

From Eliot Cutler's Facebook page:

Energy & Environment

When Eliot helped Senator Ed Muskie craft the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts, Muskie emphasized that Maine need not sacrifice jobs for a clean and healthy environment. He taught us that we don't need to choose between payrolls and pickerel. That's still sound thinking.

Maine is a place of unrivaled natural beauty. Our state also can be a place of boundless opportunity – but only if we protect our environment, minimize environmental threats to the health of our citizens, and build our renewable energy generation portfolio.

New energy solutions can help meet our economic goals *and* protect the environment. If we capitalize on this opportunity, extending Ed Muskie's legacy, we can once again make Maine a great place to live *and* a great place to make a living.

Imagine a different and better approach to governing. Imagine a state where government's decisions are made based on evidence, not ideology. Imagine a state where dramatic advances in science complement Maine's natural competitive advantages. Imagine a state that emerges as a magnet for the best new businesses, the most innovative and skilled employees and the finest cutting-edge manufacturers—while conserving and sustaining the natural environment we cherish.

This is the moment for Maine.

Here's how the Cutler Administration will pursue these extraordinary opportunities:

Rebuild the DEP to Meet Today's Environmental Challenges

The Cutler Administration will rebuild and strengthen Maine's Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), restoring its integrity and funding and providing the department with the staffing levels, competence, expertise and leadership that it needs to discharge its responsibilities. We will modernize an often-cumbersome review process, improve the predictability of environmental regulation in Maine, and encourage more environmentally sound development and investment in Maine by transforming the citizen *Board* of Environmental Protection into a professional, adequately staffed, three-judge court of first-stage appellate review.

As Associate Director of the White House Office of Management and Budget, Eliot led the effort to restore funding and personnel to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency after it was weakened dramatically during the Nixon and Ford Administrations, and he will apply those skills in the similar circumstances now apparent at the Maine DEP.

Moreover, because Eliot is an independent, he will be able to select the most qualified individuals for key positions of responsibility, regardless of political affiliation. He will find the most qualified people to lead the DEP, and he will support them in their work to protect Maine's public health and environment.

Among the priorities for the Cutler Administration's DEP will be these:

- Implement Maine's Kids Safe Products Act, which was adopted with bipartisan support in 2008, but has been stalled in its implementation by the LePage Administration.

- Promulgate mining regulations that strengthen the Aroostook County economy while protecting the County's water and land resources through rules that will permit minerals extraction by mining companies that make enforceable, long-term commitments to protecting Maine's environment.
- Increase protection of inland waterways and lakes through oversight of municipal water systems, attention to problematic stormwater runoff, and support for local associations that safeguard the quality of our lakes.
- Assist Maine's towns and cities in coming to grips with the monumental financial challenges of rebuilding or replacing aging sewer systems, separating sanitary and storm sewers, building new treatment works and dealing with urban and rural runoff.
- Defend and enforce federal regulations that protect Maine from upwind emissions of greenhouse gases, ozone precursors, particulates and toxics.

Reduce Carbon Emissions from Transportation

Climate change is real, and human activity is its chief cause. The greatest environmental challenge of our time, global warming portends massive effects on our public health and our way of life. The next governor of Maine needs to acknowledge the facts about climate change and lead Maine people to limit and mitigate its impacts.

Maine's economy – including our Gulf of Maine fisheries, forest products, farms and four-season tourism – depends on the quality of our water, our coastal resources and communities, our wildlife habitats and our infrastructure. All these resources are threatened by rising sea levels, rising water temperatures, ocean acidification and changes to our habit including our flora and fauna.

Maine's transportation sector is our largest single source of both liquid fuels consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, so powering cars and trucks with lower-carbon alternatives such as electricity from solar or other renewable energy sources sustainably-produced biofuels and other clean fuels will preserve our health, clean our environment and strengthen our economy. By being vigilant and forward-looking, state leaders can protect the region from dirtier fuels and put us on a more sustainable path.

By taking the following steps, the Cutler Administration will place at the top of its environmental agenda the reduction of carbon dioxide emissions – both in Maine and in neighboring states and provinces:

- Develop in cooperation with northeast states and Canadian provinces a regional Clean Fuels Standard and market-based incentives to gradually reduce the carbon intensity of transportation fuel use and resulting carbon emissions.
- Join the multi-state effort to increase the number of zero-emission vehicles to 15% of all new cars sold by 2025, develop shared standards for electric charging stations, and shape new policies that will make it easier to build and use charging stations.
- Procure increased numbers of energy-efficient state fleet vehicles.
- Encourage more efficient forms of transportation – including rail, buses, carpooling, commuter lanes, and bicycling and sidewalks –where it is cost-effective to do so.
- Collaborate with Maine communities to better coordinate state transportation policies and local landscape and zoning policies in order to combat sprawl, which contributes to increased carbon emissions, drives up the cost of public services, weakens communities and makes our state a less attractive destination for visitors.

Develop Renewable Energy Sources

Reducing Maine's dependence on fossil fuels and reducing energy costs are critical goals for Maine's future. Towards these goals, the Cutler Administration will:

- Re-double Maine's efforts at conservation and energy efficiency, starting with a comprehensive review of existing programs and incentives, including smart grid technologies, new rate structure designs and diversified energy sources for Maine homes and businesses.
- Consider new incentives that can spur development of energy storage technologies and distributed energy generation from onshore and offshore wind, biomass, biofuels, geothermal, tidal and solar resources.
- Support regional efforts for investment in increased pipeline capacity for to deliver natural gas to Maine and the rest of New England.
- Jumpstart the introduction of natural gas into more Maine communities as a lower cost bridge fuel between higher carbon fossil fuels and cleaner renewable energy sources, helping more Maine communities attract and maintain employers.

