

Guide to the 2026 Supplemental Budget Hearings

All over Maine, most of us believe that we should take care of each other. It's helped us get through a lot of hard times, and we know that when everyone gives what they can, we build a stronger state and a better future. That includes making sure that the wealthiest among us pay what they truly owe in taxes – so we can pay for the programs that help us all thrive. That's where the budget comes in – it's the most honest way that the people who run our state government reveal their priorities.

Maine's budget has a two-year cycle, and this year's is the "supplemental", which dictates how the state will spend money from revenue that goes beyond what it planned for in the "biennial" budget (last year). This is also a point when the state can make cuts to programs it funded in the first year. The supplemental budget determines state funding for the next year, meaning which programs and bills get funded, and which ones get cut. The governor has released her proposed budget, and the legislature now gets to respond with their version.

To fund the vital programs we all depend on, and to fund our state's growth in the future, we need to make sure that the wealthiest Mainers and super-rich corporations do what's right, and pay what they truly owe in taxes. When we do that, we won't have to cut housing, childcare, and healthcare. And most of us won't even notice.

It's also the right thing to do – it doesn't make any sense that ordinary people would be paying more in taxes than ultra-rich people and highly profitable corporations.

In each of these joint budget hearings, you have an opportunity to push back against cuts that will hurt Mainers, and ensure that our state budget delivers for the people.

Thank you for testifying! Here is the schedule for upcoming relevant budget hearings. Below are more details about each hearing and what they will include.

Public Hearing Schedule:

Tuesday, Feb. 17 at 1:00pm: Health and Human Services - Maine Care

Wednesday, Feb 18 at 1:30pm: Health and Human Services - Childcare

Thursday Feb. 19th at 9am: Taxation

Thursday, Feb. 19th at 1:00pm: Housing and Economic Development

How to sign up: You have the choice of testifying either in person at the State House (on the second floor in the Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee) or via Zoom. If you would like to testify remotely and you do not have Zoom, you can download it for free [here](#).

You can sign up to testify online, or submit written testimony at <https://www.mainelegislature.org/testimony/> from the time the hearing is scheduled until 30 minutes prior to the posted start time of the hearing. Please be sure to select the Appropriations

and Financial Affairs committee. You can be sure the process was successful when you receive an automatically generated email with the Zoom link for the meeting.

A person who testifies in the committee room and has written testimony should provide 40 hard copies for distribution to the committees.

If you are able to testify in person or on Zoom, that will have the most impact, but if you are unable to do so, written testimony is also very useful – you can submit that testimony using the same link above.

These are the important things to remember:

The best way to get your point across is to share your story. You don't need to be a policy expert to be effective. In fact, just being yourself and sharing why you personally care about this is always going to be better than reading a list of facts and figures.

You have 3 minutes to speak, and the time goes by fast! You really only have time to say your key message and tell a story to illustrate your point. Your written testimony can be longer than 3 minutes, if you have more you want to share with the committees.

You are making a difference! The legislature needs to ensure that the needs of the most marginalized Mainers are a priority this year. Your voice matters.

Taxation Budget Hearing: Thursday, Feb 19th at 9am

Start testimony with “Senator Rotundo, Representative Gattine, Senator Grohoski, Representative Sayre, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs and the Joint Standing Committee on Taxation: my name is _____ and I live in _____. I am here today to testify *neither for nor against* LD 2212.”

Maine must raise taxes on the ultra-rich and profitable corporations, and reject copying Trump's corporate tax cuts.

Tax Conformity: Yes to credits for people, no to cuts for corporations

“Tax Conformity” refers to the degree to which the state copies (conforms with) the federal tax code. Governor Mill's budget proposes matching the new federal standard deduction, which is larger and would likely benefit many Mainers. It doesn't copy Trump's tax cuts on tips, overtime, and car purchases, and it also rejected most of Trump's tax cuts for the rich and corporations, which is good.

However, the governor's budget includes about \$17 Million in tax credits for research and development, and gives tax cuts to large corporations as well as small businesses. Since large corporations have money to spend on research and development projects upfront, they are much more likely to benefit from these tax cuts. Some of these cuts are *retroactive*, meaning we are giving away money to companies for things they've done in the past, so they won't even incentivize future investment. R&D tax cuts for corporations just reduce the state budget for important services and benefit large corporations that can afford to pay.

