

Representative
VICKI DOUDERA



January 2020

Dear Friend,

We're back in action in Augusta! On Jan. 8, the 129th Legislature returned for our second session, also called the "short session." We have upwards of 650 bills to consider before our adjournment date in April, so there's a lot to be done in a condensed amount of time.

As I've discussed in previous newsletters, last year we wrote new laws to expand health care coverage, reign in the skyrocketing prices of prescription drugs, address climate change, lift up working Maine families, support our schools, improve broadband access and provide meaningful property tax relief. We will push even harder on those topics in the coming months.

Many items on our session to-do list will come from the hard work our many task forces and commissions took up during the off-season. We'll consider recommendations from the Maine Climate Council to help us address the climate crisis and assist Maine communities adapting to the changes we've already seen. We'll consider more sustainable ways to fund transportation projects. We'll look at how we can support the long-term care workforce in Maine, improve criminal justice systems, and amend the Land Claims Settlement Act to increase tribal sovereignty and much more.

Personally, this session I will continue to serve on the Energy, Utilities and Technology Committee where we'll consider topics like expanding access to broadband, supporting solar energy development and managing Maine's water districts. I've also sponsored several bills of my own this session. This includes legislation to protect Maine women undergoing pelvic exams, as well as legislation to modernize the manufacturing of plastic bottles to make sure that they are more environmentally friendly. I'm also cosponsoring several important bills to build up our workforce, explore electric ferries for our islands, and improve access to affordable housing opportunities throughout the state.

Please reach out with any questions you may have. I'm glad to be back at work in Augusta, doing my best to be a strong voice



for all in our community.

Vicki

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Progressive Governance Academy



Last weekend I attended a dynamic workshop in Portland with some of my legislative colleagues as well as municipal officials from different corners of Maine. It was interesting to hear how much we had in common, whether in state or city government.

Track our work and join the conversation

If you'd like more information on what's happening at the State House or would like to add your voice to debates on legislation, the Legislature's website has a number of resources:

- You can find a schedule for public hearings, a great opportunity for you to weigh in on the issues before us, and other meetings here:

<http://legislature.maine.gov/Calendar>

- If you would like to subscribe to email notifications about a particular committee's work, you can sign up here: <https://lists.legislature.maine.gov>

- You can submit testimony on a bill here:

<https://www.mainelegislature.org/testimony/>

- If you would like to listen to a public hearing or work session online, you can do so here: <http://legislature.maine.gov/Audio/>

- On days the House is in session, you can find a livestream of the chamber here: http://legislature.maine.gov/Audio/#house_chamber

And of course, you can always reach out to me with your thoughts and ideas.

Check your mailbox

Last session we approved a bill sponsored by Speaker Sara Gideon to provide direct property tax relief to qualifying homeowners. As a result, 310,000 Mainers are getting \$104 checks in the mail. Visit the [State Treasurer's website](#) to see if you qualify and when our community's checks are being sent.

Nominate an outstanding teacher

It's time to nominate educators for the 2020 County Teacher of the Year awards! If a teacher has made a positive difference in your life, your child's life or our community, you can nominate them to be honored [here](#).

UMaine early college opportunities

Starting Jan. 21, the University of Maine will offer more than 100 [tuition-free](#) online and campus-based (in both Orono and Belfast) spring courses suitable for qualified high school students. Register online [at this link](#).

