

Overarching Themes:

- Maine's economy has been hamstrung for decades by public policies, legislation, regulations, and regulatory enforcement that have impaired the state's ability to compete.
- Reversing these trends is a difficult, long-term process that starts with a comprehensive economic development strategy and a legislative strategy that benefits all sectors of the economy and population and stands a chance of bridging our growing political divide.
- If we are to move Maine forward, we need to think strategically, we need a vision for the State, we need a coordinated vision for public policy, and we need an integrated plan that is consistent with a long-term economic development strategy and a legislative strategy.

PDI Assessment and Maine's Rankings:

- A recent assessment of the competitiveness of Maine's statewide economy by the Porter Development Initiative (PDI) found that Maine's economy is not growing at rates comparable to most other states in the nation. PDI's research revealed that we are among the least productive states in the nation; we create fewer jobs, attract less investment, and start fewer businesses; our wages are low and contrast with higher costs; and we lack many of the hallmarks of a competitive location for talent, jobs, and investment.
- Maine's economic and demographic rankings are consistently in the bottom ten in the nation. We are 43rd in the nation in overall economic ranking and 41st in the nation for venture capital investment. We have the highest percentage of population over 65 and the second lowest percentage of population under 18. We also have the 4th highest overall tax burden, the 4th highest average residential electricity prices, the 9th highest health care costs, and the 13th highest cost of living. As a result, Maine businesses are increasingly being sold out of state, which often results in the loss of executive positions, salaries, and taxes;

career paths for young people; ancillary legal, accounting, and insurance services; spin-off income for airports, hotels, and restaurants from vendors who visit the new headquarters; and reduced connection to Maine communities, charities, and social services.

Talking points specific to the economic impact statement legislation

This bill establishes a pilot project to develop an economic impact statement to be used to evaluate the economic impact of legislation.

- For years, Maine's public policy has been about short-term, self-interested issues. As a result, Maine has been viewing and voting on legislation and public policies in isolation without any overall plan, any information on the bigger picture, any research into implications and long-range effects, or any overall goal or objective.
- The Legislature rarely, if ever, does quality comprehensive research to understand the implications, context, and consequences of legislation. And, there has been no long-term economic development strategy or coordinated legislative strategy to advance the Maine's prosperity, productivity, and competitiveness.
- Over time, these actions have piled one on another with unknown and unexamined cumulative effects. However, what we do know is that Maine ranks in the bottom ten of many economic indicators more often than any other state – by a wide margin – and that dozens of quality Maine companies have been sold to out of state owners in recent years.
- That is not vision, that is not leadership, and that is not the path to success.
- We need to design legislation and public policies to increase quality jobs, keep our kids here, provide employment for Maine's blue-collar families, connect to 21st century innovators, provide quality careers for young Mainers, attract

investment and venture capital, educate children to reach their full potential, and reverse our adverse demographics. These are much more complex and visionary goals than any single piece of legislation. They require a strategy that is rigorously followed, research and information to inform decisions, understanding of complex economic interactions, and a commitment to more productivity, better training, better technology, and an economy that supports families and improves life for all Mainers.

- LD 1673 has bipartisan sponsorship and provides one method of measuring the impact legislation has on a long-term economic development strategy and how legislation might enhance or detract from the State's prosperity, productivity, and competitiveness. The goal of LD 1673 is simply to provide information on the economic impact of legislation to committees to enhance legislative decision-making. This will help chart our course to more and better jobs for working people and their families, grow our tax base, and keep our kids and grandchildren here.

Talking points specific to the legislative reform study legislation

This bill establishes a commission to study and recommend solutions for modernizing and improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the Maine Legislature.

- The legislative process is a critical part of creating and enacting public policies, so it is important that it works well for all Mainers and delivers quality results. Yet, it has evolved over the years without any direct evaluation or review. It is time to review a number of factors and recommend solutions to modernize and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Maine Legislature.
- While there is no magic bullet for modernizing and improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the Maine Legislature, and there are pros and cons to every suggestion, improvement is certainly possible and that starts with thoughtful analysis, consideration, and discussion, which is what this bill aims to accomplish.

- Members of the public should be able to comment on and have a voice concerning how their Legislature operates. The Legislature works for the people, not the other way around. It is a public service and the public should very much have a say in how it operates.
- In this very divided political environment, with both parties talking past each other with little inherent middle ground, there is every reason to consider structural changes that might foster more moderation and give Maine a chance to rebuild trust, cooperation, and compromise.
- LD 1649 has bipartisan sponsorship and seeks to provide information on ways to modernize and improve efficiency and effectiveness of the Maine Legislature.
- The bill itself does not make any changes to current processes or procedures. Rather, the bill simply seeks to provide the Legislature with a survey of recommended solutions to modernize and improve the efficiencies and effectiveness of the Maine Legislature. The power and decision to make changes remains with the Legislature.