Create the Maine Energy Finance Authority

Maine should make sound public investments in the energy sector in order to both restore economic activity across Maine and spur the wider development of renewable, distributed generation.

The Cutler Administration will establish the Maine Energy Finance Authority (MEFA) within the Finance Authority of Maine (FAME) – not in a separate new bureaucracy – to provide low-cost capital for 21st-century energy projects that promise to make energy more affordable for citizens and businesses.

Through low-interest, tax-exempt financing and public-private partnerships, MEFA will encourage investment in renewable energy resources and help construct needed energy infrastructure, including expanded natural gas pipeline capacity for industrial and commercial users and communities in Maine.

In circumstances where high energy prices might discourage a company from locating in Maine or increasing existing activity and employment, MEFA financing or contracting will be able to facilitate investments in cost-effective distributed generation or cogeneration options at large industrial or commercial facilities. This could hasten the development or expansion of a lumber mill or wood products manufacturer in Penobscot County or a high-tech manufacturing facility in Cumberland County. In communities where access to a lower-cost energy source, such as natural gas, could transform the region's economic prospects, MEFA will be able to finance or co-finance energy infrastructure improvements that target job growth.

Make Government Work Better

Innovation and investment in Maine's energy infrastructure needs to be supported by a fair, predictable and efficient regulatory process that will help move this agenda forward while meeting our tough environmental standards.

As Maine people and businesses invest in new technologies that will save energy, reduce emissions and create jobs, the last thing we should do is put unnecessary roadblocks and delays in their way. The rules need to be clear, and state regulators and inspectors must have the knowledge and training to make informed and timely decisions.

The Cutler Administration will make government a reliable partner in our efforts to improve Maine's energy infrastructure, reduce our carbon emissions and maintain our precious environment. Here are some of the measures we will take to do that:

- Undertake a comprehensive study to identify the most serious long-term risks posed to Maine residents, communities and businesses by climate change, develop a statewide plan to mitigate those risks and to take advantage of any opportunities for Maine—such as increased use of our ports—that will emerge as a result of climate change.
- Eliminate or modify regulations that cause unnecessary costs, delays and uncertainties and deter investment in clean, cost-effective energy projects.
- Implement a Dig Once policy requiring the Public Utilities Commission and the Department of Transportation to consider whether road or utility construction affords an opportunity to bury conduits for services such as fiber optic cables, permitting us to meet our transportation, communications, and energy challenges more efficiently and cost effectively.
- Put in place a new Buy Once policy requiring that whenever the State of Maine purchases certain categories of goods or services, the vendor will make the same price for the same goods or services available within a reasonable period of time to any unit of local government in the state that also wants to purchase the same goods and services. Better leveraging the state's buying power, particularly in cases where the costs of new technologies remain relatively high, will help drive down costs and expand access to those technologies.

Make Plans That Leverage Maine's Natural Assets

To pay for all the things we want and need to do in Maine – protect our natural resources, maintain our parks and recreation areas, invest in education, develop new energy sources – we must have economic growth that is fully consistent with our environmental goals. Indeed, Maine's most important competitive advantages are our magnificent natural resources. That's Ed Muskie's most enduring legacy: Good jobs and the extraordinary quality of Maine's natural environment can and must coexist.

Maine is one interdependent community, with merely 1,300,000 of us responsible for a vast piece of extraordinary real estate. If opportunities aren't available for people of all ages in all parts of Maine, the entire Maine community will suffer. A fundamental responsibility of Maine's next governor will be accelerating economic activity in Maine counties where it has lagged for decades, where prosperity has vanished and towns have lost population.

Certain traditional industries in Maine – papermaking is a good example – should continue to add value to our natural resources and generate exports for our economy and incomes for Maine citizens, but as more and more sophisticated technology is introduced and as productivity increases, employment will never again reach earlier levels.

Yet, these daunting challenges often hide great opportunities. The very same resources that have sustained and supported many of Maine's traditional industries – the North Woods, our rivers and the Gulf of Maine, the western mountains, and our arable lands and abundant water supplies – also sustain and support Maine's dominant tourist economy and can fuel new economic growth in that sector and others.

The Katahdin Region is a perfect example of a place where boundless prospects hide behind the challenges facing the Region's traditional economy. In recent decades the Region has suffered from dramatic job loss, industrial flight and a precipitous decline in homeowner property values. Stearns High School in Millinocket,

the Magic City, once was a Class A basketball powerhouse that won the New England championship; Stearns teams today compete in Class D. Yet, nowhere in Maine do the potential benefits of renewable energy and the rich promise of a flourishing natural environment come together with more possibility and potential than here.

As governor, Eliot has promised to personally apply his own skills and experience in the Katahdin Region to assist area residents and communities in crafting an economic development plan that capitalizes on the Region's natural riches, while protecting and celebrating its recreational wonders; that harnesses available low-cost energy from the hydroelectric dams on the mighty Penobscot River to spark new centers of manufacturing and new economic activity; and that advances the Region's enormous tourism and recreational potential through branded development, including a possible new state or national park and recreation area.

In the Katahdin Region and throughout the State of Maine we need to stop looking for our future in the rearview mirror. Challenges and opportunities that mirror those found in the Katahdin Region exist throughout rural Maine. With an open mind, a willingness to innovate, and with our gaze fixed on the road ahead, the Cutler Administration will lead Mainers in efforts to balance preservation and use, to protect Maine's natural resources and to harness Maine's competitive advantages in pursuit of a more prosperous future.

http://www.cutlerformaine.com/issues_environment#sthash.9N1x0Nev.dpbs