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# **KNOX**DEMS

KNOX COUNTY MAINE DEMOCRATS  
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## **KNOX COUNTY DEMOCRATIC COMMITTEE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER MAY 1, 2023 (No. 13)**



### **FOCUS ON THE NOVEMBER BALLOT**

Third in the KCDC series providing resources on upcoming ballot initiatives.

***“An Act Regarding Automotive Right to Repair”***

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repair vehicles. In the absence of the Legislature taking action on the legislation, the initiative will be decided by voters in the Fall election.

The proponents, spearheaded by the Maine Right to Repair Coalition, argue that independent repair shops and consumers should have access to the same data that is transmitted to manufacturers and dealerships.

The opponents, largely represented by the trade group lobby Alliance for Automotive Innovation (AAI), claim that the data is already available to independent repair shops and consumers through a memorandum of understanding (MOU) that was drafted by manufacturers. A MOU conveys intent, although it is not legally binding.

“Right to Repair” initiatives or legislation have appeared in more than 40 states as of this year. Voters in Massachusetts approved a right to repair law in 2020, which was subsequently challenged in court by the AAI. The Massachusetts attorney general announced on March 8, 2023, that the law would go into effect June 1.

### ***Background Media Articles***

‘Right to Repair’ Question Qualifies for Maine’s Fall Ballot

<https://www.mainepublic.org/politics/2023-02-21/right-to-repair-question-qualifies-for-maines-fall-ballot>

Maine "Right to Repair Law" Vehicle Data Access Requirement Initiative (2023)

[https://ballotpedia.org/Maine\\_%22Right\\_to\\_Repair\\_Law%22\\_Vehicle\\_Data\\_Access\\_Requirement\\_Initiative\\_\(2023\)](https://ballotpedia.org/Maine_%22Right_to_Repair_Law%22_Vehicle_Data_Access_Requirement_Initiative_(2023))

A Massachusetts law protects the right to repair your own car. Automakers are suing.

<https://grist.org/transportation/a-massachusetts-law-protects-the-right-to-repair-your-own-car-automakers-are-suing/>

### ***Proponent Information***

*Maine Right to Repair Coalition:*

<https://mainerrighttorepair.org>

### ***Opponent Information***

Alliance for Automotive Innovation:

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## Maine Secretary of State Resources

Draft Legislation & Proponent Information

<https://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/citizens/index.html>

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### **KNOX COUNTY DEMOCRATS TO WELCOME SPEAKERS FROM MIDCOAST REGIONAL HOUSING TRUST AT MAY 9, 2023 MEETING**

KCDC will hold its next meeting on Tuesday, May 9, at 6pm, via Zoom.

The featured speakers will be Dr. Robert Wasserstrom and Susan Reider, Board Member and Community Advisor, respectively, of the MidCoast Regional Housing Trust (MCRHT). Their presentation will be followed by a Q & A session. Founded in 2022, MCRHT is a nonprofit organization committed to developing and stewarding permanent year-round workforce housing in Knox County and neighboring towns. It envisions "vibrant communities of economically diverse residents who want to live, work and retire in the region".

KCDC has also invited our Knox County legislators to provide updates on the current legislative session and their priority bills.

All Knox County Democrats and unenrolled progressives are welcome to attend KCDC meetings.

Pre-registration is required in order to receive the Zoom login and/or phone-in details. Register at <https://forms.gle/SX4Qf5nYDByEdMdU7> before Noon the day of the meeting to ensure access, or email [knoxdems@gmail.com](mailto:knoxdems@gmail.com). KCDC will do its best to accommodate last-minute registrations.

Information about the KCDC, its meetings and other activities may be found at <https://www.knoxmainedemocrats.org/> or <https://www.facebook.com/knoxmainedems>.

