



Legislative Update: May 28, 2021

Percolating. Most bills of interest to GrowSmart Maine are percolating through the legislative process behind the scenes as legislative staff prepare amended bill language developed in work sessions for committee members' final review. Other bills are already on their way to the House and Senate for further consideration beginning next week.

One exception is the series of broadband bills we've been working on through the [Maine Broadband Coalition](#). These bills were worked by the committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology on Thursday afternoon. [MORE HERE](#)

The Legislative session shifts gears next week with the House and Senate scheduled to be in Session. Most committee work has been completed, with staff drafting amendments as necessary, then all bills are reported out for final action by the full Legislature. Even bills and resolves voted unanimously "ought not to pass" in committee are listed in the House and Senate calendars for final disposition. (For these bills, no further action may be taken by the Legislature unless a Joint Order recalling the bill from the file is approved by 2/3 of the members of both houses voting in favor of recall.) [Detailed Path of Legislation](#) provides details on the overall process.

You can read all our testimony [here](#)

The House and Senate plan to convene every weekday from June 2nd until the June 16th adjournment date. They will be meeting in the Statehouse for this first time in over a year, with masks required. The Statehouse IS OPEN to the public, with masks, or you can watch proceedings online using these links:

[Senate Chamber Video Livestream](#)

[House Chamber Video Livestream](#)

You can search [here](#) to watch the committee process live or to watch recordings of prior public hearings and work sessions.

Public hearings this week

There were no public hearings on bills we are tracking this week as committees focused on work sessions following hearings held earlier this session.

Follow Up On Earlier Public Hearings: Further Committee Action:

This work has been completed for the bills we are tracking. See the status of our key bills [here](#)

LD 1312 "An Act To Remove Barriers to Accessory Dwelling Units and Allow Accessory Dwelling Units where Single-family Houses Are Allowed" sponsored by Rep. Geiger. **Bill Summary:** *This bill requires municipalities to allow one accessory dwelling unit on the same lot as a single-family dwelling unit and outlines certain limits to restrictions a municipality can place on tiny houses. It also addresses inspection requirements.* In our testimony, we noted that accessory dwelling units (ADUs) as a valuable component of a community's effort to provide housing choices. ADUs offer a relatively straight forward, affordable option for accommodating housing needs that evolve from starter housing to aging-in place over a lifetime. We also highlighted one of our Community Guides, [Accessory Apartments, An Affordable Housing Strategy](#), provides ADU guidance for municipalities and links to our [ADU Ordinance Overview](#). provides valuable information on this topic. While we support the bill, we acknowledge likely opposition as it is a municipal mandate. We also offered specific recommendations on setbacks, allowing short term rentals, and owner occupancy.

THIS WEEK: The committee on Labor and Housing held with a unanimous committee vote to support the amended version of the bill.

In The Legislature

The House and Senate did not meet this week.

Partnerships: In addition to the Maine Alliance for Smart Growth, we are working with two other collaborative efforts this session: We have joined **Climate Maine** to review and prioritize legislative proposals that fall within our policy priorities to ensure our advocacy is effectively coordinated with others. In addition we continue to lead the policy work of the [Maine Broadband Coalition](#), which will focus on several key funding and policy bills. Check out the [Broadband Policy Page](#) for testimony, value propositions for each committee, and recordings of the Broadband Caucus!

How can you engage?

You can watch live or recorded committee work as each committee has a dedicated YouTube *channel*. *You can search [here](#) to watch the committee process live or to watch recordings of prior public hearings and work sessions.*

From the Legislature's website, you can find Your Senator [here](#) and your State Representative [here](#).

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