

# Maine Climate Action Plan

## Acadia Center Response/News Release



On December 1, 2020, the Maine Climate Council released its report, “Maine Won’t Wait, A Plan for Climate Action,” to Governor Janet Mills. Action now turns to the Governor and legislature to transition the Plan’s priorities and strategies into legislative and regulatory initiatives.

“The opportunities and vision Maine’s Climate Action Plan lays out will be a catalyst to securing a future for Maine that improves public health, transportation sources, benefits consumers and reduces pollution while building jobs,” said Daniel L. Sosland, President of Acadia Center. “Acadia Center looks forward to being part of its implementation.”

The Climate Action Plan confronts the extreme impacts of climate change on public health, Maine’s coastal communities, fishing and marine industries, forests, and low-income and other vulnerable populations. Jeff Marks, Acadia Center’s Senior Policy Advocate and Maine Director said, “This Plan represents the most significant and comprehensive effort to map out the actions that are needed to reduce climate pollution and create new jobs as part of the transition to a clean energy economy. It sets out strategies based on scientific assessments of the reduction levels needed to help guard our economy, people, and environment from severe impacts of climate change.”

The final Climate Action Plan includes substantial increases in electric vehicles and residential heat pumps, additional support for renewable energy projects, and assistance to improve community resilience. There are also strong recommendations to protect natural and working lands across the state, which absorb carbon from the atmosphere; deploy high-speed broadband to 95% of Maine homes by 2025 and 99% by 2030; increase weatherization, especially for low-income and rural households; phase in modern, energy efficient building codes to reach net zero carbon emissions for new construction by 2035 and incorporate mass timber and wood-fiber insulation into new building structures; procure clean energy supply with specific development targets for offshore wind, smaller distributed energy resources, and energy storage; minimize environmental and community impacts of renewable siting by focusing on early engagement with key stakeholders and the public; and marry Maine’s natural resources and cleantech workforce and innovation to create and maintain good-paying, sustainable jobs.

The Plan will not be successful without a political and financial commitment to implement its strategies. The federal government will also need to step up to support states like Maine in investing in clean energy, a modern transportation system, and resilient infrastructure. While the Plan has gaps, especially in its limited support of a regional Transportation & Climate Initiative (TCI) we believe this

blueprint will lead to significantly lower greenhouse gas levels, and importantly, a diversity of opportunities for a diversity of Mainers.

With the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic, the economy, and the transition to a more climate-friendly U.S. President, it is particularly critical now that the final Climate Action Plan spurs robust, sustainable, and equitable solutions for the economic, energy, and environmental benefit of all Mainers. Jeff Marks said, “We appreciate Governor Janet Mills and the Members of the Maine Climate Council for their commitment to seeing this important process through in such challenging times.”

*Acadia Center is regionally focused, non-profit organization headquartered in Rockport, Maine, working to advance a clean energy, climate safe future that benefits all.*