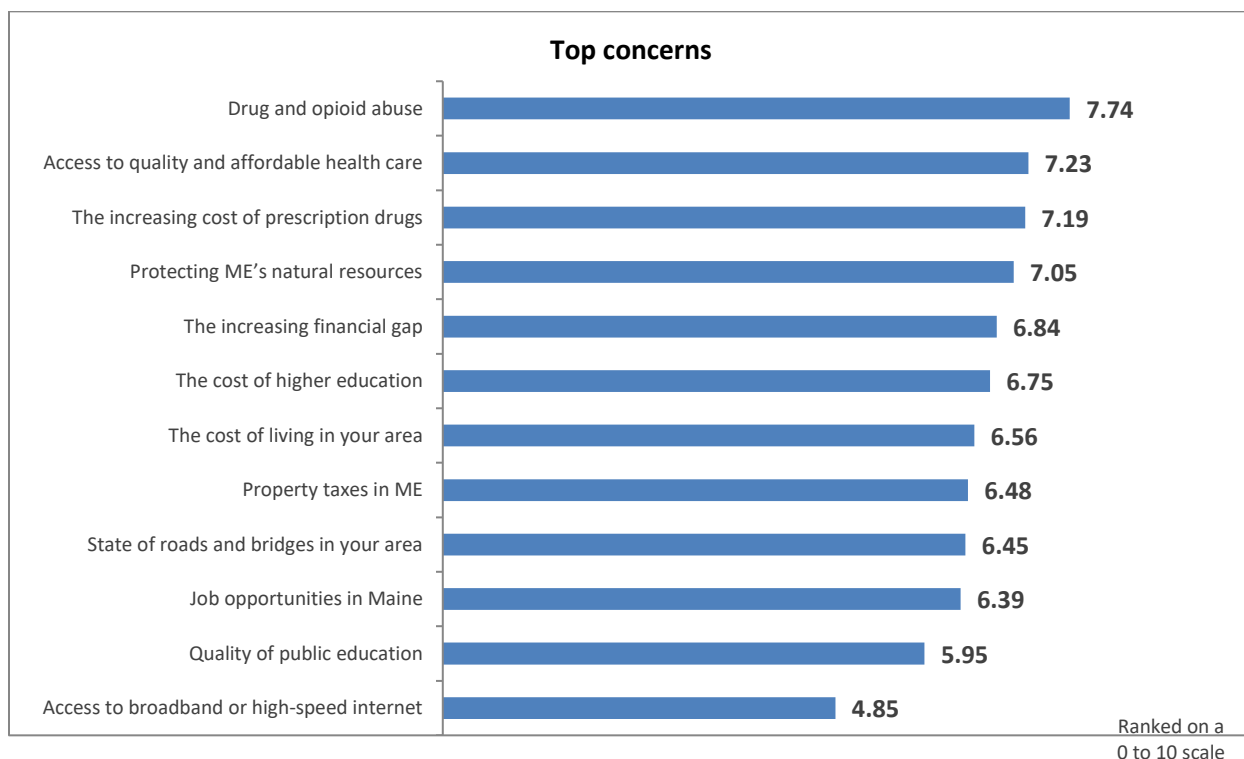


1 600 interviews among adults were conducted from August 27-September 5, 2018 via both internet and phone survey. The results were weighted to ensure proportional responses. The margin of error is  $\pm 4$  percent at the 95% confidence level.



**Key findings on this topic include:**

- When it comes to the state, residents are very concerned about drug and opioid abuse (64%), access to quality and affordable healthcare (57%), and the cost of prescription drugs (54%).
- Non-college women (71%) and residents of the Lake Region<sup>2</sup> (71%) are most concerned about drug and opioid abuse, while college women (63%), Mainers 45-64 (65%), and those in Penobscot (65%) are more concerned about access to affordable healthcare. Among residents in the northern counties<sup>3</sup>, the cost of prescription drugs is the largest concern (66%), more than opioid abuse (62%), and access to affordable healthcare (60%).
- Twenty-one (21) percent of respondents say the economy and jobs or personal finances are the biggest concern keeping them up at night and 50% of those in the northern part of the state and 51% in Penobscot county are very concerned about job opportunities. Additionally, women are more likely to be very concerned about job opportunities than men (46% and 37%, respectively).
- However, a majority (51%) of Mainers are very concerned about the increasing financial gap, particularly non-college women (55%) and college women (57%), York county (59%), the coastal region (53%), and residents 65 and older (56%).
- While a majority of non-college women (55%) and Cumberland County residents (52%) are very concerned about the cost of living in their area, northern residents (50%) are very concerned about property taxes.

