

The logo for Verrill, featuring the word "Verrill" in a bold, black, serif font centered on a bright yellow rectangular background.

Legislative Update

TO: Commissioner Steve Gorden, Commissioner Brian Hobart, Lauren Haven, Maine County Commissioners Association

FROM: James I. Cohen, Clara McConnell

DATE: June 24, 2022

RE: Week Ending June 24, 2022

After a few weeks off from sending our *Legislative Update*, we thought it was time to check in. Here are some recent highlights:

Democrats hold Hancock County Senate seat in June special election. Last Tuesday was Election Day in Maine, and Democrats managed to keep control of a swing legislative district when Rep. Nicole Grohoski (D-Ellsworth) defeated former Sen. Brian Langley (R-Hancock) in a special Maine Senate election in Hancock County. The special election was called to fill the seat vacated by former Sen. Louis Luchini (D-Hancock), who resigned in January to take a job with the Small Business Administration. Langley and Grohoski will face off again in the November election, as they each also won their respective primaries on Tuesday. The boundaries of the district are shifting slightly for the November election due to redistricting, swapping nearly a dozen towns in eastern Hancock County for several on the Blue Hill Peninsula. The special election was seen as an important step in determining control of the Maine Senate, with Democrats attempting to retain control and Republicans hoping to win the seats needed to take the majority.

June primaries pave way for November general election. As noted, last Tuesday was Election Day in Maine, and in addition to the special election for State Senate, primaries were held for state and federal races. For Governor, Democrat Janet Mills and Republican Paul LePage both ran unopposed, so they move on to November's general election without issue. Republicans held a primary for the 2nd Congressional District seat to determine who will take on sitting Congressman Jared Golden in November's election. In that race, former Congressman Bruce Poliquin bested lesser-known candidate Liz Caruso, although the race was closer than many expected as Caruso got a boost from appearing as a guest on Tucker Carlson's Fox News show. Many candidates for State Senate and House also faced primaries last week. Links to the winning candidates who will now face off in November's general election can be found [here](#).

State Representative Jeffrey Gifford passes away. The Maine Legislature suffered another loss recently when Representative Jeffrey Gifford (R-Lincoln) passed away on June 12. Gifford served four terms in the Maine House from 2006 to 2014 and was elected to another term in 2020. He was poised to run unopposed in the primary election on June 14. Rep. Gifford was an active member of the Lincoln Town Council and a local football coach for decades. This is the fourth death of a member of the Maine House of Representatives this year. Reps. Donna Doore (D-Augusta) and John Tuttle (D-Sanford) died in

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late January, and Rep. Theodore “Ted” Kryzak (R-Acton) died in March. The entire Maine Street Solutions and Verrill team sends our condolences to Rep. Gifford’s family and friends.

State Representative Seth Berry to step down. Representative Seth Berry (D-Bowdoinham) announced last week that he is [no longer seeking reelection to the Maine House of Representatives](#) and will instead focus on a statewide referendum campaign to form a quasi-governmental entity to buy out Maine’s investor-owned electric companies. Berry was seeking election for the newly redistricted House District 52 seat, which includes Bowdoinham, Richmond, and part of Bowdoin. Berry is in his seventh non-consecutive term in the House. He has served on the Legislature’s Energy, Utilities and Technology Committee for eight years, including six years as House chair. To replace Berry on the November ballot, the Sagadahoc County Democratic Committee will need to caucus in the coming weeks to choose a new candidate. Peter Lewis of Bowdoinham is running in the general election as an unenrolled candidate, and there is no Republican on the ballot.

We hope you are enjoying summer so far (notwithstanding the cold) and basking in the long hours of sunlight. We will be back in touch soon as more updates arise. Until then, stay safe and be well.

I. Printed Legislation

None of the bills printed this week appear to be of interest to Maine County Commissioners Association

II. Calendar

There are no upcoming meetings of interest to Maine County Commissioners Association