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**A DAY AT THE STATE CAPITAL, By Linda Souers, Friendship**

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April 3, 2023 was the day for a public hearing on proposed legislation concerning firearms. All public hearings are available as live video at <https://legislature.maine.gov/Calendar>. However, I attended the hearing in person to support our local legislators and the organization “Mom’s Demand Action for Gun Sense in America” <https://momsdemandaction.org/>. As a relatively recent full time resident in Maine, it was my first visit to the Capitol in Augusta, and provided insight into an important slice of public participation during the legislative session.



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**Photo: Giving Testimony - Kevin Joyce, Sheriff of Cumberland County, Maine Sheriff's Association.** Photo by Linda Souers

The Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety is comprised of three Senators (2 Democrats & 1 Republican) and 10 House Representatives (6 Democrats & 4 Republicans), with our own Knox County Sen. Pinny Beebe-Center as Co-Chair. On this day, three bills were presented for public comment; LD 22 “An Act to Impede the Transfer of Firearms to Prohibited Persons”, LD 60 “An Act to Require a 72-hour Waiting Period After the Sale of a Firearm”, and LD 168 “An Act Regarding Criminal Background Checks for the Sale, Transfer or Exchange of Firearms”. Sen. Beebe-Center of Knox Co. and Rep. Doudera of Camden are cosponsors of LD 22. All three bills are sponsored solely by Democrats.

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**Photo: Sen. Anne "Pinny" Beebe-Center (District 12), Committee Co-chair. Photo by Linda Souers**



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I was amazed to see that the public hearing, which drew a large crowd given the subject matter, was held in a room with seating for only about 30 members of the public, rm. 436 in the State House. Other visitors were invited to stay in the side rooms equipped with video links. Persons who had registered to speak on one or more of the bills were called in turn to the podium in front of the committee.

About 80 or more people provided testimonials, for or against passage of the bills. Committee members asked questions of each person if so desired. As you can imagine, the opinions on all sides of the issues were strongly expressed and impactful.

Visitors encouraging passage of bills to increase public health, welfare & safety were countered by those visitors opposing any new measures that may further restrict firearm use and ownership. Testimonials for the hearing on April 3 may be read at <https://legislature.maine.gov/committee/#Committees/CJPS>.

These three bills have not received any further action or moved out of committee as of this writing.

I encourage everyone to follow legislation for any reason that you find meaningful. This is why we vote to send representatives to our Maine State House. They need and deserve our input and participation. <https://legislature.maine.gov/>

Form to submit testimony via Zoom on a bill. <https://www.mainelegislature.org/testimony/>

Archived video of April 3, 2023, 1:00pm Public Hearing, Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety. [https://sg001-harmony.sliq.net/00281/Harmony/en/PowerBrowser/PowerBrowserV2?viewMode=3&fk=88064&mediaStartTime=20230403130000&#info\\_](https://sg001-harmony.sliq.net/00281/Harmony/en/PowerBrowser/PowerBrowserV2?viewMode=3&fk=88064&mediaStartTime=20230403130000&#info_)

Texts of the legislative documents:

LD 22: <https://legislature.maine.gov/bills/getPDF.asp?paper=SP0014&item=1&snum=131>

LD 60: <https://legislature.maine.gov/legis/bills/getPDF.asp?paper=HP0035&item=1&snum=131>

LD 168: <https://legislature.maine.gov/legis/bills/getPDF.asp?paper=HP0109&item=1&snum=131>

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**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MAINE**  
**2023 GUIDE TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN MAINE IS NOW AVAILABLE**

The League of Women Voters of Maine has recently released its 2023 edition of its *Guide*

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## YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN KNOX COUNTY!

KCDC is looking for motivated Democrats to keep our organization strong! In particular:

**Fundraising Team:** We're working on our annual fundraiser and would welcome folks with experience in event planning, marketing, etc.

**Technology:** If you have experience with coordinating the technical side of things, especially sound systems or video editing, we'd love to chat!

Please email us at [knoxdems@gmail.com](mailto:knoxdems@gmail.com) for more information - and to volunteer!

Please help support the KCDC's [mission](#) by making a one-time or recurring contribution of any amount by clicking the link below. Thank you!

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