**MAINE Legislative Action Committee (MELAC)**

***Reprinted from July 2018 Condo Media LAC Update Feature***

***Many Bills to Follow – Little Action to Report by Nena Groskind***

**Residential Foreclosure Process**

The legislature adjourned in April without acting on the majority of the bills on its docket, including the one bill on which the Maine Legislative Action Committee (MELAC) had submitted comments – revising some of the procedures in the residential foreclosure process.

**Sale of Marijuana**

Lawmakers did take one noteworthy action before ending this term, and it was dramatic: They overrode Gov. Paul LePage’s veto of legislation creating a system for regulating the retail sale of marijuana in the state.

After voters approved a ballot question allowing recreational marijuana use in 2016, lawmakers crafted regulations implementing it. But LePage vetoed that bill, citing, among other objections, his concern about having two different marijuana programs (for medical and recreational use) and his reluctance to approve a law that conflicts with federal law, which still classifies marijuana as an illegal drug.

Legislators voted overwhelmingly (109-39 in the House and 29-8 in the Senate) to override the veto, which will open the door to retail sale of the drug, but not immediately – in fact, not anytime soon, according to Bruce McGlauflin, a partner in Petruccelli, Martin & Haddow, LLP, who chairs the MELAC.

“The Dept of Administration and Financial Services is supposed to hire a consultant to develop regulations for issuing the licenses to retailers,” he explains. “If that gets done, the regulations then have to be approved by the Legislature when they next convene, which will be in January of 2019. And if and when that happens, municipalities will have to take action to “opt in” before licenses can be issued locally.”

And then there’s the staffing required to manage this regulatory system once it has been approved. “It’s not clear how quickly the state will move to hire workers to administer and enforce the new law and seek bids to design a seed-to-sale tracking system that will be used to regulate the marijuana market,” an article in the *Portland Press Herald* pointed out.

The bottom line, according to McGlauflin: Anyone hoping to buy marijuana legally in Maine, is going to have a long wait.