

Regional Voices - From Sebago Lake to Casco Bay

Chris Hall, GPCOG Director of Regional Initiatives

January 4, 2019

How many of you [watched](#) (starts at 1:26:00) or [read](#) Governor Mills' inaugural address? She shared her Maine values and expressed real hope that we can all work together to make Maine a better place, especially for those who need help the most. (Read coverage in the [PPH](#) and [BDN](#)).

While her speech didn't get deep into policy details, the Governor did outline several priorities that will directly impact our region.

- She addressed climate change and **called for a new energy policy**: *“Our new Administration will embrace clean energy; change our modes of transportation; weatherize homes and businesses and reach a goal of 50 percent of our electricity coming from Maine renewable resources.”*
- She committed to **expanding health insurance**: *“Our new Administration will expand Medicaid – and pay for it sustainably; work to ensure that every person has primary care; control the cost of health insurance; and rein in the cost of prescription drugs.”*
- She outlined **new efforts to fight the opioid crisis**: *“Our Administration will create a Director of Opiate Response, a person who will marshal the collective power and resources of state government to stem the tide of this epidemic.”*
- She focused on **workforce development and education** for all Maine people: *“I will work with the new Legislature to achieve the best education for our people, from preschool through college and beyond, beginning with full and fair funding for schools, including our Career and Technical Centers.”*
- Finally looking to the rapid pace of change in our society, she announced: *“that my administration will create an **Office of Innovation and the Future**. This office will dive into major policy challenges, foster collaboration and propose concrete, workable solutions.”*

Governor Mills closed with a new brand for Maine, added to the 'Welcome' signs on the Turnpike: “Welcome Home.”

If that brand includes innovation, a better educated workforce, a healthier population and a clean energy economy, we'll all have opportunities to improve our communities and strengthen our prospects for the future, especially if we work together as a region as I discussed last week [in the Portland Press Herald](#).

If you'd like to share your feedback on the opening days of the Mills Administration, send her an email! And if you have feedback for us let me know.

Regional Voices is a regular update from Chris Hall on issues and opportunities that GPCOG members and friends can speak out on. If you want more information about how to engage, or you have other feedback to share, contact Chris Hall directly.