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STATE OF MAINE
PENOBSCOT, ss.

DISTRICT COURT
LOCATION: BANGOR
DOCKET NO. BANDC-PFH-2026-00180

JAMIE M. BECK,

Plaintiff,

v.

ADAM STADE,

Defendant.

DEFENDANT'S SPECIAL MOTION FOR EXPEDITED RELIEF UNDER 14 M.R.S. § 734 (ANTI-SLAPP), WITH INCORPORATED MEMORANDUM OF LAW

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1.0 Introduction

This is a case about a candidate for public office, married to a public official, who is angry that the press is covering her and that she has been mocked in public. The First Amendment will not abide her attempts to weaponize the harassment protection order process to censor negative coverage and negative opinions. Not only that, but the Maine Legislature has made it clear that freedom of speech and freedom of the press are so protected in this state, that when someone tries to abuse legal process for the purpose of censorship, there is a cost for doing so.

Plaintiff Jamie Beck is a candidate for the Bangor School Committee[1] and she is married to a sitting Bangor City Councilor. Adam Stade is a videographer for the Maine Wire, a media organization that covers Maine and national stories. On August 17, 2026, there was a City Council meeting where the Bangor City Council refused to reconsider an $11.2 million homeless-housing deal and where public debate was prematurely shut down. Ms. Beck's husband voted for the project and was visibly angry at the citizens who showed up to voice their displeasure. As Mr. Beck left the meeting, Maine Wire reporter Joe Sokol walked down a public street and asked Councilman

[1] *See Bangor won't clarify if councilor's spouse can be sworn in to school committee*, Bangor Daily News (Sept. 2, 2026), https://www.bangordailynews.com/2026/09/02/bangor/bangor-government/bangor-wont-clarify-councilors-spouse-school-committee-joam40zk0w/. **Exhibit 1**.

Beck questions about the issue, and Defendant Stade held the video camera, behind him. A few weeks later, Mr. Stade published two satirical pictures of the Becks on his Facebook page, depicting them as homeless drug addicts. Stade Decl. ¶10.

The Becks want the power that comes with public office, but do not like the scrutiny that comes with it. They were upset that the press questioned Mr. Beck about his anger-management problem and his apparent conflicts of interest. They did not like that the press covered them negatively. They did not like being made fun of in a satirical cartoon.

The protection from harassment statute is not here for this purpose. This statute is here for people who are legitimately being threatened and stalked. It is not a tool for the politically connected to silence the press or to censor criticism. Harassment "does not include any act protected by law." 5 M.R.S. § 4651(2) (2025). Unless speech falls into one of the specifically enumerated exceptions to the First Amendment, it is "protected by law." Here, the "protected by law" status of news gathering and satirical pictures of public officials is not just protected by law, but clearly established by generations of binding case law.

To protect citizens from such litigation abuse, Maine enacted the Uniform Public Expression Protection Act, 14 M.R.S. §§ 731–742 ("UPEPA" or "the Act"), which requires prompt dismissal, with prejudice and with mandatory fees, of any civil cause of action that targets speech on a matter of public concern and cannot meet its minimal merit standard. Mr. Stade moves under 14 M.R.S. § 734 to dismiss the Complaint with prejudice, and for his costs, attorney's fees, and expenses under 14 M.R.S. § 740. By operation of 14 M.R.S. § 735(1)(A), the filing of this motion stays all other proceedings between the parties, including the hearing set for October 7, 2026.

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2.0 Facts

2.1 The Yellen Pines vote

Yellen Pines is a proposed 30-unit homeless project that will cost the taxpayers about $11.2 million.[2] On August 10, 2026, the City Council approved a 30-year tax deal for the project. Councilor Michael Beck voted for it. Residents objected so strongly that the Council called a special meeting on August 17, 2026, to discuss reconsideration. The Council voted immediately to reject reconsideration with Councilor Beck in the majority. The meeting was adjourned about twenty minutes after it began, and members of the public were not allowed to be heard.[3] Stade Dec. ¶5.

The Maine Wire covered the story, as the First Amendment allows it to, and as good press practices require Mr. Stade was the Maine Wire's cameraman. Stade Decl. ¶¶2-4.

2.2 August 17: Questioning a City Councilor

Ms. Beck's narrative is not consistent with the video evidence. The full recording is available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OmaDyttJQ6A. It shows a true and correct copy of the encounter Decl. ¶9. Beck claims that this interaction with the press was "harrowing." She claims that at "*[a]pproximately 6:56pm Adam Stade and Joe Sokol followed me, my husband, and our youngest son from Bangor City Council Chambers to our car parked on Center St*." (Pl.'s Compl. Attach.) According to her, Stade's reporters asked her husband about his vote, about Ms. Beck's conflicts of interest, and Mr. Beck's anger management problems, while Defendant Stade filmed. She claims the men were closer than she liked and that they "stood in the street, obstructing us from moving at first and continued filming us as we left." (*Id.*) Again, her claims and the video are

[2] See *Housing for homeless in Bangor moving forward despite some residents pushing back*, Bangor Daily News (Aug. 12, 2026), https://www.bangordailynews.com/2026/08/12/bangor/bangor-government/housing-homeless-bangor-moving-forward-joam40zk0w/. **Exhibit 2**.

[3] See *Bangor's council holds firm on deal for homeless housing development*, Bangor Daily News (Aug. 17, 2026), https://www.bangordailynews.com/2026/08/17/bangor/bangor-government/bangor-tax-deal-homeless-housing-development/; *Bangor Council Approves 30-Year Tax Deal for Homeless Housing Despite Taxpayer Concerns*, The Maine Wire (Aug. 2026), https://www.themainewire.com/2026/08/bangor-council-approves-30-year-tax-deal-for-homeless-housing-despite-taxpayer-concerns/. **Exhibits 3-4**.

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very different. But even if we take her at her word, her own complaint makes it clear that Defendant Stade did nothing more than film, and that they all left after the questions. Stade Decl. ¶¶6-8.

She does not claim (nor could she) that anyone touched her, her husband, or her son (who is barely visible in the background as he follows his parents out of the meeting). She does not describe any threats. She does not allege that Mr. Stade said anything to her at all. The full recording is available at the YouTube address above and can be submitted in hard copy to the Court if needed. It shows a typical reporter interaction with a public official. Stade Decl. ¶¶6-9. Stade simply carried the camera, in public place, where he had a right to do so. Stade Dec. ¶¶6-7; *Glik v. Cunniffe,* 655 F.3d 78, 82 (1st Cir. 2011) (peaceful recording in a public place is protected); *Gericke v. Begin*, 753 F.3d 1, 7-8 (1st Cir. 2014) (making it clear that *Glik* is not limited to police arrests); *Berge v. Gloucester School Committee,* 107 F.4th 33, 43 (1st Cir. 2024) (clearly established that a government official may not use an inapplicable statute to try and censor published video).

The coverage in the Maine Wire is what really drove her to try and manipulate this court into being her private censor. She complains: "The video and sound footage from this incident was later used in a post by the Maine Wire on both their Facebook and YouTube page on August 18, 2026." The Maine Wire's article described "[a]bsolutely wild scenes at the emergency Bangor meeting last night over the $11.2 million Yellen Pines homeless housing project." (Pl.'s Compl. Exh.) Ms. Beck wants to censor the report because she is upset that the report discussed her ties to a nonprofit that stands to benefit from the vote and she does not like being criticized by the Maine Wire. (Pl.'s Compl. Attach.)

2.3 September: Satirical Images

Ms. Beck alleges that on September 12, 2026, Mr. Stade made an AI-generated caricature of her and her husband and published it on his Facebook page, with a note in the corner reading "This is satire by Adam Stade." (Pl.'s Comp. Attach.) He did. Stade Dec. ¶12. She alleges that on September 14, 2026, he "posted a new version of this photo as his cover photo with more distortion of my body and he removed the note from the corner of the picture 'This is satire by Adam Stade'

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which removes all ambiguity about his intent." (*Id.*) She lies that the image is "sexually suggestive" so that she can invoke 17-A M.R.S. § 511-A, a statute that criminalizes revenge porn. (*Id.*). Nobody would find that image "sexually suggestive," and even if it were, "suggestive" is not prohibited by §511-A.

