

## T H E L E G S L A T I V E R E ORT: 2008 - 2009

## Under the Dome

## Priority Legislation Advances, Falters for the Maine Women's Lobby

A$t$ the close of another busy legislative session, we celebrated passage of several bills that addressed vital issues facing women and their families. In particular, we were proud to advance three major bills to help decrease discrimination. "An Act To Ensure Fair Pay" (L.D. 84) addresses a shortcoming of existing state law by explicitly stating that employees have the right to discuss salary information when seeking to enforce their right to equal pay. Simply put, you can't take action against pay discrimination if you don't know about it. By addressing the issue of wage disclosure, this law will promote fair pay and will alleviate poverty by giving women better tools for uncovering wage discrimination.

Early on in the session, The Maine Women's Lobby worked with Coastal Enterprises, Inc. in opposing "An Act To Conform State Mortgage Laws with Federal Laws" (L.D. 1439) due to concerns regarding the bill's proposed changes to Maine's existing antipredatory law. However, the final version of bill, which we ultimately supported, keeps the substantive provisions of the law intact with only minor technical changes.

To address discrimination against Native American women, the legislature also took strong action against the use of offensive place names by expanding current law to prohibit the use of any derivative of the word "squaw." "An Act To Fully Implement the Legislative Intent in Prohibiting Offensive Place Names" (L.D. 797) addresses efforts in some Maine communities to usurp the intent of the law by using obvious derivatives of the offensive name.

While you've probably already heard, we're still celebrating enactment of the marriage equality bill (L.D. 1020) which made Maine the first state in the nation to pass marriage equality for gay and lesbian couples through the legislature and go on to receive the Governor's signature. Now, it's time to defend that win at the ballot box (you can read more about this monumental bill later in this newsletter).

Throughout the session, you heard us talk, write, blog, and even tweet about our caregiver protection bill. "An Act to Protect Family Caregivers" (L.D. 962) sought to include 'family caregiver' status in Maine's anti-discrimination law. Enactment of this legislation would have made it illegal for employers to refuse to hire, advance, or otherwise discriminate against an individual
based simply on perceptions about the employee's familial obligations. With strong bipartisan support in the House (10040), it appeared that passage of this bill was probable. However, a last ditch rally by a bevy of corporate lobbyists stripped support in the Senate. The bill was ultimately defeated at the end of the session. Unfortunately, many Senators failed to recognize that this bill sought to reduce lawsuits by clarifying existing law, as well as protect working women (and men, too) from a growing form of discrimination.

We formed some new alliances through our work with the Alliance for a Clean and Healthy Maine on "An Act Allowing Workers' Compensation Benefits for Firefighters Who Contract Cancer" (L.D. 621). This bill addresses the connection between cancer and repeated exposure to the chemicals associated with firefighting, particularly important for breast cancer victims in the field. It creates a rebuttable presumption to allow certain firefighters to receive workers' compensation if diagnosed with a related cancer.

In the usual category of bad bills that just won't go away, we saw a return of "An Act To Enact a 5-Point Welfare Reform Program" (L.D. 254). This bill threatened to impose unnecessary

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At the begiming of the 124 h session, the Maine Wonen's Lobby, along with our many partners in the 'Maine Can Do Better' coalition, welcomed legislators and thanked them for their service to Maine people.
residency requirements and strict time limits on Maine's most vulnerable families seeking General Assistance. The Maine Legislature recognized the potential harm and ultimately voted to defeat the measure. Additionally, working with the Maine Choice Coalition, we once again defeated anti-choice legislation seeking to invade minors' access to contraceptives. The Health and Human Services Committee voted unanimously against "An Act To Protect the Safety of Maine Children by Requiring the Express Consent of a Legal Guardian To Dispense Prescription Medication to a Minor" (L.D. 251) and "An Act To Require Reporting on Medical Services or Treatment Provided to Minors without Parental Consent" (L.D. 802).

In the last few days of session, following a successful campaign for tax reform, the Governor signed "An Act To Implement Tax Relief and Tax Reform, (L.D. 1495). The enactment of this bill was supported by the Maine Women's Lobby for including a partially refundable earned income tax credit, providing much-needed tax relief for people with the lowest incomes.

Also worthy of note is the legislature's enactment of "An Act To Improve the Ability of the Department of Education To Conduct Longitudinal Data Studies" (L.D. 1356). This law establishes an information data collection system to compile students' educational data. By allowing the Department of Education and the Department of Labor to track the progress of students into the workforce, we will now be able to evaluate the success of Maine's education and workforce initiatives and set benchmarks for job attainment for both young and adult students. Because higher education is definitively linked to skills attainment and higherpaying jobs-and ultimately, a stronger Maine economy-this law will be critical in meeting the needs of Maine women.

