

The Case for Maine, by Joseph Swyers

Maine is the best compromise state for people who like Alaska or the West but also eastern amenities. Maine is larger than the other five New England states combined. It has great outdoors open spaces -- in the East! It is nearly tied with VT at 60% rural according to the Census. The next most rural state (SD) is only 48%.
<http://forum.freestateproject.org/index.php?board=5;action=display;threadid=569>

Yet the Portland MSA has a quarter million people. From Kittery to Massachusetts is only 20 miles. Maine resident Thomas Golebiewski states: "it is certainly less than a 1 hour commute by car/train into downtown Boston, certainly close enough for many of its residents to work and spend time in Boston." Back home, Maine is widely wired for cable internet to support high tech jobs.

Maine has eighteen private colleges (including Bowdoin and Bates), in addition to the University of Maine system. Maine's Technical Colleges and University of Maine have reciprocal tuition arrangements with universities in English-speaking New Brunswick. <http://www.maine.gov/portal/education/colleges.html>

Growth is welcome, especially at Maine's premier ex-Air Force Base opened for commercial development by the locals. Aroostook County is actively seeking people to fill thirteen thousand vacancies left when Loring Air Force Base was decommissioned in 1994. It is the largest international class airport in Maine -- given the length of runway, number of facilities, and acreage. It is capable of handling anything but the space shuttle. <http://www.loring.maine.com/>

According to the FSP FAQ: "important criteria include: 1) coastal access (to make ourselves less dependent on the American market and by extension American policies)". Of the lower 48, Maine's coast is the most conducive to independence. Delaware's is under the eye of Washington D.C. and New Hampshire's is too short to permit much privacy or private ownership. Maine's forests, coastline, and Canadian border are extensive and "wild" -- affording privacy unmatched in the east. Maine has a profusion of inlets, islands, bays, and harbors along 228 miles of coastline and 3,478 miles of shoreline. (New Hampshire has 13 miles of coastline and 131 miles of shoreline.) Maine can access major ports of the US and Canadian east coast, Europe, and other Atlantic markets.

Maine resident Thomas Golebiewski also states: "I can not stress enough that our coastline offers a resource matched only by Alaska. The opportunity for industry, foreign relations, and commerce abound up and down the Maine coast, and the people who live there certainly are comprised of many sympathetic to the ideals of the FSP."

Maine's secession from Massachusetts in 1820 fuels Maine's independent spirit. Fishing and logging communities hate government interference in private forests or fisheries. Northern Mainers want to be the 51st state.
<http://forum.freestateproject.org/index.php?board=5;action=display;threadid=325>

Coastal Maine's mild climate yields hot summer days but cool nights. Winters are warm by the sea; spring arrives by April. Near the coast the long frost-free season is exceeded only by Delaware. The moderating influence of the sea prevents temperature extremes. At a latitude similar to Boise, ID or Portsmouth, NH, Maine farmers and gardeners produce a wide variety of vegetables and fruits. An acre of Maine has twice to thrice the water of an acre in the western states.

The perfect place for warm weather Porcupines to settle and have convenient access to Boston, is in middle of York County 16 miles northeast of Rochester, NH. The population of Sanford town was 20,806 in the 2000. York county had 186,742 people. Average climate data for Sanford are:

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	YEAR
TEMP	21.9	25.0	34.4	45.1	56.5	65.2	70.3	68.6	60.3	49.3	38.7	27.6	46.9
PRECIP	4.16	3.51	4.51	4.50	3.92	3.53	3.91	3.63	3.75	4.27	4.82	4.28	48.79
SNOW	18.0	15.7	12.3	03.0	00.2	00.0	00.0	00.0	00.0	00.3	03.0	19.0	71.3

Other New England states have only a sample of what Maine offers in full. Maine's diversity of wildlife and habitat cannot be matched by any state except Alaska. Maine residents enjoy fresh caught fish, mussels, lobster, scallops, clams, oysters, shrimp, salmon, halibut, haddock, and swordfish. No "flying it in" at exorbitant prices. World-class hunting includes bear, moose, deer, wild turkey, ruffed grouse, pheasant, upland game and waterfowl.
<http://www.state.me.us/ifw/>

Regarding guns and hunting, Maine received an "F" from the Brady Campaign Gun Control 2002 Report Card. Other state grades were: Wyoming F, Montana F, Idaho F+, Alaska D-, Vermont D-, South Dakota D, North Dakota D, New Hampshire D+, Delaware C. (<http://www.bradycampaign.org/press/rc03/details.pdf>)
Maine received the worst gun control score of all 50 states -- a minus 10 -- from the Open Society Institute in 2000. Other state scores were: Alaska -8, Montana -6, Vermont -5, North Dakota -5, Wyoming -4, South Dakota -3, Idaho -3, New Hampshire 0, Delaware +2. (<http://www.soros.org/crime/gunreport.htm>) These are all good news, coming as they do from our adversaries.

The FSP main web page says of Free State activists: "Then they could use their political leverage to negotiate appropriate political autonomy for our state." Maine is best-positioned for autonomy. A more autonomous Maine would not be an enclave in the middle of the country. Maine has less Federal land than all but Delaware. An independent Maine would not threaten to separate other states from the lower 48 as New Hampshire would. Maine could ally with neighboring Quebec or New Brunswick. Yet Maine's wilderness and warm coast is close to northeastern cities.

The number of people in a representative district is THE major factor in campaign time and expense. Maine, Wyoming, Montana, and Vermont all have between eight and nine thousand people per legislative district. In New Hampshire only 19 of its 88 multi-seat House districts have less 9,000 people. The rest of the states have much greater numbers of people per district (from 13,106 in ND, to 36,962 in Idaho to 43,246 in New Hampshire's largest multi-seat district).

Maine is the most politically independent state in the nation. Maine's split in voter registration (31% D, 29% R, 38% unenrolled) gives third parties exceptional influence. It is the ONLY state which gave Ross Perot second place in 1992. In 1974 it was first in electing an independent governor. They did it again in 1994 (he was term limited in 2002). 1992 proved the potential "Independent" vote, in that Maine beat all the other candidate states in the Perot vote.

30.44%	206,820	Maine	23.07%	71,084	North Dakota
28.43%	73,481	Alaska	22.78%	65,991	Vermont
27.04%	130,395	Idaho	22.56%	121,337	New Hampshire
26.11%	107,225	Montana	21.80%	73,295	South Dakota
25.56%	51,263	Wyoming	20.44%	59,213	Delaware

Maine limits legislators to four consecutive terms and Governors to eight years. Maine voters can veto legislation, and propose and pass their own. Many referendums and initiatives cause high voter involvement in every election. Maine is the only eastern state with initiative and referendum.

Maine is the only eastern state under consideration where medical marijuana is legal. Of our ten states it ranks behind Alaska and ahead of Wyoming for marijuana laws, based on fines, jail time, and medical marijuana.

Again we must remember that, according to the FSP FAQ:

"important criteria include: 1) coastal access (to make ourselves less dependent on the American market and by extension American policies)."

Only Maine delivers the world-class coastal access and independence needed for a viable option for autonomy. Fred Staples stated on the forum, "As the chairman of the LPME, I'm committed to the liberating [of] Maine. I think Maine is the best choice for the Project."