The Chamber of Commerce, the Republicans, and other conservative, corporate lobbies will try to push for more cuts for corporations and the wealthy. We must reject these calls. **Tax cuts for the rich and corporations are bad for the services that Mainers rely on, and bad for the economy.**

Key Points:

- The state already has huge service and budget holes from federal cuts, we don't need to give more money to already wealthy corporations.
- Retroactive tax cuts are a blatant giveaway to wealthy corporations.
- An increased standard deduction will benefit most Mainers.
- No taxes on tips, overtime, and car purchases would only benefit 2-5% of Mainers, and open up budget holes that could be used for programs that benefit the majority.
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Tax Fairness

The Legislature currently has three bills before it that would raise revenue from the ultra-wealthy and corporations to fund things we all use::

- [LD 1089](#) would charge a 2% tax on income over \$1 Million/year to fund education.
- [LD 1879](#) would charge a 1.07% tax on corporate income over \$3.5 Million/year to fund agriculture.
- [LD 229](#) would create two new tax brackets and lower taxes for the brackets 70% of Mainers fall into. That means people with higher incomes will pay a higher rate in taxes than people with moderate incomes, rather than less.
- People earning \$1 Million/year currently pay less in taxes than people earning \$70k/year; that's not right, and we're leaving money on the table that Maine could use to provide services.
- Ensuring that our wealthiest pay what they truly owe would allow us to fund education, agriculture, childcare, and health care.
- Contrary to what you might have heard, increasing taxes on the highest incomes encourages more wealthy people to move to the state – because well-funded public services benefit everyone and make states good places to live (this is what happened in Massachusetts when they passed a tax on incomes over \$1 Million/yr.)
- When we properly fund our public services and people can afford to meet their needs, our economy thrives. When we allow people who are already super wealthy to hoard

their wealth, it hurts the economy – and everyone who doesn't benefit from the services we could have provided.

These bills would make our tax system more fair and would raise revenue we need to fill Trump's cuts and guarantee essential programs like healthcare and childcare. Ask AFA and Taxation to put these policies (or better) in the budget.

Housing and Economic Development: Thursday, Feb 19th at 1pm

Start testimony with "Senator Rotundo, Representative Gattine, Senator Curry, Representative Gere, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs and the Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development: my name is _____ and I live in _____. I am here today to testify neither for nor against LD 2212."

- **Invest in Affordable Housing and Tenant Protections:**
 - All Mainers deserve safe, affordable housing.
 - I urge you to fully fund emergency rental assistance in the Eviction Prevention Program. This program has been widely successful in keeping people in their homes. Survey results [show](#) that seven out of eight participants maintained their housing after engaging with the program. Furthermore, 70% of applicants found the process easy to navigate, praising the straightforward instructions and helpful staff.
 - At a time when we have great economic and political uncertainty, and thousands of Mainers have lost income out of fear of leaving their homes, this program is more important than ever to fully fund.
 - I appreciate the Governor's proposed shelter funding. I urge you to include that funding in the supplemental budget, along with additional funding to fully support our shelter system, such as the funding proposed in LD 2124
- **Raise taxes on the ultra-rich and corporations, and reject copying Trump's corporate tax cuts.**
 - Funding for housing is essential to Maine families and communities. I urge you to raise revenue and reject Trump's cuts to guarantee essential programs like housing. Please include LD 1089, 229 and 1879 (or better) in the budget.

Health and Human Services - Childcare Session: Tuesday, Feb 17th at 1pm

Start testimony with "Senator Rotundo, Representative Gattine, Senator Ingwerson, Representative Meyer, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs and the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services: my name is _____ and I live in _____. I am here today to testify neither for nor against LD 2212."

Increase funding for the Child Care Affordability Program by \$15M to fund the child care for families on the waitlist and expand this critical program.

- Safe, high-quality child care isn't optional—it's essential. 15 million in ongoing funding for Maine's **Child Care Affordability Program (CCAP)** means young children can access safe, stable, and enriching environments during the most critical years of development.
- This investment would immediately support more than 1,000 children currently on the waitlist and limit future waitlists that disrupt parents' ability to work, attend school, or pursue job training. CCAP is a proven economic investment: it helps families afford child care while providing stable, predictable payments to child care programs operating on razor-thin margins. \$15 million in ongoing funding for CCAP ensures access to safe, quality care, keeps families working, and stabilizes child care programs across Maine.
- Affordable child care allows parents to work, pursue education, and fully participate in Maine's workforce, strengthening businesses and local economies. A report in 2023 showed that Maine's underinvestment in childcare is losing the State \$400M in economic activity, wages, and revenue.¹ Waitlists and funding gaps create lost wages, reduced productivity, and, in some cases, program closures, which negatively impacts communities statewide.
- Safe, high-quality child care is essential to young children's healthy development and to the strength of Maine's economy. This is a smart investment with a powerful return—every dollar invested in early childhood education can generate \$7 or more in long-term benefits.