The law clearly does not apply, as the images are not sexual, and cannot be harassing since she does not even allege that Mr. Stade sent any images to her, tagged her, messaged her, or contacted her at all. She just doesn't like satirical pictures of her. Stade Decl. ¶ 15. The images are exhibits to the complaint.

2.4 The Complaint and the September 18 Order

Ms. Beck filed a Complaint for Protection from Harassment and checked the box stating that she had not sought or obtained from law enforcement a notice to Mr. Stade to stop harassing her. (Pl.'s Compl.) She asks the Court to order no contact, and to "order the defendant to remove, destroy or return the private images," to "order the defendant to stop disseminating the private [sic] images, and further order the defendant not to disseminate the private images at any time in the future." (Pl.'s Compl.)

On Sept. 18, 2026, the Court wisely denied the grant of a temporary order. "The photographs provided with the application do not appear to show persons 'in a state of nudity or engaged in a sexual act or engaged in sexual contact.'" It noted that no notice to cease harassment under 17-A M.R.S. § 506-A had been served. (Order of Sept. 18.) A hearing was set for Oct. 7, 2026. This motion is timely as it is filed within 60 days of filing, and the statute requires it be filed within 60 days of service. 14 M.R.S. § 734 (2025). It is unclear when Defendant was served, but it could not have been more than 60 days ago.

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2.5 The Uniform Public Expression Protection Act (UPEPA)

The UPEPA "applies to a cause of action asserted in a civil action against a person based on the person's" communication "on an issue under consideration or review in a legislative, executive, judicial, administrative or other governmental proceeding," or the person's "[e]xercise of the right of freedom of speech or of the press . . . guaranteed by the United States Constitution or by the Constitution of Maine, on a matter of public concern." 14 M.R.S. § 733(2)(B)-(C). A party served with "a complaint, petition . . . or other pleading" asserting such a cause of action may file a special motion for expedited relief within 60 days. *Id.* § 734.

The motion proceeds in three steps. First, the movant shows that the Act applies, and the respondent may try to show that one of three narrow exceptions removes the case from the law's protection. *Id.* § 738(1)(A)–(B). Second, the plaintiff must "establish a prima facie case as to each essential element of the cause of action." *Id.* § 738(1)(C)(1). Third, even if she does, the Court must still dismiss if the movant shows that the complaint fails to state a cause of action or that he is entitled to judgment as a matter of law. *Id.* § 738(1)(C)(2). If the respondent loses at any step, the Court "shall dismiss with prejudice" the cause of action, or the offending part of it. *Id.* § 738(1). The Court considers the pleadings, the motion papers, and any evidence that could be considered on summary judgment. *Id.* § 737.

The Act "must be broadly construed and applied to protect the exercise of the right of freedom of speech and of the press." *Id.* § 741. And the Legislature adopted the Uniform Law Commission's official comments "as part of" the Act and directed that Maine's version be interpreted "as substantively the same as the uniform act." P.L. 2023, ch. 626, §§ 5–6.

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3.0 Argument

3.1 The Act applies to this Complaint

3.1.1. A protection from harassment complaint is a covered civil action.

A protection from harassment case is commenced by a "complaint." 5 M.R.S. § 4653(1). The statute calls the proceeding "an action under this chapter," *id.* § 4658(4), (5), and directs that "all proceedings shall be in accordance with the Maine Rules of Civil Procedure," *id.* § 4658(1). Under those Rules there is "one form of action to be known as 'civil action.'" M.R. Civ. P. 2. The Law Court treats these complaints accordingly, reviewing them under Rule 12(b)(6) like any other. *Nadeau v. Frydrych*, 2014 ME 154, ¶¶ 5–8, 108 A.3d 1254. The comments adopted by the Legislature say that "civil action" is to be read as broadly as Fed. R. Civ. P. 1, which reaches "all civil actions and proceedings," and that the only thing the Act leaves out is criminal prosecution. Unif. Pub. Expression Prot. Act § 2 cmts. 3–4, *adopted by* P.L. 2023, ch. 626, § 6.

The Act has three exceptions: suits against the government, government enforcement actions to protect public health or safety, and suits over a seller's commercial speech. 14 M.R.S. § 733(3). None covers a harassment complaint brought against a journalist, and the Act says that "journalistic" and "political" work is not exempted as commercial goods or services. *Id.* § 733(1). Plaintiff might try to argue that civil harassment actions are not subject to UPEPA, but she would be wrong. When other legislatures adopted UPEPA, some sought to keep protective-order cases out. They said so in the text. *See* Minn. Stat. § 554.08(c)(9) (excluding causes of action "for or based on an antiharassment order"); Wash. Rev. Code § 4.105.010(3)(a)(ix) (same). Maine wrote no such exception in 2024, and when it reopened § 733 in 2025 it made the Act broader, not narrower. P.L. 2025, ch. 403, §§ 2–4.

There is a good reason that Maine followed California's lead in protecting freedom of expression. A harassment petition is the cheapest prior restraint available to an ignoble censorious party. There is no lawyer needed, no proof of falsity needed, they are heard quickly, usually given out liberally with little thought behind them, gets heard quickly, and if it is issued, then the consequence for violating it is going to jail. California, whose anti-SLAPP decisions the adopted

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comments cite throughout, recognized twenty years ago that "resort to the courts' injunctive powers to stifle speaking out on public issues" is the SLAPP plaintiff's "reserve arsenal," and held that the anti-SLAPP statute applies to civil harassment petitions. *Thomas v. Quintero*, 126 Cal. App. 4th 635, 652, 657 (2005); *see also* Aaron H. Caplan, *Free Speech and Civil Harassment Orders*, 64 Hastings L.J. 781 (2013); Eugene Volokh, *One-to-One Speech vs. One-to-Many Speech, Criminal Harassment Laws, and "Cyberstalking,"* 107 Nw. U. L. Rev. 731 (2013).

3.1.2. The claim is based on speech and press activity on a matter of public concern.

The first step "focuses on the movant's activity, and whether the movant can show that it has been sued for that activity." UPEPA § 2 cmt. 1. A movant can carry that burden with the other side's pleading alone. *Id.* § 7 cmt. 2. Ms. Beck's pleading does a great job of proving that burden is met. Every act she lists is filming, asking questions, publishing a news video, or publishing a cartoon. She could not have pleaded it better if she wanted to lose a UPEPA motion.

Everything she complains about is speech and press activity. Recording public officials in public places and asking them questions is newsgathering, and "[g]athering information about government officials in a form that can readily be disseminated to others serves a cardinal First Amendment interest in protecting and promoting 'the free discussion of governmental affairs.'" *Glik*, 655 F.3d at 82 (*quoting Mills v. Alabama*, 384 U.S. 214, 218 (1966)). "[W]ithout some protection for seeking out the news, freedom of the press could be eviscerated." *Branzburg v. Hayes*, 408 U.S. 665, 681 (1972). Publishing the footage is protected. *Berge*, 107 F.4th at 43. So is caricature of public figures, which has been a quintessentially American way of mocking politicians since before there was a First Amendment. *Hustler Magazine, Inc. v. Falwell*, 485 U.S. 46, 53–55 (1988). Maine's Constitution is, if anything, more protective of these activities than even the First Amendment: "Every citizen may freely speak, write and publish sentiments on any subject," and "no laws shall be passed regulating or restraining the freedom of the press." Me. Const. art. I, § 4.

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This is also speech on a matter of public concern, and on "an issue under consideration or review" in a governmental proceeding. 14 M.R.S. § 733(2)(B), (C). Speech addresses a matter of public concern when it can "be fairly considered as relating to any matter of political, social, or other concern to the community," or when it "is a subject of legitimate news interest." *Snyder v. Phelps*, 562 U.S. 443, 453 (2011) (citations omitted); UPEPA § 2 cmt. 9. An $11.2 million public housing project, a thirty-year tax deal, a meeting that ended with residents still trying to speak, and whether a Councilor who voted for all of it had a conflict are about as public as local concerns get. The questions were put to the Councilor as he left the vote. The cartoons depict that same Councilor and his wife, who was also a candidate for public office. The First Amendment "has its fullest and most urgent application precisely to the conduct of campaigns for political office." *Monitor Patriot Co. v. Roy*, 401 U.S. 265, 272 (1971).