Finally, during a year when women's commissions across the Country were being defunded, the Maine Legislature endorsed "An Act To Establish the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women" (L.D. 236). This puts into statute a permanent Commission dedicated to promoting, carrying out, and coordinating programs designed to improve opportunities for Maine women. Although no funding was appropriated, the Commission will be housed by the Secretary of State.
The Maine Women's Lobby is excited about partnering with this new ally for future legislative endeavors and leadership development opportunities! For a complete wrap-up and to see how your legislators voted on these issues, check out the insert in this newsletter.

## Moments in Time:

## Laura Harper, Director of Public Policy, Reflects on the Passage of Marriage Equality

I know there were moments in my parents' lifetime that they will never forget, such as the moment they heard President John F. Kennedy was assassinated. For my generation, that moment was replaced by, "Where were you when the twin towers fell?" These instants of national crisis or profound change - when time itself seems to stop - are burned into our collective consciousness. These memories are timeless. We may age, but these moments seem immutable.

I know my moment in time. It was the day that culminated in the passage of Maine's marriage equality legislation, which concluded the latest phase of Maine's social struggle for equal rights for all. It's a legacy I'll be able to share with my nieces and nephews. And, no matter how many times I pinch myself, I still can't believe that I was one of the principle lobbyists working on the bill.

I feel blessed and forever grateful that I was given the opportunity to lead in the Freedom to Marry Coalition and work alongside such incredible women and men making history in Maine. It was a gift to work on the bill and to share my personal story with legislators in order to illustrate the need for marriage equality. And, I've got stories!

But for now, I simply want to thank you, our members and supporters, for all of the work that you did - making calls, writing letters, and asking others to do the same. Without your support, I couldn't have kept sharing my stories of discrimination with so many legislators.

Now, I need you to join me and tell your stories to new people. In this stage of the campaign, it will be voters who decide the fate of marriage equality. We all need to share with our friends, family, and neighbors that all Maine families deserve the rights and protections of civil marriage. You can keep up with what's happening by subscribing to our e-newsletter. Visit us at www.mainewomen.org today.

## From the Executive Director

## Sarah Standiford



One of the most gratifying days of the year is the day in March when 100 8th grade girls from across the State join us in Augusta for a day of learning and action. Girls' Day at the State House gives Maine's young women insight into the legislative process and, most importantly, the tools they need to have an impact now and in the future. Judging from the evaluations and comments we receive from the girls each year, the experience is transformative. For some, it's the beginning of a lifelong commitment to public service.

One participant, Hannah, showed us how Girls' Day can make a far-reaching difference. After her experience with Girls' Day in 2008, Hannah, the niece of our Outreach and Communications Manager, Charlotte, decided to get more involved in public policy. She currently volunteers with us in the office and advocates in her school and community for the issues she cares about. Specifically, as she received our updates on the marriage equality debate in Maine, Hannah shared what she knew - and what she believed - with her schoolmates, even when others disagreed. "My experience at Girls' Day taught me that it's really important, and easy, to make a difference in our communities. Also, there are people who sometimes need to be spoken up for, and I learned that I have a powerful voice."

124th HOUSE FIRST SESSION ROLL CALL VOTES FOR THE MAINE WOMEN'S LOBBY LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

