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Energy, Environment, and Climate Change

Protecting Maine’s Environment, Advancing Clean Energy & Combatting Climate Change:

From rising seas to warming temperatures to deadly natural disasters, our climate is changing in dangerous ways that will have profound implications for our people, for our economy, and for our state. Governor Mills believes that Maine can't wait to take action to ensure the resiliency of our communities to the effects of climate change, to build a clean energy economy that creates good-paying jobs around the state, and to end Maine's dependence on expensive, harmful fossil fuels by using homegrown, renewable energy sources.

That's why, under her leadership, Maine has taken bold action to fight climate change and to advance renewable energy opportunities. Since taking office, Governor Mills has:

- *Protected Working Forests and Waterfronts:* Governor Mills [proposed and secured \\$40 million for the Land for Maine's Future program](#), replenishing the State's primary program for conserving land and working waterfronts, allowing it to make its [first awards](#) since 2017.
- *Joined National Partnerships to Combat Climate Change:* Under Governor Mills, Maine joined the [U.S. Climate Alliance](#), making it the 22nd of 25 states to join the bipartisan effort to meet the goals outlined in the Paris Climate Agreement.
- *Committed to Carbon Neutrality by 2045:* Standing before the United Nations General Assembly in 2019, Governor Mills challenged world leaders to take action against climate change and announced that she signed an Executive Order committing Maine to [carbon neutrality by 2045](#). In doing so, she became the only sitting Maine governor to speak before the international body.
- *Developed a State Plan to Combat Climate Change:* Governor Mills introduced and signed into law bipartisan legislation to establish the [Maine Climate Council](#), which developed Maine's Climate Action Plan – [Maine Won't Wait](#) – to meet our ambitious emission reduction goals and to ensure that Maine's people, communities and economy are resilient to the effects of climate change.
- *Advanced Renewable Energy:* Governor Mills signed into law one of the [most ambitious renewable energy requirements](#) in the country, increasing Maine's Renewable Portfolio Standard from 40 percent to 80 percent by 2030 and setting a goal of 100 percent renewable energy by 2050. Maine [is on track to reach the 2030 goal of using 80 percent renewable energy](#).
- *Expanded Access to Electric Vehicles & Clean Transportation Infrastructure:* Governor Mills and Efficiency Maine Trust announced a set of [initiatives to expand the use of electric vehicles](#) across Maine to reduce the state's carbon footprint and reliance on fossil fuels. The initiatives, which include the creation of financial incentives to purchase electric vehicles and the installation of public vehicle charging stations, are in part the result of a \$5.1 million settlement won by then-Attorney General Mills against Volkswagen. Governor Mills' Maine Jobs & Recovery Plan furthers the expansion of public charging across the state with an \$8 million investment. Under Governor Mills, Maine has reached [a record number](#) of electric vehicle registrations (5,677) and sales rebates (1,220), and public EV charging stations (246).

- *Promoted Heat Pumps to Reduce Home Heating Costs:* Governor Mills launched an initiative to support the [installation of 100,000 new heat pumps by 2025](#), a technology that reduces the use of fossil fuels and saves Maine people money on their heating bills. Since 2019, Maine has installed more than 40,000 new high-efficiency heat pumps for heating and cooling, including a record 28,000 from June 2020 to July 2021.
- *Encouraged the Responsible Growth of Solar Power:* Governor Mills signed legislation to [reset Maine's metering policy for solar](#), which has encouraged 12,000 customers to invest in rooftop systems or community solar programs across the state. Hundreds of new jobs have been created with the development of solar power projects statewide. Maine is also taking important steps to balance the advancement of solar with other important priorities including agriculture needs and natural resource protection.
- *Responsibly Advanced Offshore Wind:* Governor Mills has undertaken a comprehensive, stakeholder-driven process to responsibly advance offshore wind while sustaining Maine's iconic fishing industry. Governor Mills signed legislation [directing the approval of the contract for Maine Aqua Ventus](#), on track to be the first floating offshore project in the U.S., and submitted to the Federal government [an application](#) for a small-scale research array of 12 or fewer wind turbines on innovative floating hulls designed at the University of Maine. In response to concerns raised by Maine fisherman and to reflect the Administration's priority of locating offshore wind in Federal waters, Governor Mills signed legislation [prohibiting new offshore wind projects in State waters](#), which extend three miles from shore.
- *Gave Communities Resources to Become More Resilient:* Governor Mills established the [Community Resilience Partnership](#), a \$4.75 million program to provide grants and technical assistance to municipal and tribal governments to start or enhance their local climate action plans and undertake community projects to curb carbon emissions, transition to clean energy, and become more resilient to the effects of climate change.
- *Invested in Community Infrastructure:* Governor Mills created the [Maine Infrastructure Adaptation Fund](#), a \$20 million program through the Maine Department of Transportation that will provide grants to municipalities, tribal governments, and others to improve stormwater, drinking water, and wastewater infrastructure and to help communities better withstand impacts from flooding, rising sea levels, and extreme weather.
- *Phased Out Polluting Chemicals:* Governor Mills proposed and signed into law [bipartisan legislation to phase down the use of hydrofluorocarbons \(HFCs\)](#), a highly potent greenhouse gas and significant driver of climate change. These synthetic gases are most often used as a refrigerant in appliances and are known as "climate super-pollutants", with hundreds to thousands of times the heat-trapping power of carbon dioxide.
- *Invested in Energy Efficiency:* Through the biennial budget that she signed into law and her Maine Jobs & Recovery Plan, Governor Mills has invested \$50 million in energy efficiency programs, such as residential weatherization and efficiency upgrades for schools, towns, non-profits, and businesses. She also signed into a law new appliance standards that promote energy efficiency and reduced operating costs.
- *Advancing Clean Energy Job Opportunities:* Governor Mills set an ambitious goal to double clean energy jobs to 30,000 by 2030. Through her Maine Jobs & Recovery Plan, the state is investing \$12 million to expand apprenticeship opportunities in fast-growing fields like clean energy, and \$8 million in the Clean Energy Partnership, an effort to grow the clean energy workforce and to provide initiatives to support innovation in Maine's energy sector.
- *Protected Against PFAS:* Governor Mills signed an Executive Order creating a Governor's Task Force to mobilize state agencies and other stakeholders to [review the prevalence of PFAS in Maine and put forward a plan to address it](#). In her most recent biennial budget, the Governor secured \$30 million for PFAS remediation, which includes \$10 million to help farmers impacted by PFAS, \$15 million to provide safe drinking water and \$5 million for environmental testing. Additionally, she invested \$5 million for managing PFAS-contaminated waste under her Maine Jobs & Recovery Plan.
- *Ended A Blanket Ban on Wind Power:* Governor Mills signed an Executive Order to [end a moratorium on wind turbine permits](#), allowing state agencies to once again work with Maine's

local communities and stakeholders to determine which projects should go forward.

- *Opposed Offshore Drilling:* Governor Mills [withdrew the State of Maine from the Outer Continental Shelf Governors Coalition](#) (OCSGC), a group that supports offshore oil and gas drilling, saying its “work promoting the expansion of offshore oil and gas drilling is incompatible with Maine’s interests.”
- *Lead-by-Example in State Government:* Governor Mills signed an Executive Order directing state government agencies to lead by example in pursuing [energy efficiency, renewable energy, and sustainability measures](#), all of which are expected to reduce operational costs and reduce state government’s carbon emissions, and her administration released [actionable targets to ensure state action on this initiative](#).

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