The Act's "definitional focus is not the form of the plaintiff's cause of action but, rather, the defendant's activity that gives rise to his or her asserted liability." UPEPA § 2 cmt. 1 (quoting *Navellier v. Sletten*, 52 P.3d 703, 711 (Cal. 2002)). And she is not a mere bystander (although it would not matter if she was). She is a candidate for office who is married to an officeholder and who complains, in her own words, about how a news report treated her reputation. A public official's wife, running for office herself, trying to get an order that shuts up a journalist and a satirist, under penalty of being jailed. Nothing could offend the First Amendment more profoundly than this kind of action. And the UPEPA puts a price on that offense. Beck must pay it.

3.2 Ms. Beck cannot establish a prima facie case

Ms. Beck proved prong one for us. She now must come forward with evidence that, if believed, would satisfy "each essential element" of her cause of action. 14 M.R.S. § 738(1)(C)(1); UPEPA § 7 cmt. 4. "Harassment" has two definitions that could theoretically apply here. She cannot meet either.

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3.2.1. There are not three acts of intimidation or confrontation, and there is no intent to cause fear.

The first definition requires "[t]hree or more acts of intimidation, confrontation, physical force or the threat of physical force directed against any person . . . that are made with the intention of causing fear, intimidation or damage to personal property and that do in fact cause fear, intimidation or damage to personal property." 5 M.R.S. § 4651(2)(A); *Nadeau*, 2014 ME 154, ¶ 6, 108 A.3d 1254. Each piece of that sentence is an element.

"Three acts" are missing. Ms. Beck describes one encounter that lasted while she walked to her car. Everything else is publication. This is a single event, so even if it applied, it is only one.

Intimidation, confrontation, force, or threat, directed against her. A cartoon on Mr. Stade's own Facebook page mocking Ms. Beck is none of those nefarious things. Stade did not send it to her. She had to go and voluntarily look at it. Speech *to* a person *can be* harassment, but speech *about* a person, addressed to the public, is not. "The publication of commentary directed only to the public generally does not amount to 'contact.'" *Chan v. Ellis*, 296 Ga. 838, 841, 770 S.E.2d 851, 854 (2015). *See also Thomas*, 126 Cal. App. 4th at 662–63 (harassment statute "requires significantly more" than speech directed to third parties). The Law Court agrees with this obvious line of cases. The orders it affirms involves messages delivered to the plaintiff. *E.g., Jefts v. Dennis*, 2007 ME 129, ¶¶ 7–8, 931 A.2d 1055 (repeated emails and faxes sent to the plaintiff's office). As for August 17, 2026, the questions were directed to Councilor Beck, about Councilor Beck's vote. Ms. Beck just happened to be walking with him.

Intent to cause fear. The statute does not apply to conduct that happens to annoy someone. It only applies to conduct committed "with the intention of causing fear, intimidation or damage to personal property." 5 M.R.S. § 4651(2). Ms. Beck offers nothing to support the novel theory that a news videographer filming a councilor after a council meeting is trying to frighten the councilor's wife, and none either that a satirical cartoonist was trying to do anything other than what satirical cartoonists do — mock the subject of their political satire. Stade Decl. ¶¶8, 16. Her sole attempt to show intent is that Mr. Stade removed the words "This is satire." That demonstrates

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nothing except a man who trusts his audience to recognize a joke when they see one. "Parody serves its goals whether labeled or not, and there is no reason to require parody to state the obvious (or even the reasonabl[e])." *Campbell v. Acuff-Rose Music, Inc.*, 510 U.S. 569, 583 n.17 (1994).

The obstruction allegation. Ms. Beck says the men were "obstructing us from moving at first." The video shows that she is not being honest. Stade Decl. 7,9, video. Even if the video of the event supported her position, this would be at most a single act — not three. She alleges no force, no threats, and not even a single word directed at her. By her own account it ended in moments, with the camera still running and the family driving away. The video confirms it. A single act of holding a camera on a public street is not "three or more acts," and the Court does not need to resolve it to grant this motion. *See* 14 M.R.S. § 738(1) (court dismisses a cause of action "or part of a cause of action").

Notice. Finally, a plaintiff proceeding on a three-acts theory must ordinarily file a copy of a law enforcement notice to stop harassing or show good cause for not having one. 5 M.R.S. § 4653(1)(B); *Nadeau*, 2014 ME 154, ¶ 3 n.2, 108 A.3d 1254. Ms. Beck has none. Stade Decl. ¶ 17.

3.2.2. The cartoons are not "private images" under 17-A M.R.S. § 511-A.

The second definition is "[a] single act or course of conduct constituting a violation of" certain criminal statutes, including 17-A M.R.S. § 511-A. 5 M.R.S. § 4651(2)(C). Section 511-A makes it a crime to disseminate, "with the intent to harass, torment or threaten," an image of another person "in a state of nudity or engaged in a sexual act or engaged in sexual contact," or an image "created or modified so that it appears to show" those things, "in a manner in which there is no public or newsworthy purpose." 17-A M.R.S. § 511-A(1). The terms are defined. "State of nudity" means exposed or transparently clothed genitals, pubic area, anus, or female breast. *Id.* § 511-A(3)(C). "Sexual act" and "sexual contact" are defined by reference to the sex-offense chapter. *Id.* § 511-A(3)(A)–(B).

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This Court already looked at the images and found the obvious — they "do not appear to show persons 'in a state of nudity or engaged in a sexual act or engaged in sexual contact.'" (Order of Sept. 18, 2026.) Nothing has changed. Ms. Beck's belief that a clothed caricature is "suggestive" does not make it a depiction of nudity or a sex act. When the Legislature extended § 511-A to deepfake images in 2025, it kept the same line: the image must appear to show nudity, a sexual act, or sexual contact. P.L. 2025, ch. 400, §§ 2–3. A satirical picture that shows a politician as a drug addict does not even begin to enter the same galaxy as "sexually explicit" images.

Even if it did, it would still not be unlawful. A caricature of a Councilor and a candidate, posted in the middle of a public fight over the councilor's vote, has an obvious "public or newsworthy purpose." And the intent the statute requires is intent to harass, torment, or threaten, not intent to mock. In *Hustler*, the Supreme Court protected a parody that described Jerry Falwell losing his virginity to his mother in a filthy outhouse while they were both drunk on Campari. In a unanimous decision, the Supreme Court held that the parody was "gross and repugnant in the eyes of most" and that it was meant to wound. 485 U.S. at 50, 53. Nevertheless, with no dissent, the Supreme Court recognized that the First Amendment protected this kind of expression, because "[t]he appeal of the political cartoon or caricature is often based on exploitation of unfortunate physical traits or politically embarrassing events — an exploitation often calculated to injure the feelings of the subject of the portrayal." *Id.* at 54. If Jerry Falwell had to put up with that, a candidate for the Bangor School Committee can put up with this.

3.2.3. Every act alleged is "protected by law."

Even if Ms. Beck could count to three, the statute would still abandon her. The definition of harassment "does not include any act protected by law." 5 M.R.S. § 4651(2).

Speech loses its protection only in a few "well-defined and narrowly limited classes." *Chaplinsky v. New Hampshire*, 315 U.S. 568, 571–72 (1942). The one that matters in harassment cases is the true threat: a "serious expression conveying that a speaker means to commit an act of unlawful violence." *Counterman v. Colorado*, 600 U.S. 66, 74 (2023) (cleaned up). Even then the

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First Amendment requires proof that the speaker was at least reckless about the threatening character of his words. *Id.* at 69. The Law Court agrees that what falls outside the Constitution is "speech as part of conduct designed to threaten or harm other individuals." *Childs v. Ballou*, 2016 ME 142, ¶ 15, 148 A.3d 291. Ms. Beck alleges no threat. Questions about recusal are not threats. A news video is not a threat. A mocking satirical picture is not a threat.