|  | $\begin{aligned} & \text { Marriage Equality } \\ & \& \text { Religious Freedom } \end{aligned}$ | To Protect Family Caregivers | 5-point Welfare Reform | To Ensure <br> Fair Pay | $\begin{gathered} \text { Tax } \\ \text { Reform } \end{gathered}$ | Firefighters <br> Presumptive Cancer |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Roll Call (RC) \# | 52 | 87 | 177 | 21 | 230 | 100 |
| Legislative Document (L.D.) \# | 1020 | 962 | 254 | 84 | 1495 | 621 |
| YES $=$ Agreed With | YES = MWL | YES $=$ MWL | YES = MWL | YES = MWL | YES = MWL | YES $=$ MWL |
| MWL Position: | Support | Support | Oppose | Support | Support | Support |
| Herbert C. Adams ( D ) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Susan M. W. Austin (R) | NO | NO | NO | YES | NO | NO |
| Bernard L. A. Ayotte ( R ) | NO | NO | NO | YES | NO | YES |
| Stephen R. Beaudette (D) | NO | YES | YES | YES | YES | ABSENT |
| Paulette G. Beaudoin ( D ) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Michael G. Beaulieu ( R ) | YES | NO | NO | YES | NO | NO |
| Henry E. M. Beck ( D ) | YES | YES | NO | YES | YES | YES |
| Seth A. Berry ( D ) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Bruce A. Bickford ( R ) | NO | NO | NO | YES | NO | NO |
| Richard D. Blanchard (D) | NO | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Anna D. Blodgett ( D ) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Andrea M. Boland (D) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Brian D. Bolduc (D) | YES | YES | ABSENT | YES | YES | YES |
| Sheryl J. Briggs (D) | NO | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| William P. Browne ( R ) | NO | NO | NO | YES | NO | NO |
| Mark E. Bryant (D) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| David C. Burns ( R ) | NO | NO | NO | YES | NO | YES |
| Steven J. Butterfield, II ( D ) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Emily Ann Cain (D) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| James J. Campbell, Sr. (R) | YES | YES | YES | YES | NO | YES |
| Michael E. Carey (D) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Alan M. Casavant ( D ) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Richard M. Cebra (R) | NO | YES | NO | YES | NO | NO |
| Michael Celli (R) | ABSENT | ABSENT | NO | ABSENT | NO | ABSENT |
| Kathleen D. Chase (R) | NO | NO | NO | YES | NO | NO |
| Herbert E. Clark ( D ) | NO | YES | YES | YES | NO | YES |
| Tyler Clark (R) | NO | NO | NO | YES | NO | YES |
| Richard C. Cleary (D) | YES | ABSENT | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Joan F. Cohen ( D ) | YES | NO | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Gary A. Connor (D) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Alexander Cornell du Houx (D) | YES | YES | NO | YES | YES | YES |
| H. David Cotta (R) | NO | YES | NO | YES | NO | NO |
| Dale J. Crafts (R) | NO | NO | NO | YES | NO | NO |
| Dean A. Cray (R) | NO | YES | NO | YES | NO | YES |
| Jarrod S. Crockett ( R ) | NO | YES | NO | YES | NO | YES |
| Patsy Crockett ( D ) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Philip A. Curtis ( R ) | NO | NO | NO | YES | NO | NO |
| Andre E. Cushing, III (R) | NO | NO | ABSENT | YES | NO | NO |
| Paul T. Davis, Sr. (R) | NO | YES | NO | YES | NO | YES |
| Cynthia A. Dill (D) | YES | YES | YES | ABSENT | YES | YES |
| Stacy T. Dostie ( D ) | YES | ABSENT | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Timothy E. Driscoll ( D ) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Robert S. Duchesne ( D ) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Robert N. Eaton ( D ) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Jane E. Eberle ( D ) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Peter E. Edgecomb ( R ) | NO | NO | NO | YES | NO | YES |
| Mark Eves ( D ) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Edward D. Finch (D) | NO | NO | YES | YES | NO | YES |
| Stacey Allen Fitts ( R ) | NO | NO | NO | YES | NO | ABSENT |
| Sean Flaherty ( D ) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Elspeth Flemings (D) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Kenneth C. Fletcher (R) | NO | YES | NO | YES | NO | YES |
| Patrick S. A. Flood ( R ) | YES | YES | NO | YES | NO | NO |


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| MWL Position: | Support | Support | Oppose | Support | Support | Support |
| Leslie T. Fossel ( R ) | NO | NO | NO | YES | NO | YES |
| Jeffery Allen Gifford ( R ) | NO | YES | NO | YES | NO | NO |
| Paul E. Gilbert (D) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Jayne Crosby Giles ( R ) | YES | NO | NO | YES | NO | YES |
| Adam Goode (D) | YES | YES | YES | ABSENT | YES | YES |
| Christian D. Greeley ( R ) | ABSENT | ABSENT | NO | ABSENT | NO | YES |
| James Michael Hamper (R) | NO | NO | NO | YES | NO | NO |
| Stephen P. Hanley ( D ) | NO | YES | NO | YES | ABSENT | YES |
| Charles W. Harlow (D) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Lance Evans Harvell ( R ) | NO | YES | NO | YES | NO | YES |
| Anne M. Haskell ( D) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Teresea Hayes ( D) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Dawn Hill ( D ) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Jon Hinck ( D ) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| George Hogan ( D ) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Robert B. Hunt ( D) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | ABSENT |
| Melissa Walsh Innes ( D ) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Peter B. Johnson (R) | NO | NO | NO | YES | NO | NO |
| Patricia Jones ( D ) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | NO |
| Henry L. Joy (R) | NO | NO | NO | YES | NO | NO |
| Bryan T. Kaenrath ( D ) | YES | YES | NO | YES | YES | YES |
| Peter S. Kent (D) | YES | ABSENT | NO | YES | YES | YES |
| Jane S. Knapp ( R ) | NO | NO | NO | YES | NO | NO |
| L. Gary Knight ( R ) | NO | NO | NO | YES | NO | NO |
| Charles B. Kruger ( D) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Michel A. Lajoie ( D ) | NO | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Brian D. Langley ( R ) | NO | NO | NO | ABSENT | NO | YES |
| Edward P. Legg ( D ) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Sarah O. Lewin ( R ) | NO | NO | ABSENT | YES | NO | NO |
| Stephen D. Lovejoy ( D ) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| W. Bruce MacDonald ( D ) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Veronica Magnan (D) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| James R. Martin (D) | YES | ABSENT | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| John L. Martin (D) | ABSENT | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Edward J. Mazurek (D) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Jeff M. McCabe ( D ) | YES | ABSENT | YES | ABSENT | YES | YES |
| Howard E. McFadden (R) | NO | NO | NO | YES | NO | YES |
| Jonathan B. McKane ( R ) | NO | NO | NO | YES | NO | NO |
| Everett W. McLeod, Sr. ( R ) | NO | NO | NO | YES | NO | NO |
| Elizabeth S. Miller (D) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| H. Sawin Millett, Jr. ( R ) | NO | YES | NO | ABSENT | NO | NO |
| Terry K. Morrison (D) | YES | YES | ABSENT | YES | YES | YES |
| Joan M. Nass (R) | NO | NO | NO | YES | NO | NO |
| Mary Pennell Nelson (D) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Robert W. Nutting ( R ) | NO | NO | NO | YES | NO | NO |
| Andrew Roesing O'Brien (D) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Peggy A. Pendleton (D) | YES | YES | YES | YES | NO | YES |
| Ann E. Peoples ( D) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Leila ). Percy (D) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Anne C. Perry (D) | YES | ABSENT | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Matthew J. Peterson (D) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Wendy Pieh (D) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Donald E. Pilon (D) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | NO |