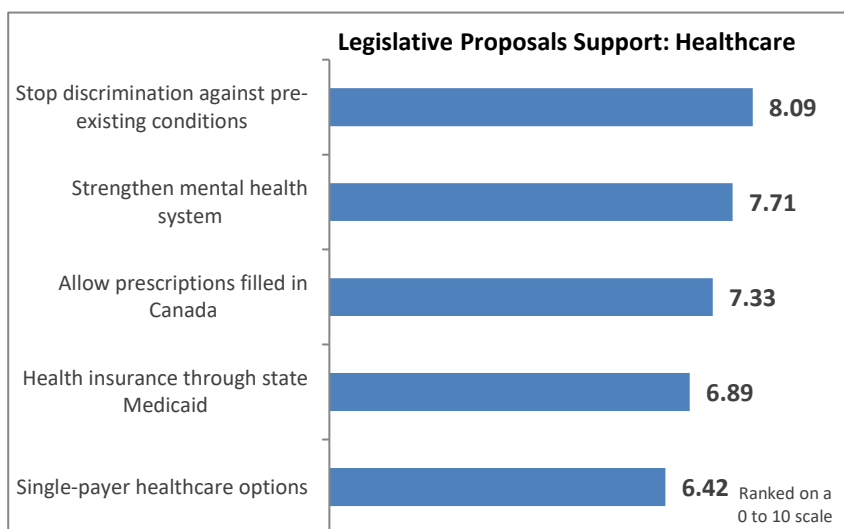
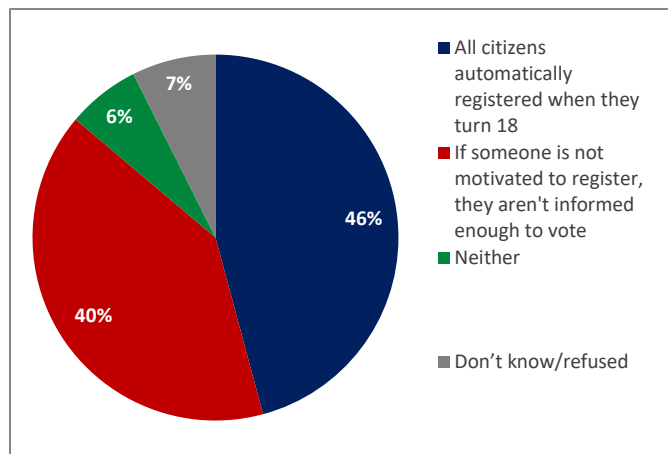
<sup>2</sup> Androscoggin, Franklin, and Oxford counties

<sup>3</sup> Aroostook, Piscataquis, and Somerset counties

- A majority (50%) of Mainers are very concerned about protecting the state's natural resources, particularly non-college men (52%), York and Cumberland counties (54% each), and older Mainers (56%).
- While just over a third of Mainers are concerned about the quality of public education, nearly half of parents (48%) are. College women (55%), residents of York (59%) and Cumberland (53%) counties, and parents (54%) are most concerned about the cost of higher education.

**Mainers are supportive of Automatic Voter Registration as a plurality believe everyone should be automatically registered when they turn 18.** Additionally, two-thirds of residents support a policy that will automatically update a voter's registration when they change their address with a state agency.

- College educated residents (51%) are most supportive of automatically registering all eligible citizens but a plurality of non-college women (44%) are also supportive. Non-college men are more likely to think that if someone isn't motivated to register they aren't informed enough to vote (47%) than all eligible citizens should be registered (38%).
- Residents of Cumberland County (50%), the northern region (50%), York (46%) and Kennebec (46%), and the lake region (45%) are more likely to think everyone should be registered, while those in Penobscot County (48%) and the coastal region (47%) are more likely to lean the other way.
- Younger Mainers are more likely to support automatic voter registration, while Mainers 65 and older are split.



**Given voters' strong concern around healthcare-related issues, it is not surprising that healthcare-related legislation was some of the most popular, including stopping insurance companies from discriminating against people with pre-existing conditions, strengthening the mental health system, allowing prescriptions from Canada, and giving an option for Mainers to**

buy health insurance through the state's Medicaid. The only legislative proposal focusing on healthcare that did not receive a majority support is giving single-payer healthcare options.