A politician did not like speech. That is it. "[S]peech cannot be restricted simply because it is upsetting or arouses contempt." *Snyder*, 562 U.S. at 458. Debate on public issues is supposed to be "uninhibited, robust, and wide-open," and it "may well include vehement, caustic, and sometimes unpleasantly sharp attacks on government and public officials." *N.Y. Times Co. v. Sullivan*, 376 U.S. 254, 270 (1964). As Chief Judge Walker put it last year, in a case about another Maine journalist whose targets wanted him quiet, public debate "is often vituperative, abusive, and inexact," and the Court was "not persuaded" that "bullying language is not protected by the First Amendment." *McBreairty v. Brewer Sch. Dep't*, 783 F. Supp. 3d 394, 410 n.10 (D. Me. 2025) (*quoting Watts v. United States*, 394 U.S. 705, 708 (1969)).

Courts elsewhere have refused to let officials and their families misuse protective-order statutes this way. Florida's 4th District Court of Appeal, sitting en banc, reversed a stalking injunction that a state senator obtained against a crude and persistent critic, explaining that "[p]ublic officials, by the very nature of their positions, are sometimes required to endure the passions and pleas of the public as they do the people's work." *Logue v. Book*, 297 So. 3d 605, 619 (Fla. 4th DCA 2020) (en banc). The Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court reached the same result when a local board member sought a harassment prevention order against a political opponent, holding that political speech that is neither a true threat nor fighting words cannot support such an order. *Van Liew v. Stansfield*, 474 Mass. 31, 39, 47 N.E.3d 411 (2016). Maine's statute is just as protective of the Constitution, no matter what Beck wants.

To the extent Ms. Beck's is complaining that the Maine Wire's report implied something false about her, that is a defamation claim. She has not brought one. If she did, she would have to plead and prove falsity and fault, and as a candidate for office she would have to prove actual

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malice. She would lose that in a humiliating defeat and have to pay Maine Wire's fees too. But here she did something even worse than an ill-advised defamation claim. She tried to use a harassment petition to circumvent the strict requirements of a defamation claim.

3.2.4. Stade is prepared to challenge the Constitutionality of the Statutes, if Necessary.

In the unlikely chance that this Court finds that these acts meet the threshold for harassment, Mr. Stade is prepared to challenge the constitutionality of 17 M.R.S. § 4651(2) as applied. In Mr. Stade's career as a journalist, he depends on clear definitions. A criminal statute is unconstitutionally vague when a person "of ordinary intelligence" could not "reasonably understand" that the actor's conduct was prohibited. *United States v. Harris*, 347 U.S. 612, 617 (1954). Here, Mr. Stade employed common journalistic techniques of filming a reporter asking questions and publishing satiric art. Stade Decl. ¶ 18. As such, should this court contradict the existing finding that Mr. Stade did not harass Ms. Beck, he is prepared to fight Maine's definition of "Harassment" in protection of his profession. He is further prepared to challenge the constitutionality of § 511-A on the same grounds as unconstitutional both facially and as applied.

3.3 The Complaint fails as a matter of law because it seeks is a prior restraint

Even a plaintiff with a prima facie case loses if the movant shows that the complaint fails to state a claim on which relief can be granted. 14 M.R.S. § 738(1)(C)(2)(a). This one does, for the reasons above and for one more.

Ms. Beck asks the Court to order Mr. Stade to take down his cartoons and "not to disseminate" them "at any time in the future." That is an injunction against publication, entered before any court has found the publication unlawful. That is a prior restraint, "the most serious and the least tolerable infringement on First Amendment rights." *Neb. Press Ass'n v. Stuart*, 427 U.S. 539, 559 (1976). *See also Alexander v. United States*, 509 U.S. 544, 550 (1993) (prior restraints are "judicial orders forbidding certain communications when issued in advance of the time that such communications are to occur"); *Near v. Minnesota*, 283 U.S. 697 (1931). Her theory has had no viability since at least 1971: "No prior decisions support the claim that the interest of an

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individual in being free from public criticism . . . warrants use of the injunctive power of a court." *Org. for a Better Austin v. Keefe*, 402 U.S. 415, 419 (1971). The First Circuit vacated an injunction that barred a defendant from repeating statements a jury had already found defamatory. *Sindi v. El-Moslimany*, 896 F.3d 1, 30–36 (1st Cir. 2018). Ms. Beck wants more than that even that plaintiff got on far thinner of a record. As the Texas Supreme Court put it, quoting Walter Sobchak, "the Supreme Court has roundly rejected prior restraint." *Kinney v. Barnes*, 443 S.W.3d 87, 91 n.7 (Tex. 2014) (quoting *The Big Lebowski*).

The statute does not even authorize such an order. The removal remedy exists only "[w]ith respect to unauthorized dissemination of certain private images as described in Title 17-A, section 511-A." 5 M.R.S. § 4655(1)(G). These are not such images.

3.4 The October 7 hearing is stayed by operation of law

"[O]n the filing of a motion under section 734," "[a]ll other proceedings between the moving party and responding party, including discovery and a pending hearing or motion, are stayed." 14 M.R.S. § 735(1)(A). The stay lasts until the Court rules on the UPEPA motion and the time to appeal runs. *Id.* § 735(2). Its purpose is to protect the moving party "from the burdens of litigation" until the Court decides whether the case should exist at all. UPEPA § 4 cmt. 1.

The only exception that could matter is the Court's power, for good cause, to hear "[a] motion seeking a special or preliminary injunction to protect against an imminent threat to public health or safety." 14 M.R.S. § 735(7)(B). We do not have that here. Ms. Beck asked for a TRO and the Court denied it on Sept. 18, 2026, finding her allegations insufficient. A satirical picture is not an imminent threat to anyone's safety. The stay costs her nothing but time, and the UPEPA allows the Court to advance this motion on the docket. *Id.* § 736. Mr. Stade asks that the October 7, 2026, hearing be continued as stayed and that the Court set this motion for hearing at its earliest convenience.

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3.5 Mr. Stade is entitled to his costs, fees, and expenses

If Mr. Stade prevails, the Court "shall award court costs, attorney's fees and reasonable litigation expenses related to the motion." 14 M.R.S. § 740(1). The award is mandatory because "[w]ithout the prospect of having to financially reimburse a successful moving party, SLAPP plaintiffs will be able to file their frivolous suits . . . with impunity." UPEPA § 10 cmt. 1. A voluntary dismissal does not avoid it. 14 M.R.S. § 738(2)–(3). Mr. Stade will submit a fee application after the Court rules. But fees are mandatory.

4.0 Conclusion

A cameraman filmed a journalist asking an elected official questions on a public street, his outlet reported the news, and he drew two cartoons. The official's wife, a candidate herself, wants a court order that says this is harassment and that takes the cartoons down. Using a clearly inapplicable criminal statute to try and gain an advantage in a censorship campaign is prohibited by the First Amendment. *McBreairty v. Brewer Sch. Dep't,* 783 F. Supp. 3d 394, 407 (D. Me. 2025). *See also Berge v. School Comm. of Gloucester*, 107 F.4th 33, 43 (1st Cir. 2024). While these cases involve public officials committing this transgression, and thus being held liable under §1983, the rule of law here still applies to Ms. Beck. She cannot use a clearly inapplicable law to try and censor material she does not like. The harassment statute does not reach protected speech, and the Uniform Public Expression Protection Act exists so that a case like this ends now. The Court should dismiss the Complaint with prejudice, continue the October 7, 2026, hearing as stayed pending its ruling, and award Mr. Stade his costs, attorney's fees, and expenses under 14 M.R.S. § 740.

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NOTICE

Matter in opposition to this motion pursuant to M.R. Civ. P. 7(c) must be filed not later than 21 days after the filing of this motion unless another time is provided by the Maine Rules of Civil Procedure or set by the Court. Failure to file timely opposition will be deemed a waiver of all objections to the motion, which may be granted without further notice or hearing.

Dated: October 6, 2026.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ David Gordon
David Gordon, Bar No. 11432
Steve Smith Trial Lawyers
191 Water Street
Augusta, ME 04330
(207) 622-3711
david@americantrialgroup.com

/s/ Marc J. Randazza
Marc J. Randazza (*Pro Hac Vice Pending*)
Randazza Legal Group, PLLC
30 Western Avenue
Gloucester, MA 01930
(888) 887-1776
ecf@randazza.com

Attorneys for Defendant Adam Stade

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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that on October 6, 2026, a true and correct copy of the foregoing was filed electronically. Notice of this filing will be sent by e-mail to all parties by operation of the court's electronic filing system or by mail to anyone unable to accept electronic filing as indicated on the Notice of Electronic Filing. Parties may access this filing through the court's CM/ECF System.