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| MWL Position: | Support | Support | Oppose | Support | Support | Support |
| Hannah M. Pingree ( D ) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Wright H. Pinkham, Sr. (R) | NO | YES | NO | YES | NO | YES |
| John F. Piotti (D) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Gary E. Plummer ( R ) | NO | NO | NO | YES | NO | NO |
| Benjamin Marriner Pratt ( D) | ABSENT | ABSENT | YES | YES | ABSENT | ABSENT |
| Kerri L. Prescott ( R ) | YES | YES | NO | YES | NO | YES |
| Charles R. Priest (D) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Helen Rankin (D) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| David E. Richardson (R) | YES | YES | NO | YES | NO | NO |
| Wesley E. Richardson (R) | NO | NO | NO | YES | NO | NO |
| John C. Robinson ( R ) | NO | NO | NO | YES | NO | NO |
| Kimberley C. Rosen (R) | ABSENT | NO | NO | ABSENT | ABSENT | YES |
| Margaret R. Rotundo (D) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Diane Russell ( D ) | YES | YES | ABSENT | YES | YES | YES |
| Linda F. Sanborn ( D ) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Ralph W. Sarty, Jr. ( R ) | NO | YES | NO | YES | NO | NO |
| Thomas B. Saviello (U) | NO | NO | NO | YES | NO | YES |
| James M. Schatz (D) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Michael A. Shaw ( D ) | NO | YES | NO | YES | NO | YES |
| Lawrence Sirois (D) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Nancy E. Smith (D) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Sara R. Stevens (D) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Meredith N. Strang Burgess ( R ) | YES | NO | NO | Yes | NO | ABSENT |
| Peter C. Stuckey ( D ) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Patricia B. Sutherland (D) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Richard M. Sykes ( R ) | NO | NO | NO | YES | NO | NO |
| Toshua A. Tardy (R) | NO | NO | NO | YES | NO | YES |
| Charles Kenneth Theriault ( D ) | NO | YES | YES | YES | NO | YES |
| Michael D. Thibodeau (R) | NO | YES | NO | YES | NO | NO |
| Douglas A. Thomas (R) | NO | NO | NO | YES | NO | NO |
| Dianne Tilton (R) | NO | YES | NO | YES | NO | YES |
| Sharon Anglin Treat ( D ) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Pamela Jabar Trinward (D) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| John L. Tuttle, Jr. ( D ) | NO | YES | ABSENT | YES | YES | YES |
| Linda M. Valentino (D) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| David A. Van Wie (D) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | NO |
| Joseph Andrew Wagner (D) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Richard V. Wagner (D) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Thomas R.Watson (D) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Windol C. Weaver (R) | NO | NO | NO | YES | NO | YES |
| David Webster (D) | YES | ABSENT | YES | YES | YES | ABSENT |
| Joan W. Welsh (D) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Walter A. Wheeler, Sr. (D) | YES | ABSENT | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Michael J. Willette ( D ) | NO | NO | NO | YES | NO | YES |
| Thomas J. Wright (D) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Yes | 89 | 100 | 85 | 143 | 87 | 110 |
| No | 57 | 40 | 60 | 0 | 61 | 34 |
| Absent | 5 | 11 | 6 | 8 | 3 | 7 |
| Excused | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 146 | 140 | 145 | 143 | 148 | 144 |

124th SENATE FIRST SESSION ROLL CALL VOTES FOR THE MAINE WOMEN'S LOBBY LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES


