

*Preble Street's mission is to provide accessible, barrier-free services to empower people experiencing problems with homelessness, housing, hunger, and poverty, and to advocate for solutions to these problems.*

In the short session of the 132nd Maine Legislature (January-April 2026), **Preble Street will remain steadfast in its advocacy on behalf of Mainers struggling with hunger and homelessness.** We are focused on highlighting the critical need for increased funding to support individuals and families experiencing homelessness and those facing housing emergencies. Our work will also prioritize reducing the harm of recent federal cuts to food security programs, emergency shelters, and anti-trafficking services.

## Keep emergency shelters open

Maine's emergency shelter system is facing a funding crisis because of rising operational costs. Most shelters are full every night but are struggling to keep their doors open and provide high-quality support and service to people in need. In the last session, we secured one-time funding of approximately \$4.5 million to support emergency shelter operations. While this provided temporary relief to many emergency shelter providers allowing them to keep people sheltered and safe, this funding is not a long-term solution for a healthy and sustainable emergency shelter system. This session, we will advocate for a **permanent increase in shelter funding to keep life-saving shelter beds open** and to increase the state's financial contribution for this vital healthcare resource.

### Corresponding legislation

- LD 2124, An Act to Support Emergency Shelter Funding Using Revenue from the Real Estate Transfer Tax, Sponsored by Representative Drew Gattine (D – Westbrook): *This bill would use revenue from the Real Estate Transfer Tax to help cover the operational costs of emergency shelters.*

## Support survivors of human trafficking

There is a significant gap in federal funding for Maine's only anti-trafficking program assisting adult survivors of sex trafficking. Without this funding, hundreds of survivors across Maine will have fewer options for exiting their trafficking situations and meeting their basic needs. Preble Street is advocating for state funds to fill this urgent need and **provide survivors with the resources they need to reclaim their lives.**

### Corresponding legislation

- LD 2136, An Act to Support Victims of Trafficking in Maine in Response to Federal Funding Cuts, Sponsored by Senator Tim Nangle (D – Cumberland): *This bill provides one-time funding of \$317,000 to support survivors of human trafficking.*

## End Veteran homelessness in Maine

Nearly 200 Veterans in Maine are currently experiencing homelessness. **Landlord engagement has been a key part of moving Veterans into housing**, including providing landlords with financial incentives when they rent to Veterans.

### Corresponding legislation

- LD 2135, An Act to Provide Funding to Keep Maine Veterans Housed, Sponsored by Senator Tim Nangle (D – Cumberland): *This bill would provide one-time funding of \$90,000 to support Veterans in remaining housed.*

## Prevent homelessness

Providing **one-time financial support to individuals and families facing a housing emergency** is one of the most cost-effective ways to prevent people from experiencing homelessness. This financial support is known as diversion funding. In 2025, **Preble Street's Rapid Re-Housing team served 59 households with just \$120,000 in total diversion funding, helping 100% of them to remain housed** and avoid entering the homeless services system. However, demand for this kind of intervention remains incredibly high, and Preble Street's team often exhausts available funding within the first three to four months of the year. By increasing investment in diversion funding, Maine can save money and support individuals and families in maintaining housing stability.

### Corresponding legislation

- LD 641, An Act to Support Diversion Efforts to Prevent Homelessness in Maine, Sponsored by Representative Marc Mallon (D – Biddeford): *This bill provides one-time funding to the Housing Problem Solving Fund.*

## Address food insecurity

Rising grocery prices and cuts to federal nutrition programs have left many Mainers without adequate access to food. This session, we will be supporting a range of bills intended to **improve Maine's response to food insecurity** and expand the state's ability to respond to future disruptions in federal funding.

### Corresponding legislation

- LD 415, An Act to Support Hunger Prevention in Maine, Sponsored by Representative Anne Graham (D – North Yarmouth): *This bill would provide an additional \$1 million annually to nonprofit organizations that provide statewide hunger relief services.*
- LD 2040, An Act to Survey Food Insecurity in Maine, Sponsored by Representative Bill Pluecker (I – Warren): *This bill would direct the state to conduct an annual survey of food insecurity due to the USDA discontinuing the national report.*
- LD 2051, An Act to Ensure Access to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program in Maine, Sponsored by Representative Bill Pluecker (I – Warren): *This bill clarifies the definition of “non-citizen legally admitted to the United States” in state statute for food assistance benefits.*
- LD 2122, An Act to Prevent Negative Impacts from Federal Funding Changes to and Fund Eligibility Determinations and Outreach for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Sponsored by Representative Ryan Fecteau (D – Biddeford): *This bill creates a 3-month contingency fund to prevent disruption of SNAP benefits to recipients in case of federal delays. It also provides funding to improve SNAP outreach and income verification.*