

Maine Legislative Update

At long last, the legislative session is over. On Wednesday, April 29, the Maine Legislature reconvened for the first time in nearly two weeks to consider a series of gubernatorial vetoes, issue a few legislative sentiments honoring a range of Mainers for various accomplishments, and then formally adjourned *sine die* (without day), marking the end of the 132nd Legislature. Of course, the final day was not without debate, with several high-profile issues generating significant floor discussion before adjournment. With the session now concluded, all non-emergency laws adopted during the 2026 session will take effect 90 days after adjournment, which is July 29, 2026, unless a later date is specified in law. Here are the final highlights from this year in Maine politics and policy:

Governor Mills suspends U.S. Senate campaign following adjournment. Early Thursday morning, shortly after the Legislature formally adjourned *sine die*, [Governor Janet Mills announced that she would be suspending her campaign](#) for the U.S. Senate. Mills had been expected to face Graham Platner in the June 9 Democratic primary for the opportunity to challenge incumbent U.S. Senator Susan Collins in the November general election. In a statement, Mills cited financial constraints as a decisive factor, [stating](#): "While I have the drive and the passion, commitment and experience, and above all else -- the fight -- to continue on, I very simply do not have the one thing that political campaigns require today: the financial resources." [Her exit](#) follows a period of [lagging polling](#) in the primary and effectively cleared the field for Platner, a progressive candidate who now becomes the likely Democratic nominee. [The decision](#) shifts the focus of the race away from a contested primary and toward the general election matchup between Collins and Platner on November 3, setting the stage for a closely watched and competitive Senate race in Maine.

Governor's veto of data center moratorium bill sustained in House. On April 29, the Maine House [failed to override](#) Governor Janet Mills' veto of [LD 307](#), *An Act to Establish the Maine Data Center Coordination Council and Place a Temporary Limitation on Certain Data Centers*, bringing an end to the proposal this session. The failed override vote had the effect of sustaining the Governor's veto of this legislation, which had garnered national attention. As previously reported, the bill -- sponsored by Rep. Melanie Sachs (D-Freeport) -- would have imposed an 18-month moratorium on new data centers larger than 20 megawatts and would have established a statewide council to study impacts on electric rates, grid reliability, water use, and land use. As proposed in the bill, the moratorium was set to expire in November 2027. After the bill passed both Chambers of the Legislature along largely partisan lines, Governor Mills vetoed the measure on April 24, stating in [her veto message](#) that the bill was overly broad and that the moratorium risked undermining economic development opportunities. She noted in particular that the moratorium would negatively impact a proposed data center project at a former paper mill site in Jay, Maine, noting that the project could help rejuvenate a community still recovering from the mill's closure three years ago. On veto day, supporters fell well short of the two-thirds vote required for an override, with the House voting 72-65 to sustain the veto. Following the vote, Governor Mills issued [an executive order](#) establishing a Maine Data Center Advisory Council to evaluate large-scale data center development and make recommendations related to electric grid reliability, environmental impacts, and electric rates, while supporting responsible economic development. [The Council](#) will include representation from state agencies, the private sector, and higher education, and is directed to report its findings by late January. [With the veto sustained](#) and the [executive order](#) in place, there will be no temporary moratorium on data centers in Maine, though the policy issues it sought to address are expected to continue into the next Legislature.

Maine Senate sustains Governor's veto of criminal records sealing bill. On April 29, the Legislature [failed to override](#) Governor Janet Mills' veto of [LD 1911](#), *An Act to Automatically Seal Criminal History Record Information for Certain Crimes*, ending the proposal this session. The failed override vote continued Governor Mills' streak of not having [a single veto overridden](#) by the Legislature. LD 1911 was sponsored by Sen. Rachel Talbot Ross (D-Portland) and would have required the automatic sealing of certain nonviolent criminal records after a set period of time through a broad, system-driven process, rather than individualized, case-by-case review. Governor Mills vetoed the measure on April 24, citing both policy and legal concerns [in her veto message](#). She noted that, as drafted, the bill would require sealing of records for certain Class D domestic violence assault convictions, which she stated would be contrary to the public interest. She also raised concerns about the administrative and fiscal burden of implementing a large-scale automatic sealing system, as well as potential constitutional issues, pointing to a recent U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit decision suggesting that categorical sealing of criminal records without individualized review may implicate First Amendment

concerns. On veto day, [the Senate fell just short](#) of the two-thirds vote needed to override the veto, voting 20-11 to sustain it. With the veto sustained, the issue of criminal record sealing and expungement is expected to remain a topic of legislative interest in future sessions.

Child welfare oversight bill dies amid procedural dispute. One of the most contentious issues of veto day centered on [LD 127](#), *An Act to Strengthen Legislative Oversight of Government Agencies and Programs by Reaffirming the Legislature's Access to Confidential Records*. This high-profile proposal aimed at expanding lawmakers' access to confidential records across a range of state agencies, although the discussion around the bill was centered on legislative access to records maintained by the Department of Health and Human Services and their oversight of [child welfare](#). The bill drew bipartisan support in votes earlier in the month, but as of veto day, the bill remained as "unfinished business" on the Maine House calendar. Advocates of the bill argued that access to confidential records was a necessary response to ongoing concerns about transparency and legislative oversight of the Department of Health and Human Services. However, the measure became entangled in a broader procedural dispute over whether the Legislature could take up new or unresolved matters after statutory adjournment, which occurred two weeks earlier on April 15. The bill also had a tentative fiscal note of \$72 million, which supporters disputed. With this backdrop, in the early afternoon of veto day, the bill was moved off the unfinished business calendar in the House, stripped of its emergency preamble, and sent down to the Senate where the bill was engrossed in concurrence. However, before the bill could be enacted in the House -- which was in recess until 8pm, the [Maine Senate narrowly voted to adjourn](#) for the year around 4pm, depriving the bill of an opportunity to move forward and [effectively killing the bill](#). The procedural move prompted objections from Republicans and other supporters who wanted an opportunity to finally enact the bill, but although these objections came too late to save the bill, the issue is expected to return in the 133rd Legislature starting in January.

With the Legislature now adjourned for the year, barring some unexpected event requiring the Legislature to reconvene, attention now shifts to the 2026 election cycle, including June primary contests for statewide and legislative races, followed by the November 3 general election. The upcoming elections will determine Maine's next Governor and shape the composition of the 133rd Legislature. Until then, we plan to catch our collective breaths and get ready for Maine's elusive spring weather!