

## In This Issue

[Legislative Round-up](#)

[Intern Energy Fuels the MECEP Summer](#)

[MECEP Blogposts](#)

[MECEP in the News](#)

[Donate Now](#)

[Get eNews](#)

## Quote

"Envisioned under a Democratic governor, brought to fruition under a Republican governor, and championed by an independent governor, [Land for Maine's Future] has a remarkable political pedigree. But more important, it is an extraordinary exemplar of our democratic process working at its best."

*Richard B. Anderson and Mark Sullivan, "LePage's LMF moves threaten democratic process." **Portland Press Herald**, June 2, 2015.*

## Facts & Figures

### MECEP "Charts" the Path to Maine's Budget

Throughout the legislature's tax and budget debate, MECEP informed the deliberations often with insightful graphics which helped to compare and contrast various proposals.

### Share of State and Local Taxes Paid by Income Group after Plan Implementation June 16, 2015

Dear MECEP Friend,

The first regular session of the 127th Maine Legislature adjourned *sine die* on July 16, 2015. (If you are not already familiar with the importance of those two words, *sine die*, to the state of our current constitutional discussion, check your favorite print, broadcast, or internet news source.) As you will see below, throughout the session, MECEP was a reliable, trusted, and valued resource to policymakers, the media, and the public. And as the summer progresses, our 2015 interns are churning out important research and information that will be invaluable to our agenda going forward.

## First Session Legislative Round-up

The keystone of each legislature is the biennial budget it enacts during the first session, and advocating for a budget that invests in Maine people is one of our highest



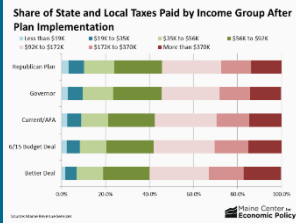
priorities. The two-year state budget for 2015-16 just passed over Governor LePage's veto provides more tax relief for working families than any budget in ten years.

The legislature made the state's Earned Income Tax Credit refundable, meaning low-income working families can receive the full value of their income tax credit even if they have no tax liability. This will increase after-tax earnings for 100,000 working families in Maine by as much as \$9 million per year. The legislature also created a new sales tax fairness credit to alleviate the impact of sales tax increases on working families by providing \$35 million of targeted tax relief per year. Policymakers preserved \$62 million over the two-year budget cycle in municipal revenue sharing funds and expanded the homestead exemption, lowering property taxes for all Mainers. These actions provide more than \$100 million in tax relief to Maine families and will deliver lasting and meaningful change that will benefit working families for years to come.

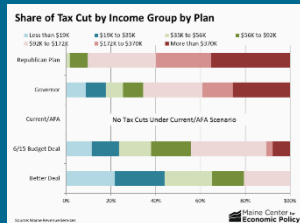
MECEP was a key contributor to the budget negotiations, working behind the scenes to provide information that legislators need and helping to secure a budget that included unprecedented levels of targeted tax relief for low income Mainers and more funding for education, property tax relief, and local services than the governor's budget proposal. MECEP also played a lead role in calling attention to the shortcomings of an alternative tax plan put forward by legislative Republicans.

For more detailed information from MECEP on the budget and tax deliberations, [click here](#).

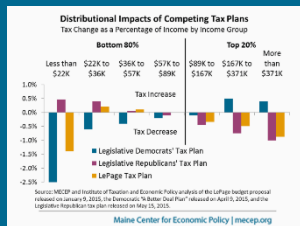
In addition to our efforts on legislation to end abusive lending practices (see below), MECEP provided testimony and informed the debate on scores of bills on a wide array of topics. For a summary of our efforts, [click here](#). To



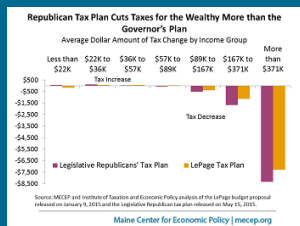
### Share of Tax Cut by Income Group by Plan June 16, 2015



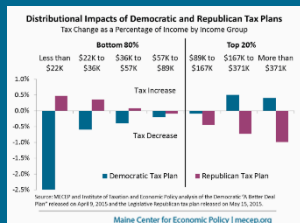
### Distributional Impacts of Competing Tax Plans May 19, 2015



### Republican Tax Plan Cuts Taxes for the Wealthy More Than the Governor's Plan May 19, 2015



### Distributional Impacts of Democratic and Republican Plans May 18, 2015



### What's Wrong with the Governor's Tax Proposal in One Chart April 16, 2015

review all of the testimony MECEP provided during the session, [click here](#),

## Payday Lenders in the Cross-hairs



Abusive practices by unregulated or under-regulated lenders cost consumers in Maine and across the nation billions of dollars and cause them great anxiety. Working with partners like [National People's Action](#) and [Maine People's Alliance](#), MECEP has worked for passage of important state legislation ([L.D.1092, An Act To Prevent Abusive Debt Collection Practices](#)) and [stronger regulation at the federal level](#).

Thank you,  
**U.S. Senator Angus King**  
for supporting strong rules against unscrupulous predatory lending practices  
#StopTheDebtTrap

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Thank you,  
**U.S. Representative Chellie Pingree**  
for supporting strong rules against unscrupulous predatory lending practices  
#StopTheDebtTrap

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## Intern Energy Fuels the MECEP Summer

Once again, MECEP is fortunate to benefit from a group of outstanding college interns. Here is a brief introduction to the members of our 2015 scholars:



**Allisen Haggard**

**Allisen Haggard**, a MECEP 2015 Bowdoin Fellow, is a Government and Legal Studies major and founder and president of the Bowdoin Mock Trial Team. She is from Portland, Oregon. She interned in the Oregon governor's office and with two Oregon members of Congress. Allisen has also volunteered with the Volunteer Lawyer's Project in Maine.