/s/ David Gordon
David Gordon, Bar No. 11432

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Exhibit 1

Bangor Daily News Article:
"Bangor won't clarify if councilor's spouse
can be sworn in to School Committee"

BDN BANGOR DAILY NEWS

54 ° F Bangor

Bangor won't clarify if councilor's spouse can be sworn in to School Committee

by **Annie Rupertus**
September 2, 2026

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Jamie Beck, seen in this November 2024 photo, is running for Bangor School Committee in 2026. Her husband is City Councilor Michael Beck. Credit: Linda Coan O'Kresik / BDN

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Bangor won't clarify if councilor's spouse can b
About 4 Minutes
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The spouse of a Bangor City Councilor qualified for this year's School Committee ballot, but it's unclear whether she can be sworn in because of vague guidance in the city's charter.

Jamie Beck, wife of City Councilor Michael Beck, is one of just three candidates who qualified to run for three open seats on the School Committee.

Article four of Bangor's charter states, "No immediate family member of a sitting City Councilor shall serve on any board, committee or commission of the City of Bangor during the City Councilor's term." The provision defines immediate family member as a spouse, child, sibling or domestic partner.

That appears to bar a councilor’s spouse from serving on the School Committee — although precedent says otherwise, as School Committee member Ben Sprague served for two years while his father, Jonathan Sprague, was a city councilor, just a few years ago.

Jamie Beck’s candidacy in the uncontested election highlights a vague point in Bangor’s rules that the city has been unwilling to clarify and leaves significant questions about what could happen to the School Committee seat if she isn’t sworn in.

Asked about the rule, city spokesperson David Warren said, “It’s the opinion of the City’s Legal Department that Article IV of the City Charter does not technically prevent an immediate family member of a sitting City Councilor from being placed on the ballot.”

Warren did not answer detailed questions about whether Beck would be able to take office, how the city would fill a vacant seat if she isn’t sworn in, and why the Spragues were allowed to serve overlapping terms.

A spokesperson for the Maine Municipal Association declined to comment.

The city’s governing documents are inconsistent in terms of whether the School Committee is included under the category of “any board, committee or commission of the City of Bangor.” The **chapter** of the city’s code

titled, “Boards, Committees and Commissions” does not mention the School Committee; however, the committee is included under the definition of “board” in a **different section** of the code.

Beck believes that the rule was not intended to apply to the School Committee.

Unlike other city boards like the Board of Ethics or the Parks and Recreation Committee, whose members are appointed by the council, School Committee members are elected separately by the public.

“Each body is independently elected and each body has their own code of ethics,” Beck said, adding that the previous paragraph in the charter mentions the School Committee by name separately.

Beck said she’s proceeding now with the understanding that she’ll be on the ballot and working to “see how best I can help serve the school department and the superintendent.”

Although the rule barring family members from serving on city boards has been in place for more than a decade, Ben Sprague was sworn in as a School Committee member in 2021 while Jonathan Sprague served a City Council term from 2020 to 2023. Neither responded to requests for comment Tuesday.

Clare Davitt, who sat on the City Council from 2017 to 2023, told the Bangor Daily News that she’s not sure why the city solicitor, city manager or council chair at the time didn’t bring up the charter rule when the Spragues served.

“I regret not raising the issue publicly,” Davitt said.

The provision was originally added to the charter as part of a **package of amendments** **approved by voters** in 2010. Many of those changes, such as updates to the process for recalling elected officials, were recommended by a citizen review committee, but the rule about family members serving on city boards was added later in the process by city councilors at the time.

The addition of the measure was **seemingly directed** at then-Councilor Geoff Gratwick, whose wife, Lucy Quimby, served on citizen committees.

While it appears the city will allow Beck to be on the ballot in November, it’s unclear what will happen if she is ultimately not allowed to serve.

The charter does not clearly outline how seats should be filled when there aren’t enough eligible candidates to fill the number of open seats, although **it does say that vacancies** “caused by the death, resignation, removal from the City or removal from office of any member of the City Council or School Committee” may be filled at the next regular election or via special election, at the discretion of the City Council.

That suggests the School Committee could have an unfilled seat for the upcoming year, which is set to be a pivotal one for the committee as it **moves toward a decision** on whether to preserve Bangor’s neighborhood school system or consolidate schools in the face of declining enrollment and aging facilities.

“It’s unfortunate that more people didn’t want to step up to serve and be part of our school committee,” Beck said. “It’s a really important role to fill in our community. Our children are our greatest asset and biggest investment.”

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Exhibit 2

Bangor Daily News Article:
"Housing for homeless in Bangor
moving forward despite push back"

BDN BANGOR DAILY NEWS

54 ° F Bangor

Bangor's council holds firm on deal for homeless housing development

by **Annie Rupertus**
August 17, 2026

23

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Some community members showed up to a special meeting of the Bangor City Council on Monday with signs in support of the Yellen Pines housing project. Credit: Annie Rupertus / BDN

The Bangor City Council is standing by its tax reimbursement deal for a 30-unit permanent supportive housing development after striking down a push to reconsider.

The council **already approved the deal** last week. It held a special meeting Monday to reconsider, but that effort failed in a 7-2 vote.

The Yellen Pines development, which will provide housing and 24/7 supportive services for people who have been chronically homeless in Bangor, has been the subject of heated public debate in recent weeks at city meetings and online, and Monday's meeting became chaotic after residents in attendance were not offered the chance to weigh in.

The deal includes the creation of a tax increment financing district, or TIF district, and an accompanying credit enhancement agreement that directs the city to reimburse 75% of the property taxes paid by the Yellen Pines facility for a 30-year period.

Councilors voted 6-3 last week in favor of the deal. Council Chair Susan Hawes was the only councilor who switched sides Monday, voting not to reconsider the initial decision she had previously opposed.

Also voting not to reconsider the deal were Michael Beck, Daniel Carson, Susan Deane, Susan Faloon, Joe Leonard and Angela Walker.

"This is something our city is badly in need of," Deane said of the housing project.

Carson noted that he'd already secured an amendment to the order before it passed, allowing the city manager to place conditions on the credit enhancement agreement when it's drafted, and suggested that the council discuss those conditions at its workshop next week.

Councilors Carolyn Fish and Wayne Mallar, both critics of the deal from the get-go, voted in favor of reconsideration.

Pushback against the project has included qualms about housing that offers treatment for mental health and substance use disorder as an option rather than a requirement Some community members said they don't believe the apartment building is worth sacrificing potential tax revenue.

The land on Corporate Drive where the developer, the Bangor Housing Development Corporation, plans to build the housing is currently empty and not generating tax revenue, but the city has **estimated** that the project would generate about $46,000 in taxes each year — meaning about $34,500 per year would be reimbursed back to the project.

The council voted nearly immediately after opening the special meeting, and the motion to reconsider the deal was the only agenda item.

Despite the **relatively short notice** for the meeting, the council chambers were nearly full, and clearly residents on both sides of the issue had shown up in force. Some brought signs with messages like "Bangor needs housing."

After the vote concluded, chatter grew louder in the room. Mallar leaned over to Hawes, who was sitting next to him, and asked, "Did we call for public comment?" Hawes replied that she did not.

City policy states that general public comment periods will not be held at special meetings "unless it is required by law or contains a public hearing agenda item specifically."

Numerous residents began talking in the gallery and addressing the council, arguing that the council should have asked for public comment.

"The vote is finished now," City Solicitor David Szewczyk said, noting that the council already held public hearings on the item last week.

Community members continued speaking as Beck tried to prompt Hawes to respond to the chaos in the room. When the chatter continued, Szewczyk added, "Chair, we can't have the public running the meeting. The council has to run the meeting."

Hawes called the meeting adjourned — about 20 minutes after it began — at which point many residents got up to leave.

“You guys are a clown show,” one person said as they walked out.

