



Senate President TROY JACKSON

DISTRICT 1

Proudly Representing the people of northern Aroostook County

Dear Friend,

To say that 2020 has been a whirlwind would be an understatement. When the Legislature reconvened in January, I returned to Augusta energized by what I had heard from folks at town halls and meetings all across the district and ready to deliver for Maine people. I never expected to be grappling with a deadly pandemic and the devastating consequences that have come with it.

“We don’t get to choose the challenges we face. We only get to choose how we respond. And Maine people rise to the challenge every time.”

In March, all four legislative leaders came together and agreed to temporarily adjourn the legislature after passing measures to support small businesses, Maine workers and the health and well-being of Maine people during this crisis. It was a tough decision, but we recognized the leadership the moment required.

As Mainers, we solve our greatest problems by getting people around the table and working together. It’s why I often rely on you, my constituents, to ask questions, share stories and offer feedback. This

is how we are going to get through the COVID-19 pandemic and rebuild our state.

The good news is that the pandemic didn’t stop us from delivering for Mainers. This year we worked to:

- **Fix our broken health care system:** I proudly cosponsored laws to shake up our health care system to patients before profits. The new laws put an end to both surprise and abusive billing practices, and cap the out-of-pocket cost of insulin.
- **Support Aroostook County veterans:** I worked with the Attorney General to secure a \$100,000 grant for the United Veterans of Maine in Caribou to ensure Aroostook County veterans can access critical services.
- **Grow the Rainy Day Fund to a historic high:** We added even more money to the state’s Rainy Day Fund, growing it to \$258 million, the highest amount it’s been at since the fund was created in 1985.

These are just some of the highlights. If anything, this pandemic has only strengthened my resolve to fight for you and your family. **It’s why I voted twice to reconvene the Legislature so we could finish delivering for you.** If you have a problem or just want to share your concerns, please don’t hesitate to reach out to me anytime. Together, we can build a state that works for Maine people.

CONTACT TROY:

MAIL

3 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

PHONE

Office: (207) 287-1500
Cell: (207) 436-0763

ONLINE

senatorjackson1@gmail.com
www.troyjackson.org

Supporting small business

Throughout this pandemic, Maine businesses have gone above and beyond to keep people healthy and safe, whether it's shifting to curbside pickup or manufacturing personal protective equipment. Others have worked to feed seniors and frontline workers. They deserve our support.

Over the past two years, we've worked to grow Maine's heritage industries that continue to power our rural economy. We've helped farmers grow more produce by promoting local foods in schools, state-funded food insecurity programs and food processing facilities that receive tax credits. We've also helped the forest products industry embrace new markets.

This year, I fought alongside farmers and business leaders to expand internet access in underserved areas by passing a \$15 million broadband bond. Reliable high-speed internet is too essential for education, telehealth and businesses across all industries. We also invested \$1.6 million for career and technical education, with an additional \$2 million for equipment upgrades. **When the Legislature returns, we must promote Maine-based companies, support good-paying jobs and help small businesses.**



I was proud to stand alongside Maine business owners and workers to introduce "Buy American, Build Maine" legislation this year.

Making sure working families don't get left behind

Working families are the cornerstone of our communities and economy. The COVID-19 pandemic has hit them hard. **As Maine rebuilds, we must make sure working families don't get left behind.**

Last year, we fought to ensure Mainers are paid what they're worth from promoting equal pay for equal work and preventing wage theft to increasing minimum teacher salary and defending retirement benefits for first responders. We also stood up for the rights of loggers and wood-haulers.

In response to the pandemic, we specifically expanded unemployment benefits to cover parents who were unable to work after schools closed. As we look to reconvene for a special session, I will continue to push for measures to increase access to child care, protect jobs for Maine workers and support schools.



With Jay McCrum, owner of Penobscot McCrum, at the construction site for the new potato processing plant in Washburn.

Responding quickly to the COVID-19 pandemic

When Maine reported its first case of COVID-19, the Legislature unanimously passed laws to support Maine families, seniors, small businesses and public health. **First, we approved a responsible spending package that prioritized funding for public health nursing, Maine CDC and senior care while growing the Rainy Day Fund to \$258 million, a historic high.** We expanded unemployment benefits, made sure students wouldn't go hungry, prohibited utility companies from terminating service and put \$11 million into a COVID-19 fund.

Since we adjourned, I've worked with hundreds of Mainers to solve problems and access critical resources. The stories are heartbreaking, but this is what we are elected to do — fight for the people we represent. The biggest issue has been with the unemployment system. Shortcomings in the system, inadequate staffing and other issue have left many struggling to access benefits. It's unacceptable. We must fix this broken system.

Finally, I've pressed state and federal agencies to improve small business programs, increase access to health care, provide rental and housing relief and support heritage industries from farming to fishing. Key legislative committees have continued to meet, getting folks from industry and the administration around the table to come up with solutions.