**James Jelin**, also a Bowdoin Fellow, is a Mathematics major. He authors a biweekly column in the *Bowdoin Orient* and is a board member, producer, writer, and director for the Bowdoin Student Theater group. James took a leave of absence from his studies to work as a field organizer on a 2014 Maine U.S. Senate campaign.



**James Jelin**

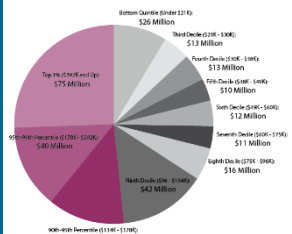


**Liam Mullen**

**Liam Mullen**, is an Economics/ Neuroscience major at Williams College and a graduate of Lincoln Academy in Newcastle, Maine. He has studied at universities in both Spain and Brazil and speaks both Spanish and Portuguese. Liam interned with a Maine gubernatorial campaign in 2013-14.

## MECEP Blogposts

More than Half of Governor LePage's \$292 Million Tax Cut Would Accrue to Maine Families with Annual Incomes over \$134K  
Estimated Share of Net Change in Personal Income, Sales, and Property Taxes in 2019



Note: This analysis does not include estimates of the indirect impacts on local property taxes resulting from other provisions in the governor's budget proposal, including but not limited to a 1/3 funding allocation of state-municipal revenue sharing. This analysis does not include the distributional effects of the governor's proposal to cut corporate income taxes and eliminate the estate tax, nor does it account for a variety of business taxes.  
Source: Maine Revenue Services Office of Tax Policy, "A Distributional Analysis of the Governor's Tax Reform and Relief Proposal" (See Table 7, Column 7)

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Source: [MECEP blog posts April, May, and June 2015](#)

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## Maine Center for Economic Policy Blog

MECEP's blog posts increasingly inform the discussion of issues before the legislature. As the log below shows, our blog output is steady and diverse.

[Bonds: Building blocks for a stronger Maine economy](#) (July 13, 2015)

[New overtime regulation changes are welcome](#) (July 2, 2015)

[Budget deal includes refundable tax credits for low- and moderate-income Mainers](#) (June 30, 2015)

[Legislators can help working families by overriding bonds release bill veto](#) (June 30, 2015)

[Protecting Mainers from unscrupulous debt collectors](#) (June 29, 2015)

[Mainers win in \*King v. Burwell\*](#) (June 26, 2015)

[Retirement crisis: Mainers in part-time and low-wage jobs face living out their retirement years in poverty](#) (June 24, 2015)

[Latest Budget Deal modestly improves Maine's tax system progressivity, future revenue adequacy less certain](#) (June 16, 2015)

[Immigrants: Honesty, not incendiary political rhetoric](#) (June 15, 2015)

[Another tilt at the windmill, more wasted taxpayer funds, but a win for uninsured Maine young people](#) (June 8, 2015)

[A crumbling road is not the route to economic growth](#) (June 4, 2015)

[The one question Republican legislators need to answer](#) (May 22, 2015)

[Where tax fairness is concerned, the legislative Republicans' tax plan is the worst of all](#) (May 19, 2015)

[Everything you need to know about the Democratic and Republican tax plans in one chart](#) (May 18, 2015)

[Republican Tax Plan Gives Huge Tax Breaks to the Wealthy While Raising Taxes for Working Mainers and Seniors](#) (May 15, 2015)

[New Report: Rejecting federal health care funds is costing Maine \\$26.7 million in General Fund savings](#) (May 15, 2015)

### MECEP in the News

Amend Maine's income tax to benefit the middle-class, make Maine's earned income tax credit refundable, raise the minimum wage, accept federal funds to expand health coverage... The Maine media looks to MECEP for data, analysis, and expert commentary on a wide array of issues.



[Spaghetti dinner/minimum wage forum packed with supporters and enthusiasm](#) (**Maine Insights**, July, 2015)

[Portland's new minimum wage law could make waves in other cities](#) (**Bangor Daily News**, July 7, 2015)

[Crucial college grant gets much-needed boost in Maine's new budget \(MECEP op ed\)](#) (**Bangor Daily News**, June 24, 2015)

[Interview about the state budget passed early on June 17](#) (WZON-AM, The Pulse Morning Program, June 17, 2015)

[The New Markets "scam"](#) (**The Beacon** podcast, June 12, 2015)

[Interview about ongoing legislative budget negotiations](#)(WZON-AM The Morning Pulse Program, June 10, 2015)

[Maine Democrats rip GOP leader on forcing state budget standoff](#) (Lewiston **Sun Journal**, June 2, 2015)

[LePage's LMF moves threaten democratic process, former conservation officials say \(MECEP op ed\)](#) (**Portland Press Herald**, June 2, 2015; Augusta **Kennebec Journal** and Waterville **Central Maine Morning Sentinel**, June 3, 2015)

[A Tale of Two Counties \(MECEP op ed\)](#) (Lewiston **Sun Journal**, May 31, 2015)

[Maine lawmakers urged to support convention to overturn Citizens United](#) (Lewiston **Sun Journal** and **Bangor Daily News**, May 28, 2015)

[Interview about legislative Republicans' budget proposal](#)(WVOM-AM/FM, George Hale/Ric Tyler show, May 19, 2015)

[Interview about legislative Republicans' budget proposal](#)(WZON-AM, The Morning Pulse Program, May 18, 2015)

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**Sincerely,**

Mark Sullivan  
Maine Center for Economic Policy