



Testimony in Support of LD 158: “An Act To Eliminate Inactive Boards and Commissions ”

Senator Baldacci, Representative Matlack, and the distinguished members of the Committee on State and Local Government, my name is Nick Murray and I serve as policy analyst for Maine Policy Institute, a nonpartisan, non-profit organization that advocates for individual liberty and economic freedom in Maine. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of LD 158.

Maine has more than 240 boards and commissions, not counting temporary task forces or other special groups. The sheer number of boards and commissions makes it difficult to find enough qualified applicants to fill vacancies. In August 2020, more than 560 vacancies existed across dozens of different boards.

There are Mainers whose lives are greatly affected by the decisions of various state boards, but there is no reason to make people wait for a board of convene if it was inactive for two years, as those identified in this bill have.

Additionally, if a board or commission did not meet during 2020 and no disparate or adverse public health and safety consequences have arisen, that board should be eliminated as well.

A [report](#) by the Office of Program Evaluation and Government Accountability (OPEGA) in 2008 highlighted the need to reform Maine’s boards and commissions in order to reduce costs and streamline administrative processes. In 2013, the Office of Policy and Management echoed those recommendations by proposing the elimination of 17 inactive boards and commissions.

The Legislature has made good progress on these recommendations. Since 2012, at least 31 boards or commissions, including the Maine Wild Mushroom Harvesting Advisory Committee and the Travel Information Advisory Council, have been retired. It is an appropriate and prudent use of taxpayer dollars to continue this ongoing audit process. This committee should continue to build on this work and advance LD 158 to the full legislature.