

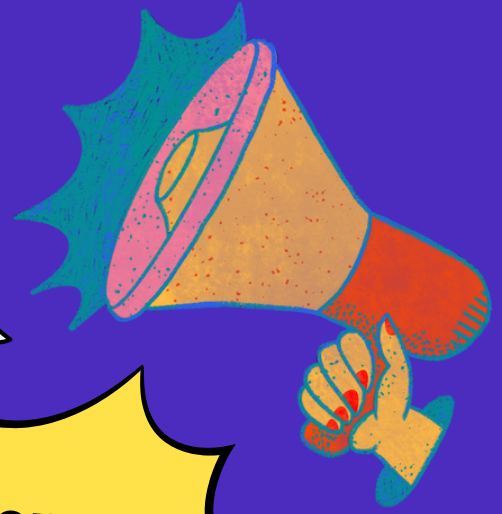
**Maine Governor  
Candidates**

**YOUTH  
VOTER  
GUIDE  
2026**

Healthcare!

Immigration!

Affordability!



**Governor  
Election**

## WHAT'S THIS?

Too often, it's near-impossible to find information about candidate positions on issues that matter most to youth. And with 2026's volatile political climate and packed primary field, you deserve the answers you need to make informed electoral decisions.

Spearheaded by our Youth Advocacy Team, we surveyed Maine youth for their top issues and developed a questionnaire addressing each using their feedback. Each candidate in the **2026 Governor Race** was asked to answer the following:

- What action would you take as governor regarding immigration policy in Maine?
- What steps will you take to ensure Maine youth have timely and reliable access to healthcare?
- What would you do to lower the cost of living in Maine?
- How would you include youth voices in your administration?



## Upcoming Dates

**June 4:** Deadline to request a no-excuse absentee ballot

**June 9:** Primary election day

**November 3:** General election day



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# THE CANDIDATES: REPUBLICAN BALLOT

Here is every candidate who will appear on the Republican primary ballot for governor on June 9.



**JONATHAN BUSH**  
Republican



**ROBERT CHARLES**  
Republican



**DAVID JONES**  
Republican



**ROBERT J. WESSELS**  
Republican



**GARRETT MASON**  
Republican



**OWEN MCCARTHY**  
Republican



**BEN MIDGLEY**  
Republican



Candidates marked with a star did not complete the questionnaire.

## WHO VOTES IN THIS PRIMARY?

Maine has **semi-open primaries**. This means that Unenrolled voters (voters who aren't registered with a specific political party) can still vote in a primary election - they select which one. To vote in the Republican primary, you're either:

- A voter registered with the Republican party
- An Unenrolled voter who requests the Republican primary ballot when you vote in person or request your absentee ballot

Green Independents, Libertarians, and Democrats must change their affiliation to Republican or Unenrolled to vote in this primary.

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# THE CANDIDATES: DEMOCRATIC BALLOT

Here is every candidate who will appear on the Democratic primary ballot for governor on June 9.



**SHENNA BELLOWS**

Democrat



**HANNAH PINGREE**

Democrat

**NIRAV SHAH**

Democrat



**TROY JACKSON**

Democrat



**ANGUS KING III**

Democrat

## WHO VOTES IN THIS PRIMARY?

Maine has **semi-open primaries**. This means that Unenrolled voters (voters who aren't registered with a specific political party) can still vote in a primary election - they select which one. To vote in the Democratic primary, you're either:

- A voter registered with the Democratic party
- An Unenrolled voter who requests the Democratic primary ballot when you vote in person or request your absentee ballot

Green Independents, Libertarians, and Republicans must change their affiliation to Democratic or Unenrolled to vote in this primary.

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[Info@MaineStudentsVote.org](mailto:Info@MaineStudentsVote.org)

 [@MaineStudentsVote](https://www.instagram.com/MaineStudentsVote)



Candidates marked with a star did not complete the questionnaire.

# INDEPENDENT CANDIDATES

NOTE: As of June 4, 2026, these are the only independent candidates that are confirmed to appear on the November general election ballot. This is subject to change, and we will update the guide accordingly.



**RICK BENNETT**  
Independent

## IS THERE A PRIMARY FOR THESE CANDIDATES?

**Nope!** All independent candidates will appear on the November 3 ballot.

If you're a voter who isn't enrolled in a political party (an Unenrolled voter), you can request either the Democratic or Republican primary ballot and vote in your chosen race. You can only vote in the Democratic **or** the Republican primary, not both!

This is because Maine has **semi-open primaries**, which allow the state's large portion of Unenrolled voters to make their voices heard during the primaries.

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Candidates marked with a star did not complete the questionnaire.



# SHENNA BELLOWS

## Democrat

### What action would you take as governor regarding immigration policy in Maine?

I will organize a coalition of partner states to resist through strategic noncompliance, litigation, public education and communications. I will ban masks and require IDs. I will work with the AG to prosecute federal agents who break the law.

### What steps will you take to ensure Maine youth have timely and reliable access to healthcare?

I support universal healthcare and will create a plan to do it. I will include more direct funding for hospitals, primary care practices, reproductive freedom, birthing centers and a free school-based health center in every school in my first budget.

### What would you do to lower the cost of living in Maine?

We need tax fairness. The rich must pay their fair share so we can invest in healthcare, education, affordable housing and programs that support renters and first-time home buyers. I would fight for universal healthcare and universal childcare.

### How would you include youth voices in your administration?

Just as I've done as Secretary, I would welcome young people to key leadership positions in my administration and establish robust youth programming including internships and job shadows. Representation is important; young people will have a voice in my administration.

