ensure Regulatory Fairness and Reform	Includes a broad range of environmental rollback proposals introduced by the Governor
RECTOR	LD 156	An Act To Clarify the Regulation of Impacts to Significant Vernal Pool Habitats under the Natural Resources Protection Act	Weakens protections of vernal pools, important habitat for rare species, amphibians, and other wildlife
RICHARDSON W	LR 892	An Act to Place a Moratorium on Wind Power Development and Repeal Expedited Permitting of Wind Power	NP: Blocks development of clean energy; perpetuates status quo fossil fuel use; and blocks jobs while moratorium is in place
SAVIELLO	LR 1046	An Act To Exempt Municipalities of Fewer than 5,000 Residents from the Maine Uniform Building and Energy Code	NP: would undermine energy codes, resulting in more homes built that waste energy and waste money for homeowners
SAVIELLO	LD 515	An Act To Review State Water Quality Standards	Purpose unclear, but appears designed to undermine water quality standards that protect Maine rivers.
SAVIELLO	LR 620	An Act To Amend the Laws Governing the Enforcement of Statewide Uniform Building Codes	NP: Purpose not clear, but likely would weaken energy codes projected to save \$100 million over next 10 years

SAVIELLO	LD 614	An Act To Expedite the Review of Certain Maine Land Use Regulation Commission and Department of Environmental Protection Applications	[Defeated] Requires outsourcing of permitting process in certain circumstances, including possibly to contractors with major conflict of interest issues
SAVIELLO	LD 159	An Act To Foster Economic Development by Improving Administration of the Laws Governing Site Location of Development and Storm Water Management	Would result in more habitat destruction and degraded water quality in Maine due to weakened Site Law thresholds
SAVIELLO	LD 793	An Act To Protect Ratepayers While Enhancing Energy Independence and Security	Requires Maine to withdraw from Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, the New England electrical grid, and stop long-term contracts for renewable energy -- major attacks on addressing climate change and renewable energy
SAVIELLO	LD 222	An Act To Provide for the Appointment of Directors in the Department of Environmental Protection	[Withdrawn] Would politicize DEP, undermine morale, and create instability if Commissioner given ability to fire leading staff
SNOWE-MELLO	LD 281	An Act To Create a 5-year Statute of Limitations for Environmental Violations	Weakens environmental enforcement, potentially allowing violators to escape accountability, transferring costs to taxpayers
SNOWE-MELLO	LD 219	An Act To Amend the Laws Governing Shoreland Zoning	Drastic weakening of Maine's shoreland zone, increasing pollution to lakes, rivers, coastal waters; damaging habitat
SNOWE-MELLO	LR 1960	An Act To Clarify Maine's Phaseout of the "Deca" Mixture of Polybrominated Diphenyl Ethers	[Sponsor has joined with Rep. Cray on LD 930] Creates loophole in law phasing out toxic chemical deca. This would increase human exposure to toxics
SNOWE-MELLO	LD 1135	An Act To Protect the Rights of Property Owners	This "takings" legislation could result in the state and municipalities having to pay land owners to comply with Maine laws governing environment, safety, and health.
SNOWE-MELLO	LR 671	An Act To Eliminate Most Rule-making Authority of State Agencies	NP: Could cripple implementation of environmental (and other) laws
STRANG BURGESS	LR 1894	An Act To Amend the Shoreland Zoning Law	NP: Appears designed to weaken shoreland zoning protections; which would increase water pollution and habitat degradation
THIBODEAU	LR 947	An Act To Modify Maine's Uniform Building and Energy Code	NP: Purpose not clear, but likely would weaken energy codes projected to save \$100 million over next 10 years
THIBODEAU	LD 431	An Act To Require the Efficiency Maine Trust To Disburse Funds More Effectively	Could bring energy efficiency programs through Efficiency Maine Trust to a halt, increasing energy vulnerability of Maine people to energy costs
TILTON	LD 1022	An Act to Amend the Law Governing Overboard Discharge Systems	This bill poses a threat to water quality and clam flats by eliminating a requirement that property owners determine the feasibility of removing any "overboard discharge system" (e.g. direct wastewater discharge system) before they sell the property.
THOMAS	LD 341	An Act To Exempt Artificial Wetlands and Artificial Significant Vernal Pool Habitats from State Regulation	Weakens protections of vernal pools, important habitat for rare species, amphibians, and other wildlife
THOMAS	LR 1161	An Act To Reduce the Buffer Zones around Vernal Pools and Other Bodies of Water	NP: Weakens protections of vernal pools, important habitat for wildlife
THOMAS	LD 729	An Act To Prohibit Electric Utilities from Entering into Long-term Supply Agreements	Would eliminate Maine's ability to directly purchase renewable energy at rates favorable to ratepayers; thus, interferes with shift away from imported fossil fuels.
TIMBERLAKE	LD 16	An Act To Revise Notification Requirements for Pesticides Applications Using Aircraft or Air-carrier Equipment	Drastically weakens registry that enables Maine people to be notified about pesticides spraying, so they can take precautions
TRAHAN	LD 210	An Act Regarding the Saltwater Recreational Fishing Registry	Repeals saltwater fishing registry, reducing funds for fisheries science and habitat