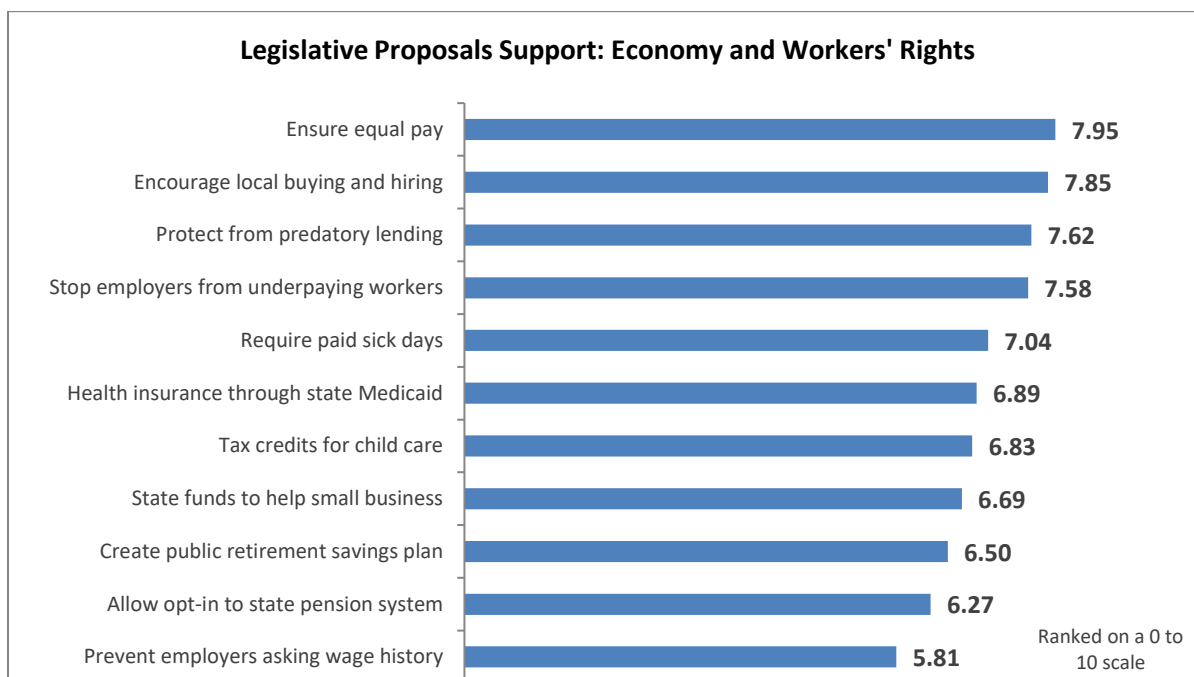
- When asked to rate various legislative proposals, over seven in ten Mainers (72%) strongly support protecting people with pre-existing conditions. Over three-quarters of women, residents of Penobscot and northern counties, and voters over 65 strongly support protecting Mainers with pre-existing conditions.
- More than three in five Mainers (62%) strongly support strengthening the state's mental health system and a majority (57%) support allowing prescriptions to be filled in Canada. Non-college men (65%) and Mainers in the north (67%) are most supportive of filling prescriptions in Canada while college women (69%) and Mainers on the coast<sup>4</sup> (67%) strongly support strengthening the state's mental health system.
- A majority (51%) of Mainers support allowing residents to buy health insurance through the state's Medicaid, including 56% of women and 59% of York County.
- Despite most healthcare proposals receiving strong support among Mainers, residents are not quite ready for a single-payer option in the state, although with 45% strongly supporting the idea it is possible a majority of Mainers could support the idea in the not too distant future. Currently, a majority of college women, York County residents, and Mainers over 65 are supportive of the idea.
- Overall, three in five Mainers (61%) support at least three of the proposed healthcare related legislation. However, a majority of Kennebec County residents (51%) support 2 or fewer.

**The state of the economy and workers' rights in Maine are keeping many up at night and Mainers see easy solutions to help aide the burdens many workers face.** Indeed, legislation ensuring equal pay is the second most popular proposal, right behind stopping discrimination against people with pre-existing conditions. Ensuring equal pay is particularly popular among women, residents in York and Penobscot counties, and with older Mainers. In addition to equal pay, other popular workers protections included stopping employers from withholding pay such as overtime and requiring workers to have the ability to earn paid sick days. Mainers overall need more positive messaging when it comes to other employee-focused proposals such as tax credits for businesses that offer child care, setting aside funds to help Maine small businesses, creating a public retirement savings plan, and allowing Mainers to opt-in to the state's pension system. While these proposals were popular among subsets of Mainers, other groups are more hesitant. Preventing employers from asking about wage history was the lowest testing proposal regardless of topic. Mainers, particularly those in the north, are concerned about job opportunities in their area and are very supportive of encouraging companies to hire Mainers and to buy products made in the state. With personal financial issues a top concern of Mainers, it is not surprising that