Make the CCAP Educator Award program permanent

- Permanent funding ensures current employees at licensed child care programs receive tuition support
- This program has been successful, helping to both recruit and retrain qualified staff, but needs permanent, expanded funding to achieve the desired outcomes.
- The Child Care Employment Award Pilot helped many educators remain in their roles by providing financial, quality of life, and psychological benefits. The program also shows promise as a tool for recruitment, as several focus group participants reported that friends or acquaintances were drawn to the field after learning about the award; however, this potential was constrained once the program reached capacity and transitioned to a waitlist.²

Raise taxes on the ultra-rich and corporations, and reject copying Trump's corporate tax cuts.

- Funding for child care is essential to Maine families and communities. I urge you to raise revenue and reject Trump's tax cuts to guarantee essential programs like child care.

¹<https://www.wmtw.com/article/new-report-child-care-shortage-costing-maine-403-million-per-year/44092306>

² <https://legislature.maine.gov/doc/12248>

Please include LD 1089, 229 and 1879 (or better) in the budget.

Health Health and Human Services - Healthcare Session 1:00 PM Tuesday, February 17, 2026

Start testimony with “Senator Ingwerson, Representative Meyer, Senator Rotundo, Representative Gattine, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committees on Appropriations and Financial Affairs and Health and Human Services: my name is _____ and I live in_____. I am here today to testify neither for nor against LD 2212.”

Core Argument: Trump’s cuts to healthcare have increased already unaffordable healthcare costs, and kicks over 30,000 Mainers off their healthcare. We need to raise revenue to backfill these disastrous federal cuts and build towards health care as a human right.

Backfill Federal healthcare cuts by raising progressive revenue

- Cuts and work requirements for healthcare in HR1 could [kick over 30,000 Mainers](#) off of their healthcare.
- Cuts from HR1 will result in decreased funding and reimbursement to Maine health care providers, and will result in job losses, hospital closures, and loss of essential services and life-saving care, especially in rural areas. (see [Maine Dept. of Health and Human Services](#))
- These cuts paid for [over \\$1 trillion in tax cuts to corporations and the wealthiest Americans](#), including the wealthiest Mainers.
- We need to raise revenue from those corporations and ultra-wealthy Mainers to fund the services and save the hospitals, jobs, and lives that Trump won’t.
- We need to counteract federal Medicaid cuts by fully funding and continuing to expand MaineCare.
- [LD 2208](#) is currently before the legislature (in the Health Coverage, Insurance, and Financial Services, and creates funds to counteract Trumps cuts to medicaid and healthcare subsidies. Provisions which backfill and support MaineCare, and stabilize hospitals and other healthcare providers must be fully funded in the budget.

How to prepare:

If you are testifying on zoom, or submitting written testimony, type up your testimony before the hearing and submit it using the online portal via the following link:

<https://www.mainelegislature.org/testimony/>.

1. First, check the dot marking “Public Hearing”
2. Next a drop-down menu will open up asking you which committee you are testifying in front of. Select the Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee.
3. Then another drop down menu will appear. Select the date of your public hearing. (see the list of hearing dates above)
4. Then click on the checkbox for LD 2212.

5. Next you can either paste your testimony into the textbox or attach a file of your written testimony. It will ask you for your full name, your town, and your email address. Then click the checkbox for “I am not a robot” and the “submit” button.

If you are testifying in person, you do not need to submit testimony in advance but should bring 20 printed copies of your testimony to give to the clerk.

If you have any questions or need help:

Contact Majlinda Mulla-Everett

207-287-1635

AFA@legislature.maine.gov

You can also use the chat function on Zoom to reach the clerk during the hearing. For that, make sure you are sending it just to them and not to the entire hearing.

You will have **3 minutes** to speak, but there is no limit on the length of written testimony that you submit.

When it's your turn to speak:

The committee will call your name, and you will then come to the podium or unmute and speak on Zoom. There may be a clock going in front of you, and you'll get a gentle reminder when 3 minutes is up. After you're finished, you can offer to answer questions if you're comfortable.

Committee members will have the chance to ask clarifying questions. *It's always OK to say you don't know the answer.*

Here's an example of how testimony can be structured:

- **Introduction:**
- **Key messages:** Pick one or two -- just one sentence on each.
- **Story:** Tell a story that illustrates your main point. This could be a story about your experience struggling with an expensive necessity like healthcare, housing, or childcare. It could also be about working hard and not seeing the fruits of your labor, while the wealthy and profitable corporations keep getting richer.
- **Closing:** Reinforce your key message (again, just a sentence) and thank the committee.

Special note:

Persons with special needs wishing to participate in a Legislative hearing who require accommodations should notify the Legislative Information Office as soon as possible: 207-287-1692, FAX 207-287-1580, lio@legislature.maine.gov.