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Exhibit 3

Bangor Daily News Article:
"Bangor's council holds firm on deal
for homeless housing development"

BDN BANGOR DAILY NEWS

55 ° F Bangor

Housing for homeless in Bangor moving forward despite push back

by **Annie Rupertus**
August 12, 2026

23

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Michael Myatt, executive director of BangorHousing, walks through the new construction of Sunridge Senior Housing, a 50-unit senior living complex on Sunset Avenue in Bangor, in September 2025. Credit: Linda Coan O'Kresik / BDN

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A 30-unit permanent supportive housing facility for homeless residents is moving forward after Bangor City Council approved a property tax reimbursement Monday that will help the project overcome a funding gap.

Under the approved tax increment financing district, or TIF district, and accompanying credit enhancement agreement, the city will reimburse 75% of the property taxes paid by the Yellen Pines facility for a 30-year period.

The housing project is moving forward while some residents push back, part of a growing sentiment of distrust for homeless service providers and nonprofits among a subset of the Bangor community. Some

community members expressed that they don't believe the apartment building is worth sacrificing potential tax revenue.

Yellen Pines will offer studio apartments for people who have been chronically homeless in Bangor with 24/7 services on site to help residents get health care and substance use treatment and readjust to living indoors. The Bangor Housing Development Corporation plans to build it on Corporate Drive, near the former site of a large homeless encampment known as Tent City.

The project, which is primarily funded by a state grant, **has been delayed** due to difficulties finding enough money. Bangor has not contributed any grants toward the project, but the tax reimbursement will allow the developer to "borrow more money to help pay for things that are expensive with this project," Mike Myatt, its director, said during a committee meeting last week.

"We're not asking for capital dollars," he said. "We are asking for very precious taxpayer dollars, but we feel that that investment from the city in Yellen Pines will come back in savings" in costly police, jail and other expenses that weigh on cities with large homeless populations. Myatt told councilors the project would not be able to move forward without the TIF and credit enhancement agreement.

The estimated cost to build Yellen Pines is $11,185,881, and the developer is short $1,205,211 in funding, according to a June **memo** from Biguita Hernandez-Smith, an economic development officer for the city.

The city estimated that the building will generate about $46,000 in taxes each year, according to the memo. Under the tax agreement, the city will reimburse 75% — about $34,500 — to the project while keeping about $11,500 within the city's affordable housing TIF district fund for other initiatives. That's about $1,035,000 in reimbursements over 30 years.

Councilor Michael Beck noted that the city would not generate any tax revenue from the property if Yellen Pines was not built and the land continued to sit empty.

“It’s been sitting dormant for how long? I mean, there’s no projects waiting in the wings, just dying for that land with something that’s going to move this city forward,” he said.

The developer, a nonprofit partner agency of the Bangor Housing Authority, was **approved for an option agreement** to purchase the land from the city for $120,000 in October.

Monday’s council meeting was crowded, and four community members spoke in favor of the agreement for Yellen Pines during public hearings while six spoke against it. Some said they thought the project was too expensive and argued against sacrificing any tax revenue for it.

“That’s a lot of money for the taxpayers to give up,” Councilor Carolyn Fish said during Monday’s workshop. She also said she opposed the agreement because she couldn’t be sure that Yellen Pines would be limited only to people who are from Bangor.

Myatt said in several workshops that while he couldn’t say how many of the building’s residents would be from Bangor, they would be chosen based on the people who already interact with Bangor service providers and have the highest need.

Michael Furrow, a resident who has **taken out papers** to get on the city council ballot this fall, argued that the developer profits from the “homeless industrial complex” and suggested that the people who would be housed at Yellen Pines are “individuals who have no hope of recovery.”

Some at the meeting, including Councilor Wayne Mallar, also expressed concerns about substance use on the premises. Myatt said that while it's possible residents might use drugs in their private apartments, "the whole point of having the wraparound services is that Preble Street will be there to encourage folks to not do that."

Both parts of the tax deal were approved in 6-3 votes, with councilors Michael Beck, Daniel Carson, Susan Deane, Susan Faloon, Joe Leonard and Angela Walker voting yes. Councilors Carolyn Fish, Susan Hawes and Mallar voted no.

Hawes, the council chair, did not say why she voted no, nor did she answer a phone call Tuesday seeking comment on her vote.

Some of the project's criticism from the public mirrored the Trump administration's approach to homelessness as the president has, through executive orders and **changes to funding structures** within the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, worked to **drastically shift** programs away from the longstanding Housing First model and toward treatment-based programs with work requirements.

In one of the stranger moments of the meeting, resident Suzette Furrow said she worried about pedophiles living in the apartment building. Myatt later approached the public comment podium to state simply, "we will not be housing pedophiles at Yellen Pines."

Others were more supportive, saying the project would have far-reaching effects in the city such as savings in law enforcement and emergency services costs and helping people maintain housing after getting off the streets.

"We see individuals move into housing and then sometimes return to homelessness because they don't have the ongoing support they need to be successful," Jennifer Lolar, Maine's homeless response hub coordinator for the Bangor region, said. "When people have the tools to remain housed, it allows shelters, outreach teams, and other providers to focus their limited resources on those who are still experiencing homelessness."

The building is **expected to open** by the end of 2027. There are several other housing projects with similar tax agreements in the city, including two market rate residential properties on State Street and the **senior apartment project** Milford Place, Anne Krieg, the city's community and economic development director, said during a workshop Monday.

Once residents move into Yellen Pines, property-related expenses will be paid for with revenue from rents, which will be partially subsidized by housing vouchers, Myatt explained at a **city council committee meeting** last week. The 24/7 services provided by the Portland-based nonprofit Preble Street will be funded through the state with revenue from the real estate transfer tax.

Bangor was also awarded state funding earlier this year to build a second permanent supportive housing project, although planning for that is still in the early stages.

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Exhibit 4

Maine Wire Article:
"Bangor Council Approves 30-Year Tax Deal for Homeless Housing Despite Taxpayer Concerns"

CRIME

Bangor Council Approves 30-Year Tax Deal for Homeless Housing Despite Taxpayer Concerns

BY JON FETHERSTON — AUGUST 11, 2026 — UPDATED: AUGUST 11, 2026 7 COMMENTS 10 MINS READ

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Hawes, Fish and Mallar oppose Yellen Pines deal as residents question costs, drug use and long-term financial risk

BANGOR, Maine — The Bangor City Council voted 6-3 Monday night to approve a controversial 30-year tax arrangement for a permanent supportive housing development intended for some of the city's chronically homeless population, despite warnings from residents and three councilors that Bangor taxpayers could be assuming a costly long-term obligation without enough financial certainty.

Council Chair Susan Hawes and Councilors Carolyn Fish and Wayne Mallar voted against both the credit enhancement agreement and creation of the tax increment financing district for Yellen Pines, a proposed 30-unit permanent supportive housing development at 205 Corporate Drive.

Councilors Michael Beck, Daniel Carson, Susan Deane, Susan Faloon, Joseph Leonard and Angela Walker voted in favor.

The Bangor Housing Development Corporation project is intended to house 30 people experiencing chronic homelessness, with Preble Street expected to provide around-the-clock supportive services.

Under the agreement approved Monday, 75 percent of the property tax increment generated by the development would be returned through the credit enhancement agreement for 30 years.

That three-decade commitment became the centerpiece of a lengthy and at times contentious public debate over how far Bangor should go financially to address homelessness, and whether city taxpayers are being asked to shoulder responsibilities that should fall more heavily on state government, surrounding municipalities and private organizations.

Bangor resident Hillary Simmons urged councilors to delay the agreement until taxpayers receive a more complete accounting of its potential costs.

"This is not about opposing affordable housing or helping people experiencing homelessness," Simmons said. "This is about fiscal responsibility and whether Bangor should make a 30-year financial commitment without first providing taxpayers with a complete financial picture."

Simmons pointed specifically to Logan Place, a permanent supportive housing development in Portland that supporters have cited as evidence that the model can reduce police, ambulance, jail and emergency health care usage.

According to Simmons, Logan Place received $435,000 in federal HOME funding but received no TIF assistance.

"If Logan Place is being represented as an example of why Bangor should support Yellen Pines, then someone should explain why the success of Logan Place demonstrates that Bangor needs to return 75 percent of the tax increments for 30 years," Simmons said.

She asked councilors to table the proposal until taxpayers could see the estimated annual cost, estimated 30-year value of the agreement, complete financing package, remaining funding gaps and justification for providing the 75-percent benefit for three decades.

