

Maine SHRM State Government Affairs Update, Fall 2010

November 10, 2010

Please feel free to contact Sarah Conroy, Maine SHRM State Government Affairs Director with questions on any of this content at seconroy@gmail.com or 207.713.8337. Thank you!

A lot going on for your Government Affairs team as we gear up for a new Congress and a new Maine Legislature with a significantly altered makeup as well as a new Governor and cabinet! As you might imagine, much is unfolding right now so it will be hard to predict exactly what to expect. One thing I hope you will rely on is our biennial **Human Resources Professionals (HRP) Day!** We are already hard at work planning and ask that you plan to save the date of **Wednesday, April 6th** to join us at the Statehouse in Augusta. As we are still planning, we invite your input. If you would like to have a hand in the planning, please contact me at your earliest convenience. We are happy for suggestions as well as helping hands. Stay tuned as the program unfolds so you thank me for making you save that date!

Recent Government Affairs Survey Results

You will recall we conducted a survey of all our members in Maine to see what you would like to see from your Government Affairs Team. We are using your input to help bring you the programs and information you need. Of course your input is welcome at any time, but here is a summary of the survey results from September, 2010:

- *You want a biennial HR Professionals Day.*
- *You have a keener understanding of ability and necessity for HR to get involved in pending legislation.*
- *At HRP day, you:*
 - *Wish to meet legislators, especially on labor committee and regulators as well as some judicial branch representation;*
 - *want a legislative update;*
 - *want to learn more about grassroots advocacy;*
 - *want to meet with legislator about his/her own company's considerations while there.*
- *You might like a local legislative forum, especially to learn more about candidates just before an election.*
- *You are **not** especially interested in Day Inside the Beltway programming*
- *Most respondents have never been to a SHRM sponsored Govt Affairs presentation, half have been to one at the chapter level.*
- *Most respondents have met with at least one of their legislators and want more!*
- *You want help getting legislators at the local level to speak to their chapters.*
- *You want leg updates and talking points on key bills.*
- *You want to follow judicial rulings and regulatory actions.*
- *You'd like some assistance in creating GOTV campaigns.*
- *You REALLY want us to score candidates and legislators on HR issues.*
- *You want grassroots advocacy more than paid lobbying.*
- *You want us to continue partnering with other orgs on issues.*
- *You REALLY want us to help craft legislation that works.*
- *There is more interest in Maine efforts than nationally.*

One More Chance!

You have one more chance to weigh in on the setting of Maine's health reform state exchanges on Monday, November 29 from 10 am to 4pm in Room 216, Cross State Office Building_ (State and Local Government Committee Room).

Or you can listen in at: <http://www.maine.gov/legis/audio/> . All the work of the Joint Select Committee on Healthcare Reform can be found at: <http://www.maine.gov/legis/opla/healthcarereform.htm>

125th Maine Legislature

As we all know by now, Maine's governorship and both houses of the Maine legislature will be controlled by Republicans. For the legislature, the last time this was so was 1974! (Our split Congressional delegation remains

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unchanged.) If you have not already signed up for our legislative update list, please consider doing so at mainelegregupdate@gmail.com (enter "subscribe" in the subject line please). Or better yet, join our *Government Affairs Team* so you can catch a piece of the grassroots action! Please contact Sarah if you wish to join the team.

As of this writing, we know who the Senate leaders will be for Maine, with the election of Senate Secretary and Assistant Secretary expected soon. The House leaders will be determined shortly. The election of Maine's Constitutional Officers will occur on the first day of the session, December 1. The first session of the 125th Maine Legislature is slated to run from December 1, 2010 through June 15, 2011. The Senate leaders are:

Senate President Kevin Raye			
Senate Majority Leader	Jonathan Courtney	Senate Minority Leader	Barry Hobbins
Senate Assistant Majority Leader	Deborah Plowman	Senate Assistant Minority Leader	Justin Alfond

*President-Elect Raye set a very positive tone of bipartisanship and openness in his remarks on Friday, November 5th, which was echoed by Governor-Elect LePage. More on the **transition** can be found at: <http://www.lepagetransition.com/>*

Reapportionment

As you may know, the census results will be released on December 31, 2010 so that both US congressional and state legislative districts may be reapportioned. Because states differ in how they handle reapportionment, it is important to note that Maine's constitution does call for reapportionment to be handled by our legislature. Our Maine Constitution specifies....

...first 3 calendar days after the convening of the Legislature in which apportionment is required. This Commission must develop, in accordance with the requirements of the Constitution, a plan for apportioning the House of Representatives, the Senate, or both. The apportionment plan of the Commission established under this section must be submitted to the Secretary of the Maine Senate (for the Senate apportionment) or the Clerk of the Maine House of Representatives (for the House apportionment) within 120 calendar days after the convening of the Legislature. The Legislature shall enact the submitted plan of the commission or a plan of its own by a vote of 2/3 of the Members of each House, within 30 calendar days after the plan of the Commission is submitted.

In the event that the Legislature fails to make an apportionment within 130 days after convening, the Supreme Judicial Court shall make the apportionment within 60 days following the period in which the Legislature is required to act but fails to do so.

The following link contains more detail on ME reapportionment as well as US House reapportionment for ME, however, ME's Congressional Districts are not expected to shift in this cycle:

<http://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/apport/detailed.htm>

Bills for the 125th Maine Legislature

Well, it has begun. Maine's legislatures typically file close to **2,000 bills** for the first session. Out of these, your Government Affairs Team must track those pertaining to the HR function. We will be waiting a bit for bills to be filed and consolidated before leaping into the fray. Already we expect at least one designed to put unemployed Mainers back to work in the private sector. Rep. Bruce Bickford of District 70 has filed a bill modeled after a similar measure in Utah that involves wage subsidies for each qualified employee hired and retained for three months – \$500 during the first month and \$1,500 after three months of employment. The bill is entitled "**An Act to Establish the Maine Back to Work Program**" and it will be added to our list of bills to track for this legislature.

For more information/ongoing updates, please visit our Maine State Council Government Affairs site at any time <http://tinyurl.com/MaineSHRMLegNews> or consider following our efforts on **Twitter: @mainelyhr**

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Update from SHRM Government Affairs

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January will see the start of the 112th Congress. The SHRM Government Affairs Team did a great job helping us interpret what the recent election means to HR related legislation in the 111th Congress and beyond. I urge you to view the archived webcast using this link (scroll to Government Affairs and select the November 10th archived webcast) <http://www.shrm.org/Communities/VolunteerResources/WebcastArchivesforVolunteerLeaders/Pages/default.aspx>

Items of Note include:

- ENDA, the Paycheck Fairness Act, EFOA and a bill aimed at shifting labor relations among public safety officials will not be taken up in the lame duck session or likely thereafter. An immigration reform bill is also unlikely to be advanced.
- The lame duck session must include work on an appropriations bill since it is already past the statutory deadline and SHRM hopes they will pass a bill to permanently extend Section 127 (tax favored tuition assistance) which is due to sunset on December 31. It will likely be considered among other tax reform measures.

SHRM recommends a look at Representative John Boehner's *Pledge to America* for an idea of what to expect from the Republican controlled House. <http://pledge.gop.gov/resources/library/documents/solutions/pledge-pocket-card.pdf>

Advocacy Team Initiative (A-Team) Update

Maine's District Captains and Member Advocates will be named in early December. In case you missed this important initiative please visit: <http://capwiz.com/shrm/about.html> .

SHRM has also just named the next 10 states in which the A Team program will be rolled out. They are: OR, NV, NM, TX, IL, OH, PA, WV, VA and DE.