



Maine Public Broadcasting Network

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
December 2012

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## **MPBN Announces Preliminary Plans for Dedicated Legislative Channel from Augusta**

(Bangor/Lewiston/Portland) – The Maine Public Broadcasting Network announces preliminary plans to launch a free over-the-air television channel devoted to covering the Maine State Legislature in Augusta, Maine. The service could potentially launch as early as February 2013 as part of a six month pilot program to test the concept. Coverage would include daily sessions of the House of Representatives and the Maine Senate as well as potentially select committee hearings and press conferences.

As the only state-wide public television service, MPBN believes that the time is right to deliver a dedicated channel for legislative coverage across Maine. MPBN's longstanding mission of connecting the people of Maine to each other and delivering independent news and information to all of Maine aligns with the vision and nature of the project. Should the pilot program move ahead, it will be entirely funded by MPBN and will not be subsidized on any level by the annual support appropriated to MPBN by statute from the State of Maine.

"We feel that there is a strong appetite for news and public affairs across the state and that this initiative –our working title is "The State House Channel" -- would prove to be of great value to our members and viewers in Maine," states MPBN's President and CEO, Mark Vogelzang. "The "State House Channel" would, for the first time, provide open access to public policy debate and the decision-making process of our state government, allowing citizens across the diversity of Maine to engage and participate in the democratic process. That's pretty exciting!"

Significant review and approvals are required before the project can be given the green light and begin taking its final form. MPBN's Board of Trustees must review and approve the project as well as Maine's Legislative Council.

"Not to get ahead of ourselves, though," continues Vogelzang, "MPBN's Board of Trustees and the Legislative Council will each review the project and at that point we will determine its future based on their feedback."

The Maine Public Broadcasting Network operates five television transmitters (WCBB-TV - Augusta - 10, WMEA-TV - Biddeford - 26, WMED-TV - Calais - 13, WMEB-TV - Orono - 12, WMEM-TV - Presque Isle - 10), and seven radio transmitters (WMEH-FM - Bangor - 90.9, WMED-FM - Calais - 89.7, WMEP-FM - Camden - 90.5, WMEF-FM - Fort Kent - 106.5, WMEA-FM - Portland - 90.1, WMEM-FM - Presque Isle - 106.1, WMEW-FM - Waterville - 91.3) reaching households in Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Atlantic Canada. MPBN also delivers content to a worldwide audience via its website, [www.mpbn.net](http://www.mpbn.net).

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