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# RICK BENNETT

## Independent

### What action would you take as governor regarding immigration policy in Maine?

Immigrants strengthen our communities and economy. My Administration will help newcomers feel welcome, access services, and contribute fully to Maine's future. I'll protect Maine's immigrants from federal overreach and ensure everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

### What steps will you take to ensure Maine youth have timely and reliable access to healthcare?

I'm committed to a path toward universal care for every Mainer. This includes expanding preventative health, protecting reproductive healthcare, supporting the healthcare workforce, and making sure young people can see a provider when they need one. Read more [here](#).

### What would you do to lower the cost of living in Maine?

Lowering costs is central to this campaign: helping homeowners afford down payments and monthly payments, cutting energy and childcare costs, making healthcare affordable, and investing tax dollars wisely. Maine should be a place people can afford to live.

<https://bennettforgovernor.com/vision>

### How would you include youth voices in your administration?

Politics has become toxic, and I'm concerned it's preventing young people from being involved. But youth voices matter most! I'll always listen, create youth advisory roles, and hire and mentor younger staff. Let's create a government worth participating in, together.

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# TROY JACKSON

## Democrat

### What action would you take as governor regarding immigration policy in Maine?

I will pursue a lawsuit against illegal searches and seizures under the 4th Amendment. I will appoint a Public Safety Commissioner committed to fair law enforcement AND protecting folks' rights and liberties. This means holding federal immigration officers accountable.

### What steps will you take to ensure Maine youth have timely and reliable access to healthcare?

It's time for universal health care in Maine. However, as we work to implement this program, I will pass laws to rein in drug prices, protect access to reproductive care, invest in primary care and strengthen rural health clinics.

### What would you do to lower the cost of living in Maine?

Working families are being priced out of Maine while Wall Street investors and out-of-state millionaires buy up our communities. As Governor, I will create the Department of Housing Affordability and give it the resources to tackle the housing crisis.

### How would you include youth voices in your administration?

Young people aren't well-represented in government and their ideas are not taken seriously. I would establish a youth cabinet where young people can put forward ideas and those ideas are taken seriously as opposed to being steamrolled by establishment voices.

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# ANGUS KING III

## Democrat

### What action would you take as governor regarding immigration policy in Maine?

Immigration law is federal, but local communities make Maine special. I will make sure Maine treats all people with dignity and doesn't deploy state resources to enforce federal overreach. We're short on workers. Let's be a state that welcomes them.

### What steps will you take to ensure Maine youth have timely and reliable access to healthcare?

We have to lower costs and increase access. To get there, we can get doctors focused on patients instead of paperwork, incentivize telehealth, strengthen rural care, and invest in public health to keep people healthier and out of expensive ER's.

### What would you do to lower the cost of living in Maine?

I have plans to lower energy costs, build more housing, lower the cost of healthcare, create stronger job opportunities, and deliver real pathways after graduation. Government should help young people build a life here—not make it harder to stay.

### How would you include youth voices in your administration?

Young Mainers will live with today's decisions—so they should help make them. I'll create advisory roles for youth voices on housing, climate, and education, and use their ideas to shape our future. (My teenage kids will help too).

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# HANNAH PINGREE

## Democrat

### What action would you take as governor regarding immigration policy in Maine?

As governor, I'll be willing to fight for all people. I helped create the Office of New Americans and have fought for immigrant rights. I will advance strong legal protections, stand up to Trump and defend civil and voting rights.

### What steps will you take to ensure Maine youth have timely and reliable access to healthcare?

Read my health care plan ([hannahforgovernor.com/health-care/](https://hannahforgovernor.com/health-care/))! Related to youth, we need to ensure reproductive healthcare, especially in rural areas, housing support for families, and mental health access. It means standing up to Trump and bullies for the safety of all.

### What would you do to lower the cost of living in Maine?

Read my plan ([hannahforgovernor.com/affordability/](https://hannahforgovernor.com/affordability/)) for immediate steps to lower costs. They include tackling the housing crisis, cutting energy bills, ensuring affordable health care and childcare access, and restructuring taxes so the wealthiest pay more and families can afford property taxes.

### How would you include youth voices in your administration?

Co-Chairing the Maine Climate Council, I included many youth representatives in our work. As governor, I would include youth on issues from housing to education to climate issues. I'm proud to be endorsed by the Maine High School Democrats!

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# NIRAV SHAH

## Democrat

### What action would you take as governor regarding immigration policy in Maine?

As a first-generation American, I'll protect Maine families through my Safeguard Maine Against the Trump Administration plan, ending abusive ICE cooperation and demanding accountability. I'll also expand opportunity by removing barriers, strengthen workforce pathways, and ensure immigrants can thrive.

<https://shahformaine.com/safeguarding-against-trump-plan/>

### How would you include youth voices in your administration?

Young Mainers are not just future leaders, they're leaders now. They are organizing and demanding change. As governor, I'll ensure they have a real seat at the table through listening sessions, youth partnerships, and policy input to shape Maine.

<https://www.bangordailynews.com/2026/04/28/opinion/letters/letter-dr-shahs-campaign-renewed-sense-of-optimism-joam40zk0w/>

### What steps will you take to ensure Maine youth have timely and reliable access to healthcare?

Maine can lead by guaranteeing universal pediatric health care as the first step toward universal care, ensuring every young Mainer access to medical, behavioral care regardless of income, while investing in school-based services, mental health support, and workforce pathways.

<https://shahformaine.com/a-better-future-for-maine-starts-in-our-schools/>

### What would you do to lower the cost of living in Maine?

Build more housing and cut red tape, hold utilities accountable to reduce energy costs, cap out-of-control health insurance copays and deductibles, lower prescription drug prices, and make sure Maine families can afford to live, work, and thrive here.

<https://shahformaine.com/maines-affordable-future-a-bold-plan-to-lower-costs-and-strengthen-maine-families/>



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