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<sup>4</sup> Hancock, Knox, Lincoln, Sagadahoc, Waldo, and Washington counties

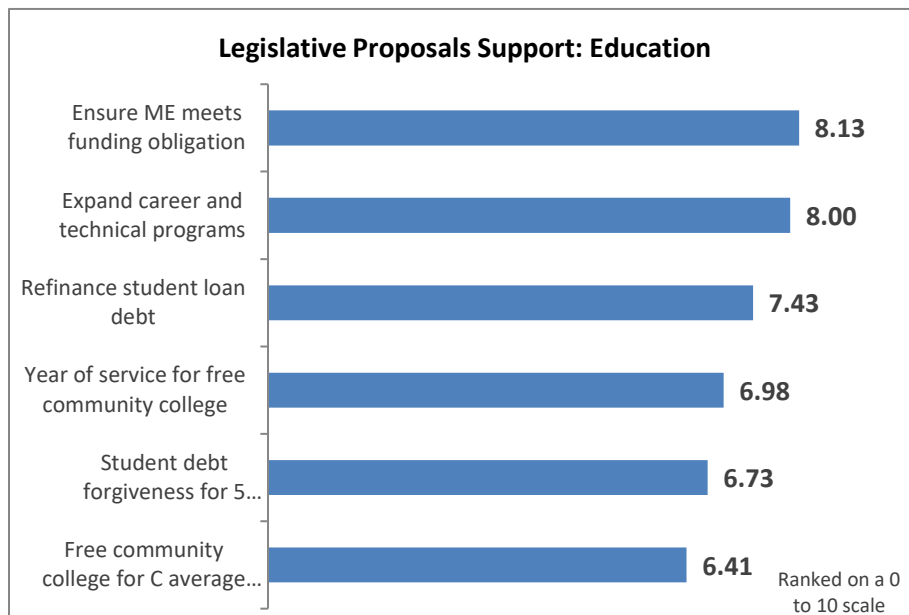
protecting Mainers from predatory lending practices was strongly supported by a majority of Mainers.



- While ensuring equal pay is strong across demographic groups (70% strongly support), non-college women (75%) and Mainers 65 and older (76%) are driving the effort.
- Nearly two-thirds (65%) strongly support stopping employers from keeping workers from getting what they earn, however college men (59%) and residents of Kennebec County (51%) are less receptive to the idea. Similarly, college men (43%), residents of Cumberland (46%) and Kennebec (49%) are less receptive to requiring employers to allow their workers to earn paid sick days than Mainers as a whole (55%).
- While tax credits for businesses that offer childcare is popular among non-college Mainers (50% among men, 48% among women), in Penobscot (52%), and among parents (49%), just 45% of Mainers overall strongly support the idea.
- Similarly, state funds to help small businesses (42%) and creating a public retirement savings plan (45%) are not strongly supported overall with college men and residents of Kennebec are most against the ideas. However, they do have pockets of support among York county residents and with non-college women.
- Three in five (64%) Mainers strongly support encouraging businesses to buy products made in Maine and to hire Mainers, with non-college men (71%), Penobscot residents (71%), and Mainers 65 and older (73%) most supportive. College men (53%) and younger Mainers (53%) are least receptive to the idea.
- Protecting Mainers from predatory lending practices is popular among college women (68%) and residents of Penobscot (72%), however, younger Mainers (52%), residents of Kennebec (52%) and York (56%) counties, and college men (56%) are more hesitant.
- Just 29% of Mainers support three or fewer legislative proposals focused on the economy and jobs.