"Supporting housing and protecting Bangor taxpayers is not mutually exclusive," Simmons said. "Thirty years is a long time."

Residents Question $11 Million Price Tag

Maine to Automatically Enroll Eligible Households in Electric Bill Discount Program
October 4, 2026

Trump Warns Fraudsters: Prison Time Ahead — and Politicians Who Look Away Could Pay
October 4, 2026

Picture-Perfect Fall Day Brings Candidates, Families and Maine Wire TV Together at Lead Maine Festival
October 4, 2026

Who Changed Windham's Voter Records? Bagshaw Seeks Federal Review After State Cannot Identify Who Made Reassignments
October 4, 2026

Collins, Fellow Senators Demand Federal Probe Into Chinese Criminal Networks

The overall cost of Yellen Pines also came under scrutiny.

Bangor Realtor Emily Ellis told councilors that 175 residential homes had sold in Bangor during the previous six months, with an average sale price just under $318,000 and a median price of approximately $289,000.

She contrasted those figures with Yellen Pines, which she said works out to approximately $373,000 for each roughly 400-square-foot unit, or about $932 per square foot.

"There is a difference between affordable housing and subsidized housing," Ellis said.

Her husband, Mike Ellis, said he reviewed the project's plans and compared its projected cost with supportive housing developments elsewhere, including projects in Canada.

He questioned how Yellen Pines reached an approximately $11.2 million price tag for 30 units.

Other speakers questioned whether Bangor could eventually face additional financial exposure if state funding supporting the development changes.

Jackie Small told councilors that ongoing services at Yellen Pines are expected to be financed through Maine's Housing First program, which is supported through the state's real estate transfer tax.

Small argued that while Bangor would be making a 30-year commitment, future legislatures and governors could change the state funding formula supporting the services.

"The city's obligation is locked in for three decades," Small said. "The state's is not."

Small urged councilors to slow the process and reconsider the proposal after the November election.

"Bangor has to stop making rash decisions because the implication that this proposal could have on Bangor for the next 30 years are very real," she said.

Drug and Alcohol Use Becomes Issue Before Vote

One of the sharpest exchanges came immediately before the council voted on establishing the TIF district.

Hawes questioned Bangor Housing representative Mike Myatt about whether drug and alcohol use would be permitted at Yellen Pines.

Myatt stressed that Yellen Pines would be permanent supportive housing rather than a homeless shelter.

"If someone's using in their unit, they could be doing that," Myatt said.

He said the purpose of having Preble Street's wraparound services on site would be to encourage residents to address substance use and other problems.

Hawes pressed further.

"But you allow drugs and alcohol to be consumed on the premises. Is that correct?" she asked.

"If someone's using in their unit, they could be doing that," Myatt responded.

"To encourage, but not to prevent," Hawes replied. "So I have issues. I will be voting against the TIF."

Hawes ultimately joined Fish and Mallar in opposing the measure.

Fish: Bangor Cannot Have 'Endless Monies'

Fish delivered one of the strongest arguments from the council against the project.

She said Bangor has already worked with Bangor Housing, MaineHousing and private developers to add housing but still has not adequately answered a fundamental question: Who is Bangor financially responsible for helping?

"To me, I am tired of passing and voting yes on taxpayers' backs for projects like this when we do not have a system of filtering," Fish said.

Fish said Bangor's homeless residents need assistance and described life on the street as inhumane but questioned whether city taxpayers should assume long-term financial obligations for people arriving from other communities.

"We do not have endless monies to take care of everybody else's," Fish said.

She also questioned the cumulative impact if Yellen Pines eventually expands beyond its initial 30 units.

Fish said she wanted more information about the financial consequences of the project and greater participation from the state, surrounding communities and service providers before committing Bangor taxpayers.

"I want to know the financial data," Fish said. "I want to know what the future circumstances and the ripple effect on the city are going to be."

Supporters Say Doing Nothing Also Costs Bangor

Supporters countered that Yellen Pines should not be viewed simply as a benefit for 30 individuals.

Councilor Susan Faloon called the development an investment in the entire Bangor community.

"This is not just an investment in 30 people," Faloon said. "This is an investment in our entire community."

Supporters argued that chronically homeless individuals already generate substantial public costs through police interactions, ambulance calls, emergency medical care, shelters and incarceration.

Jennifer Lohler, who works in homeless services in Bangor, told the council that chronically homeless individuals who were housed in June had spent an average of 1,819 days homeless.

That is nearly five years.

"Having an apartment doesn't automatically resolve the barriers someone faced before they were housed," Lohler said.

She argued that supportive housing is particularly important for individuals who may return to homelessness without continued assistance.

"Home for Good pairs permanent housing with ongoing support that can give someone the foundation to build from," Lohler said.

Preble Street Points to Portland Results

Chris Saunders, vice president of operations at Preble Street, joined the meeting remotely and urged councilors to approve the project.

Saunders pointed to Logan Place in Portland, another 30-unit supportive housing development, as evidence that housing chronically homeless individuals can reduce costs elsewhere in government.

According to Saunders, Logan Place residents experienced an 88-percent reduction in jail nights during the project's first year.

Ambulance and emergency calls dropped by 66 percent, while police contacts fell by 80 percent, he said.

Saunders also said the system of care spent $23,328 less on residents during Logan Place's first year than it had during the previous year.

He argued that the savings would be more than $40,000 in today's dollars.

"Moving people from chronic homelessness to stable permanent housing benefits both the individual and the Bangor community," Saunders said.

Myatt similarly argued that the TIF should be considered an investment capable of reducing other municipal costs.

"We're not asking for capital dollars," Myatt said. "We are asking for very precious taxpayer dollars, but we feel that that investment from the city in Yellen Pines will come back in savings for the municipality."

Myatt said those savings could include fewer police calls, first responder interactions, unpaid medical bills and jail stays.

He also made the stakes of Monday's vote clear.

"If we don't get the TIF, our project cannot move forward," Myatt said.

Council Gives City Manager Authority to Add Conditions

Before approving the credit enhancement agreement, the council voted to amend the order to give the city manager authority to place conditions on the final agreement.

That amendment passed 8-1.

The council then approved the amended credit enhancement agreement 6-3, with Hawes, Fish and Mallar opposed.

The separate order creating the affordable housing TIF district at 205 Corporate Drive also passed 6-3, with Hawes, Fish and Mallar again voting no.

Project HOPE Could Bring Another $126,000 Bangor Commitment

The Yellen Pines debate came as Bangor is simultaneously considering another homelessness initiative.

Councilors referred a separate proposal for Project HOPE to the Government Operations Committee.

The proposal would authorize Bangor to accept and appropriate up to $300,000 from MaineHousing while providing a $126,000 match from the city's unspent opioid settlement funds.

Project HOPE is modeled on a Portland initiative designed to move people directly from homelessness into permanent housing while providing ongoing case management and support.

Residents questioned what happens after the initial funding period ends and whether Bangor taxpayers could eventually be asked to cover future expenses.

One speaker warned councilors that homelessness-related proposals increasingly arrive as urgent requests requiring immediate action.

"It's always an emergency," she said. "It's always all hands-on and all resources on deck for the same 1% of Bangor's population."

"Slow down, Bangor," she added.

The Project HOPE proposal is scheduled for further consideration rather than receiving final approval Monday night.

Eric Pelletier Unanimously Approved as Bangor Fire Chief

The council found considerably more agreement later in the meeting, unanimously approving Eric Pelletier as Bangor's next fire chief.

Pelletier joined the Bangor Fire Department as a lieutenant in 2015, was promoted to captain in 2018 and has served as deputy fire chief for eight years.

Before joining Bangor, Pelletier served as both a captain and assistant chief in Hermon.

He has more than 26 years of fire service experience and holds an associate degree in fire science and a bachelor's degree in fire science administration.

Councilors approved his appointment 9-0.

"I am humbled and honored to accept this position and the responsibility that comes with it," Pelletier told the council.

Pelletier thanked former chiefs, city employees, members of the department and his family before outlining priorities including public and firefighter safety, emergency preparedness, community relationships and professional development.

"Safety for the public and our personnel will always be a top priority," Pelletier said.

