



Media Alert: For Immediate Release
October 25, 2012
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Maine Mayors Express Support for Bonds *Urge Public Support on November 6*

AUBURN – The Mayors’ Coalition on Jobs and Economic Development expressed strong support today for bond measures that will provide investment in transportation, water and wastewater systems, and higher education.

The Mayors have expressed their support for and are urging a Yes vote on three bond measures on the ballot November 6th: the Higher Education Bond (Question #2), the Transportation Bond (Question #4), and the Water/Wastewater Bond (Question #5).

“Transportation infrastructure is a key to economic development,” stated Auburn Mayor Jonathan LaBonté. “Auburn and Lewiston, and much of western Maine, benefit greatly from the intersection of roads, rail, and aviation in our community. This location is fundamental to the region’s economy and the distribution and industrial sectors, but many of these facilities in the Lewiston- Auburn area are in need of improvement or expansion to accommodate growth. Bond Question #4, including the matching funds, will generate over \$150 million in transportation improvements. This includes funding for upgrades to Maine’s roads, rail and aviation facilities, like the Auburn intermodal facility and Auburn-Lewiston Municipal Airport.”

“Infrastructure improvements will also generate good paying jobs for Maine’s struggling construction industry,” commented Lewiston Mayor Bob Macdonald. “These bonds represent reasonable investments that will provide benefits over both the short and long term.”

The Water/Wastewater Bond (Question #5) will provide \$7.95 million, to be matched by nearly \$40 million in federal funds, a 5:1 match. “Question 5 will support improvements to water and wastewater systems, providing safe drinking water and protecting all Maine waterways from pollution,” noted Westbrook Mayor Colleen Hilton. “Public water and sewer are among the requirements sought by new or expanded businesses. This is a win for Maine’s economy and its environment. “

The Higher Education Bond, Question #2, will generate \$11.3 million for the University of Maine System, the Maine Community College System, and the Maine Maritime Academy.

“A skilled workforce is essential to a growing economy, and the Mayors have made workforce development a priority,” said Bangor Mayor Cary Weston. “Bangor sees firsthand the economic benefits from a strong University and Community College presence. The Mayors are especially pleased by the funding dedicated to expanded precision manufacturing programs. A number of Maine’s best employers, including BIW and Pratt & Whitney, require more skilled machinists.”

“The members of the Mayors’ Coalition, Democrats and Republicans from around the state, are united in support of these proposals. We urge the public to vote YES on Questions 2, 4 and 5,” concluded Michael Brennan, the Mayor of Portland.

The bi-partisan Mayors’ Coalition was formed to support state policies that will grow Maine’s economy and to oppose policies that will shift costs to Maine municipalities. The Coalition includes the Mayors from ten Communities: Auburn, Augusta, Bangor, Biddeford, Lewiston, Portland, Saco, South Portland, Waterville, and Westbrook.

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