**Legislative proposals that focus on education issues receive broad support from Mainers, but some groups remain skeptical when it comes to free higher education.** Ensuring the state meets its funding obligation to provide quality education for all public schools is a no brainer for Mainers,

as is expanding the state's Career and Technical Education programs, even among men and residents in Kennebec (who are more supportive of expanding career and technical education programs than funding all public schools). Allowing student loan borrowers to refinance their debts is strongly supported overall, but less than a majority of Kennebec county and Mainers



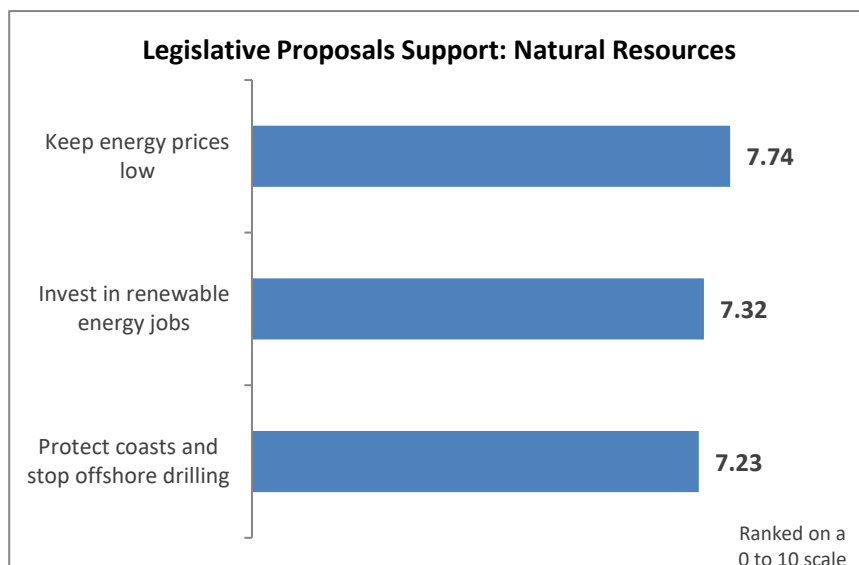
under 45 are strongly supportive of the idea. Similarly, doing a year of community service in exchange for two years for free community college and providing student debt forgiveness for any Mainer who lives and works in the state for at least five years after graduation are strongly supported by a majority of Mainers. However, important cohorts are less supportive. Lastly, free community college for any Mainer who maintains a C average is not supported by a majority of Mainers overall, but has strong support among key groups.

- Seven in ten (70%) Mainers strongly support ensuring the state meets its funding obligation, with college women (75%), northern counties (75%), coastal counties (75%), and Mainers 65 and older (77%) driving the support. Support in Kennebec is softer (58%).
- Similarly, over two-thirds of Mainers (69%) strongly support expanding career and technical education programs in the state with women (71%), northern residents (71%), coastal residents (77%), and older Mainers (76%) driving the support.
- College women (61%), Penobscot (62%), the Coast (62%), and older Mainers (66%) are very supportive of allowing student loan borrowers to refinance their debt, just 47% of Kennebec and 46% of Mainers under 45 support the idea.
- When it comes to free community college for a year of community service and student debt forgiveness for working in the state, a majority of Mainers overall are supportive (55% and 50%, respectively). Kennebec County and college men are not supportive of either idea, while non-college men, Cumberland and coastal counties, and Mainers 45-64 support free community college but not student debt forgiveness. Interestingly, voters in the northern counties are more supportive of student debt forgiveness (65%) than free community college (50%).



- Just a third of college men (34%) strongly support free community college for C average students while a majority of women, Penobscot County, and northern counties support the proposal.
- Overall, a majority (52%) of Mainers strongly support at least four of the six education proposals tested.

**While protecting Maine’s natural resources is residents’ largest concern after healthcare issues, Mainers are split between keeping energy prices low and protecting the environment.** Mainers are most supportive of focusing on keeping energy prices as low as possible and ensuring the country is not dependent on foreign oil sources, with non-college Mainers, Mainers older than 45, and residents of the northern counties driving the support. However, a majority of residents also strongly support increasing investment in renewable energy jobs and doing whatever it takes to protect our coast and the fishing and tourism industry, including stopping offshore drilling.



- There is a deep educational and regional divide when it comes to keeping energy prices low as over seven in ten non-college Mainers and four in five northern residents strongly support keeping energy prices low, while just 48% of college men and 54% of Cumberland County list this as a priority.
- Investing in renewable energy jobs is most important to college women (65%), coastal region (67%), and older Mainers (65%) while less than a majority of college men (46%) and Kennebec residents (47%) strongly support the idea.
- Protecting the coasts, including stopping offshore drilling, is more supported among women than men, although a majority of men do support the proposal. Additionally, coastal counties, York county, and older Mainers are strongly supportive of the idea.

In conclusion, when it comes to progressive legislative priorities for the new year, legislators have many proposals to build a platform around that will garner strong support from their constituents, even the harder to convince cohorts. However, several key ideas will need more work to achieve widespread support, especially if faced with a strong conservative opposition.