

Maine Environmental Priorities Coalition



Protecting Maine People and Promoting Prosperity for Today and Future Generations.

SUMMARY OF 2010 EPC PRIORITIES

1. LD 1631, An Act to Provide Leadership Regarding the Responsible Recycling of Consumer Products



Status: PASSED AND SIGNED BY GOVERNOR BALDACCI

This law sets up a process to identify consumer products that would require producers to fund collection and recycling programs. These programs would help to safely recycle or dispose of the products when they are no longer needed. LD 1631 focuses the state's limited resources on products that adversely impact the environment and human health. The law positions Maine as a national leader in minimizing waste and improving recycling.

2. LD 1538, An Act to Close Loopholes in Environmental Laws



Status: PASSED AND SIGNED BY GOVERNOR BALDACCI

This law ensures that road-building will have adequate regulatory review by tightening an exemption for forest management roads. If these roads are primarily used to access development, LD1538 requires that they get storm water and Natural Resources Protection Act permits. The law maintains the proper use and integrity of our natural resources.

3. LD 1662, An Act to Improve Maine's Air Quality and Reduce Regional Haze at Acadia National Park and Other Federally Designated Class I Areas



Status: PASSED AND SIGNED BY GOVERNOR BALDACCI

Sulfur is a common pollutant and its combustion contributes to haze, acid rain and asthma. LD 1662 reduces the amount of sulfur in home heating oil and industrial oil over the next six years. The law received the support of the oil industry and represents a shared step in improving Maine's air quality.

4. LD1568, An Act to Clarify Maine's Phase-out of Polybrominated Diphenyl Ethers



Status: PASSED AND SIGNED BY GOVERNOR BALDACCI

This law bans a toxic flame retardant, DECA, from plastic pallets used to ship everything from food to bottled water to clothing. DECA can accumulate in the environment, building up to higher levels in the food web. DECA interferes with brain development and can lead to learning disabilities. This first-in-the-nation law represents Maine's commitment to healthy people and a healthy environment.

5. LD 1547, An Act to Revise Notification Requirements for Pesticides Applications Using Aircraft or Air-carrier Equipment



Status: PASSED AND SIGNED BY GOVERNOR BALDACCI

Last year, Maine successfully passed a notification law to inform neighbors in adjacent properties of aerial pesticide application. It also created a registry for people wishing to be notified of certain applications taking place within 1,320 feet of their properties. LD 1547 was seriously weakened by eliminating the direct, written, pre-season notification requirement, exempting non-agricultural pesticide applications until 2012, and, for applications to orchards and Christmas trees, reducing the notification distance from 1,320 to 500 feet. Maine's Board of Pesticides Control (BPC) will assess much of the bill with input from the Department of Health and Human Services and make recommendations to the next Legislature. The BPC also will develop a comprehensive notification registry for people wanting information about all outdoor pesticide applications taking place in their neighborhoods.

6. LD 891, Resolve, To Develop Practices for Development of State and Regional Significance in Order To Reduce Dependency on Fossil Fuels and Meet the State's Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Goals



Status: PASSED AND SIGNED BY GOVERNOR BALDACCI

LD 891 was significantly weakened and later changed to a Resolve. It asks the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to identify and recommend practices in the operation and design of development that will minimize climate change pollution and maximize energy efficiency. DEP then submits its recommendations to the Natural Resources Committee. This bill does not create any regulatory requirements but does ask questions that will position the Committee to move forward next legislative session. In 2011, we look forward to implementing DEP's recommendations to ensure a clean and sustainable future for Maine.

7. LD 1725, Resolve, Regarding Legislative Review of Portions of Section 10: Stream Crossings within Chapter 305 Permit by Rule Standards, a Major Substantive Rule of the Department of Environmental Protection



Status: PASSED AND SIGNED BY GOVERNOR BALDACCI

Despite bipartisan support in both bodies, this bill was significantly compromised so that only new culverts are required to accommodate fish and aquatic organism passage. Many native aquatic species migrate up streams to breed and are impeded with poorly constructed and/or inappropriately sized culverts. The approved rules do not affect the bulk of the problem - existing culverts. Due to a last minute surprise Department of Transportation fiscal note, the rules for replacement culverts will instead be brought back to the next Legislature. We will continue to advocate for the protection of sustainable aquatic life in Maine.