Mansfield Stadium Field Named for Ron St. Pierre

Councilors also voted 9-0 to officially name the baseball field at Mansfield Stadium in honor of Ronald "Ron" St. Pierre.

St. Pierre and David Mansfield voluntarily managed operations at Mansfield Stadium for more than 30 years, until the city's management agreement with Bangor Westside Little League ended in 2023.

St. Pierre also devoted countless volunteer hours to coaching generations of Bangor youth and supporting baseball tournaments at the local, state, regional and national levels.

Bangor Parks and Recreation Director Tracey Ouellette told councilors that St. Pierre and Mansfield were instrumental in shepherding the stadium and preserving it as an important community asset.

By placing St. Pierre's name permanently on the field, Ouellette said, future generations will have an opportunity to learn about his decades of service to Bangor.

The measure passed unanimously.

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5

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★★★★★

7 COMMENTS

Oldest

Handy N Handsome

1 month ago

That'll be a great addition to the neighborhood.

1

Norman Linnell

1 month ago

It would be more effective, economical, and humane for every state to have asylums for all of the junkies and the mentally ill.

9

cheshire cat

1 month ago

more B.S. from the tax and spend demoKKKrats that run Bangor. I'm old enough to remember when Bangor was a very nice city, not the crap hole it has become.

10

Pork Bellying

1 month ago

How can anyone justify paying 373,000 per 400 sqft unit.The cost is insane but the idea itself is worthwhile.The members of the Bangor City Council might be the most inept and under qualified group anywhere in America.They prove time and time again how much of an embarrassment they are,it never seems to end.

6

Lowell L Morse

1 month ago

Penal Colony? Darwin / isolation / experimentation ? That's scraching the surface. Additional cost incurr with the mental/health "services" that with be imparative with such. Locking doors i.e. autism children who "sneak out"
Oh, it's not prison / jail or a penal colony?
You can not hang this albatross around the neck of the taxpayer and expect to sail away into the night.
There are consequences.
The "lawmakers" are the problem here folks. As a side note, who are the two sitting behind the old dude the women and whoever? Nice touch with the purple jacketed set in the middle.
Aye Yay people, have you no shame? I will answer that, NO!
Bellies prove it!
It's best that I see this knot yet again, for The Word of The Almighty will spew you out of His mouth.

3

MaineMadMan

1 month ago

In less than 2 years it will look like LBJ's "Great Society" housing projects from the 60's.

4

Dwight McIntosh

1 month ago

These so called "Leaders" are certainly not looking out for the taxpayers of Bangor.
They are out of their flipping minds!!!!!

4

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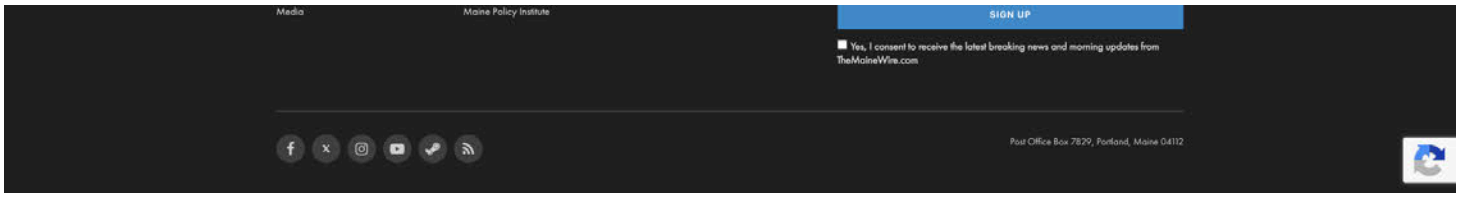
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STATE OF MAINE
PENOBSCOT, ss.

DISTRICT COURT
LOCATION: BANGOR
DOCKET NO. BANDC-PFH-2026-00180

JAMIE M. BECK,

Plaintiff,

v.

ADAM STADE,

Defendant.

DECLARATION OF ADAM STADE IN SUPPORT OF DEFENDANT'S SPECIAL MOTION FOR EXPEDITED RELIEF UNDER 14 M.R.S. § 734

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I, Adam Stade, declare as follows:

1. I am over the age of eighteen. I am the Defendant in this action. I make this declaration on personal knowledge in support of my Special Motion for Expedited Relief under 14 M.R.S. § 734, and I could and would testify to these facts if called as a witness.

2. I am a videographer for The Maine Wire, a news organization that covers Maine and national stories.

The Yellen Pines Vote

3. In August 2026, The Maine Wire covered the Bangor City Council's consideration of Yellen Pines, a proposed 30-unit housing project for the homeless with an estimated cost of about $11.2 million. On August 10, 2026, the Council approved a 30-year tax deal for the project. Councilor Michael Beck voted for it.

4. On August 17, 2026, the Council held a special meeting on whether to reconsider that vote. I attended as The Maine Wire's cameraman, together with Maine Wire reporter Joe Sokol. I filmed the meeting.

5. The Council voted right away not to reconsider. Councilor Beck voted with the majority. The meeting was adjourned about twenty minutes after it began. Members of the public

who had come to speak were not allowed to be heard. During the meeting I saw Councilor Beck become visibly angry at the citizens who had come to object.

August 17: Questions for Councilor Beck

6. After the meeting, Councilor Beck left the Council Chambers with Plaintiff Jamie Beck and their son and walked to their car on Center Street. Mr. Sokol walked along the public street and asked Councilor Beck questions about his vote, about Ms. Beck's ties to a nonprofit that stands to benefit from the project and whether he should have recused himself, and about his conduct toward the public at the meeting. I held the video camera and filmed from behind Mr. Sokol.

7. I was on a public street or sidewalk the entire time. I did not say anything to Ms. Beck. I did not touch Ms. Beck, Councilor Beck, or their son, and neither did Mr. Sokol. Nobody threatened them. I did not block their car or keep them from leaving. The encounter lasted about a minute and ended when the Becks got in their car and drove away.

8. My only purpose was to record a reporter asking an elected official questions about a public vote. I did not intend to frighten or intimidate Ms. Beck or anyone else.

9. I recorded the entire encounter. A true and correct copy of my recording is available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OmaDyttJQ6A and is submitted as **Exhibit A**. It fairly and accurately shows what happened.

10. On August 18, 2026, The Maine Wire published footage from the meeting and from the questioning of Councilor Beck on its Facebook and YouTube pages as part of its news coverage of the Yellen Pines vote. The Maine Wire's editors, not I, wrote the post and decided what to publish.

September: The Satirical Images

11. By early September 2026, it had been publicly reported that Ms. Beck was a candidate for the Bangor School Committee, and I knew that she was.

12. On September 12, 2026, I created a satirical image of Councilor Beck and Ms. Beck using an AI image tool. The image depicts them as homeless drug addicts. It is my commentary

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on their support for the Yellen Pines project. I posted it as the cover photo on my own Facebook page, with a note in the corner reading "This is satire by Adam Stade." A true and correct copy of that image is **Exhibit B**.

13. On September 14, 2026, I replaced that cover photo with a revised version of the same image that did not include the note. I removed the note because the image is obviously satire and nobody could take it as a real photograph. A true and correct copy of the revised image is **Exhibit C**.

14. Neither image shows anyone nude. Neither shows a sexual act or sexual contact. Both people in the images are clothed. I did not intend the images to be sexual, and they are not.

15. I posted the images on my own Facebook page for the public to see. I did not send either image to Ms. Beck. I did not tag her in them. I did not message her about them. I have never called, messaged, emailed, or otherwise contacted Ms. Beck at any time.

16. I made and posted the images as political satire about a sitting city councilor and a candidate for public office. I did not make or post them to harass, torment, threaten, or frighten Ms. Beck.

Other Matters

17. No law enforcement officer has ever served me with a notice to cease harassment under 17-A M.R.S. § 506-A, or otherwise told me to stay away from or stop contacting Ms. Beck. To my knowledge, no law enforcement officer has contacted me about Ms. Beck or about The Maine Wire's coverage.

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18. Filming a reporter asking questions of public officials in public places, and publishing satire about public officials and candidates, are ordinary journalistic practices. I use them regularly in my work.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Maine that the foregoing is true and correct.

Dated: October 6, 2026.

Adam Stade

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