

Preti Flaherty's [Maine Legislative Team](#) is happy to provide the below report. We will provide an update upon the conclusion of the 1st Regular Session of the 128th Maine Legislature, likely on August 2nd.

Following extended biennial budget negotiations that led Maine to its first state government shutdown in 26 years, the 128th Legislature met again last week to address bonds and special appropriation bills. The Legislature is scheduled to meet once again next week on August 2nd before adjourning sine die and concluding the business of the 1st Regular Session.

As caucus leadership and Governor LePage bartered over an eventual budget agreement until the early morning hours of July 4, the Legislature was able to run through the vast majority of its workload, meaning that there were very few legislative documents left to address. Those that remained to be dealt with hinged on the contours of an eventual budget, namely bills whose funding would be supported through general obligation bonds or appropriations not directly allocated in the biennium. The Appropriations & Financial Affairs Committee met twice in mid-July to decide which of these would be priorities. Following hearings on a select thirteen bond bills (primarily related to research & development, transportation, and student debt relief) the committee selected three bond packages relative to those areas to put forward to the Legislature. During this same period in mid-July they also “worked” the Special Appropriations Table and killed or tabled many of the dozens of bills that had been placed here for funding. A relative few of the lengthy table list survived this process to be sent to the Legislature.

On July 20, the House and Senate returned for the first time since the conclusion of budget negotiations to vote on these pieces of legislation. Legislative Democrats and Governor LePage were largely in agreement on passing a transportation infrastructure bond, as well as those for research & development commercialization and student debt relief, so while negotiations surrounding them continue the Democratically controlled House has retained possession of these bills. In addition to making a final decision on these bonds and passing a joint order authorizing “carry overs” addressing forthcoming vetoes from Governor LePage will be the primary reason for one final legislative day on August 2nd. LePage is presumed to sign all three bonds into law if presented with them, meaning yet another veto day would not be necessary.

As was character for much of this session, legislative schedules and plans continue to change rapidly, requiring a keen eye to keep abreast of the latest developments. Preti Flaherty's team of legislative experts will continue to closely watch what remains of the 1st Regular Session to bring you the best and most accurate information.