

# Legislative Review

131st Legislature - First Session

- ❖ Senator Teresa S. Pierce
- ❖ Representative Anne Graham

NORTH YARMOUTH, MAINE — DECEMBER 19, 2023

# North Yarmouth by the Numbers

- ▶ In FY2024, North Yarmouth (MSAD 51) is set to receive \$14,672,547 from the state for K-12 education. A \$1,677,533 increase from last year's share
- ▶ In FY2024, North Yarmouth is set to receive \$751,026 in Municipal Revenue Sharing. A \$1,566 decrease from last year's share

# Investing in Maine's Workforce and Families

- ▶ Creation of a statewide **Paid Family and Medical Leave** program
- ▶ Bolstering access to **child care** and increasing provider pay
- ▶ Supporting the **Maine Health Care Provider Loan Repayment System**
- ▶ Critical funding to our **Emergency Medical Services** providers on the brink of financial collapse

# Tackling Maine's Housing Crisis

- ▶ Establishing a **Housing First program**; apartment-style units with 24/7 support services to help our chronically homeless population
- ▶ Investing **\$70 million** in building more housing and increasing stock
- ▶ Investing **\$26 million** for emergency housing and shelter operations
- ▶ Supports to keep Mainers in their homes
  - ▶ **\$15 million** in lower income energy assistance (HEAP)
  - ▶ **\$12 million** in emergency rental relief (LIAP)
- ▶ **Preventing student homelessness** through McKinney-Vento liaisons
- ▶ **Created** a pilot program for improved access to credit
- ▶ Delivered emergency **heating and housing relief to over 850,000** eligible Mainers in January 2023
- ▶ **Extended TIF Districts** for affordable housing projects

# Supporting our Schools and Educators

- ▶ Maintaining our commitment to fund public education at **55%**
- ▶ Continuing **school meals** for all Maine public school students at no cost to families or districts
- ▶ Extending **tuition-free community college** for another two years for 2020-2025 HS graduates
- ▶ Bolstering our **teaching workforce** by establishing alternative pathways and training
- ▶ Fighting for increased teacher salaries in the 2024 supplemental budget

# Environment and Natural Resource Protection

- ▶ **PFAS Mitigation:** \$2M for ongoing expenses, including sampling and testing
- ▶ **Energy planning and research:** \$3M for GOPIF Community Resilience Partnership program
- ▶ **Community resilience grants to municipalities:** \$3.2M provides positions and funding for grants and technical assistance to Maine municipalities and tribes for climate planning and actions
- ▶ **Drinking water and wastewater systems:** \$33M

# Improving Access to Behavioral Health Care

- ▶ **Funding rate increases** for providers to stabilize services
- ▶ Investing \$7.8 million to help **reduce waitlists** for long-term care, and \$1.1 million to begin reducing Section 21 waitlists
- ▶ **Increasing reimbursements** for children attending special purpose schools
- ▶ Expanding **substance use disorder treatment** for unhoused Mainers
- ▶ Boosting **community-based services** for youth in the juvenile justice system

# Expanding Health Care Coverage

- ▶ Boosting funding for the Children's Health Insurance Program and school-based oral health care
- ▶ Increasing eligibility for Medicare Savings Programs for low-and fixed-income older Mainers
- ▶ Removing financial barriers to diagnostic breast examinations
- ▶ Expanding coverage for infertility treatment
- ▶ Protecting access to gender-affirming care

# Enhanced Tax Relief Programs

- ▶ **Replaced the Property Tax Stabilization Program** (LD 290) with a **targeted, fiscally sustainable** package to better serve those who need help the most (LD 130)
- ▶ **Property Tax Fairness Credit**
  - ▶ Increased the maximum benefit to up to \$2,000
  - ▶ Clarified and boosted eligibility so more Mainers can take part
- ▶ **Property Tax Deferral Program**
  - ▶ The program places a lien on a home and allows the state to recoup the unpaid taxes after the owner passes and the estate is settled
  - ▶ This budget expands eligibility for the program to ensure that those who need it most can access it

# Enhanced Tax Relief Programs cont.

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## ▶ **Establishing the Maine Dependent Tax Credit**

- ▶ This new tax credit replaces the child care tax credit and provides a refundable dependent exemption credit of \$300 beginning in Fiscal Year 2025
- ▶ The credit amount is indexed to inflation and would cover any dependent someone has, whether they are a young child, a foster child or an older adult dealing with an illness

## ▶ **Income tax breaks for retired Maine residents**

- ▶ The budget increases the annual income tax pension deduction from \$30,000 to \$35,000 for all retired Maine residents this tax year
- ▶ The deduction increases to the equivalent of the maximum social security benefit in the following years

**Thank you.**