I got a chance to sit down with Kris Doody, CEO of Cary Medical Center and other staff to talk about rural health care challenges.

Sen. Jackson's support of sponsoring and helping to execute legislation in Augusta was beneficial as we expanded our potato processing in Aroostook County. His emphasis on Maine jobs and Maine products is the kind of commonsense approach legislators should be taking with the private sector.

-Jay McCrum
CEO of Penobscot McCrum



In January, AARP Maine presented me with the 2019 Rx Price Fighter award for our work on prescription drug reform. It was an honor to be recognized by Maine seniors, who have fought alongside us to lower prescription drug prices for all Mainers.

Looking out for Maine seniors and veterans

As Mainers, we stand on the generations that came before us. We owe it to our seniors and veterans to be there when they need us most. In January, we started this session by increasing funding for Maine's nursing homes and residential care facilities. In the wake of COVID-19, we added even more funding for senior living facilities in the supplemental budget. We also pushed to increase reimbursement rates for direct care workers to support the dedicated people who care for our seniors.

To support our veterans, I was proud to cosponsor a proposal to establish a Veterans Bill of Rights, which would bolster resources for Maine's veterans, including increased access to housing, workforce training, health care and more. This bill has been carried over for a special session due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the meantime, I worked to secure \$100,000 in grant funding from the Attorney General's Office for United Veterans of Maine in Caribou. This nonprofit is dedicated to helping Aroostook County veterans gain crucial access to safe housing, Veterans Affairs benefits, job training and more. Now, more local veterans can get the support they need while we wait to pass a proposed Veterans Bill of Rights into law. I am proud to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with our veterans in Maine and want to thank the Attorney General for his attention to this issue.

Fixing our broken health care system



I was proud to stand should-to-shoulder with patients, seniors and fellow lawmakers to unveil the Patients First health care package.

Too often, the high cost of health care prevents hard-working Mainers from getting basic medical care. This is true whether it's the cost of prescription drugs, outrageous health insurance premiums or surprise medical bills. Enough is enough — my colleagues and I have fought to change that.

In 2019, we took on "Big Pharma," and won, passing an aggressive prescription drug reform package. New laws

improve drug price transparency, hold "middlemen" accountable, create an affordability board, and allow for wholesale prescription drug importation from Canada.

In recent months, we've adopted a wholesale importation plan and sent it to the FDA for approval. Maine is leading the way on prescription drug reform. We've passed a new law to hold drug manufacturers accountable for their role in the opioid epidemic.

This year, I supported a suite of bills designed to put patients before profits. We clamped down abusive billing practices and patient fees that nickel and dime families at every turn.

Over the last two years, we've worked to make sure insurance companies don't stand in the way of care by enshrining patient protections into state law, improving coverage of telehealth medicine, and eliminating the waiting period for children's dental coverage. We've also stepped up to fill gaps in rural health care by investing in rural hospitals, funding ambulance services, allowing EMTs to work in hospital settings, and recognizing the care that physician assistants can provide. We've made serious progress, but the COVID-19 pandemic proves that we can't stop now.

2020 Legislative Report
Senate President
Troy Jackson
3 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333
www.troyjackson.org
(207) 287-1500



SURVEY: I want to hear from you!

1. What is your biggest concern in the wake of COVID-19:

- ☐ Keeping your family safe and healthy
- ☐ Making sure you can pay your bills
- ☐ Supporting struggling small businesses
- ☐ Addressing racial disparities in COVID-19 cases
- ☐ Reopening the state's economy
- ☐ Protecting good-paying jobs
- ☐ Other (please specify):

2. What should Maine's focus be as we restart our economy?

- ☐ Providing direct relief to workers
- ☐ Keeping workers healthy and safe
- ☐ Providing direct relief to businesses
- ☐ Supporting Maine's tourism industry
- ☐ Investing in high-speed reliable internet
- ☐ Other (please specify):

3. COVID-19 has exposed key health care challenges in Maine. What is the biggest challenge you face?

- ☐ High cost of prescription drugs
- ☐ High cost of health care coverage
- ☐ Surprise medical bills and fees

- ☐ Lack of medical services in our area
- ☐ Other (please specify):

4. COVID-19 has also exposed where Maine needs work. What should our biggest priority be next year?

- ☐ Making sure more people can get health care
- ☐ Expanding high-speed, reliable internet
- ☐ Investing in education, career tech & child care
- ☐ Improving access to affordable housing
- ☐ Protecting natural resources
- ☐ Other (please specify):

5. What grade would you give Maine's COVID-19 response? _____

I appreciate your comments. Please feel free to contact me anytime if I may ever be of assistance.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

To fill out this survey online,
go to www.TroyJackson.org/2020Survey