



Civil Rights and Ending Discrimination

The Maine Women's Lobby is committed to working against discrimination in any form and to promoting the contributions of women and girls in all areas of society.

Highlights of Legislative Achievements 1978-Present

- 1981 Legislation to ban discrimination based on sexual orientation advanced.**
The Maine Women's Lobby joined the struggle to pass legislation banning discrimination based on sexual orientation. A bill was finally passed by the legislature in 1993 and vetoed by Governor McKernan. It passed again in 1997, was signed by the Governor, but overturned by a "People's Veto" in 1998. In 2005, discrimination was banned once and for all by popular vote.
- 1983 Maine Education Equity Act enacted.**
Maine Women's Lobby won State enforcement of Title XI Regulations through the Maine Human Rights Commission.
- 1991 Passage of An Act to Prohibit Educational Discrimination.**
Maine Women's Lobby led effort to correct an omission in the Maine Human Rights Act to prohibit discrimination in education by adding race as a protected category.
- 2000 Passage of An Act Concerning Offensive Names.**
The Maine Women's Lobby supported efforts by Native American women to pass legislation adding the word "squaw" to the list of offensive names prohibited by the State to designate place names.
- 2004 Domestic partners inheritance bill provides family security.**
The law extended inheritance rights, next-of-kin status, victim's compensation, and guardian and conservator rights to domestic partners in Maine through a statewide domestic partnership registry.
- 2005 Passage of anti-discrimination bill.**
The Maine Women's Lobby worked with allies to successfully pass a law prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity in housing, credit, education, and employment, and to win passage of this referendum at the polls.
- 2007 Maine's Family Medical Leave Law expanded to include domestic partners.**
The Maine Women's Lobby successfully worked to add domestic partners and their children to the list of family members for which an employee may use family and medical leave.