



2026 Candidate Survey

Candidate Name: United States Senator Susan M. Collins

Office Running For: U.S. Senate

District: Maine

Campaign Website: susancollins.com

Please describe your personal and professional experience with nonprofit organizations

I have been a longtime champion of Maine's non-profit sector, and throughout my Senate service, I have worked closely with Maine nonprofits of all sizes and missions. Ensuring that Maine's nonprofits have a seat at the table has always been important to me. I meet with hundreds of volunteers, organization leaders, and Mainers served by nonprofits each year, and value their insights to important federal policy matters on a range of issues. Supporting charitable organizations is also a personal value of mine and many members of my family.

I was a strong supporter of the Charitable Act, which provides a tax deduction for the majority of Maine taxpayers who do not itemize their taxes for charitable giving. The Maine Association of Nonprofits first brought this important bill to my attention. As you know, the bill was enacted in 2025 through the One Big Beautiful Bill Act. Although I strongly supported that provision, I voted against the larger reconciliation bill because of its Medicaid cuts and other provisions that would harm Maine families.

As Chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I have directed significant federal resources to Maine nonprofits through Congressionally Directed Spending. Since 2021, nearly 200 Maine nonprofit organizations have received more than \$250 million for projects across Maine. These projects range from community centers, YMCAs, and historic buildings to children's literacy, housing, health care, and other essential

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community services. These projects, with the help of nonprofit partners, are enriching communities in all of Maine's 16 counties.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, many nonprofit entities faced serious and unique challenges as demand for their services increased. I authored the Paycheck Protection Program and made sure that eligible nonprofit entities could receive forgivable loans to keep paying their employees and continue serving their communities. I also joined a bipartisan group of Senators in introducing the Universal Giving Pandemic Response and Recovery Act to expand and extend the charitable deduction for people who do not itemize their taxes. Those efforts would help lay the foundation for enacting the Charitable Act.

Please describe your top three policy goals.

As a United States Senator for Maine and the Chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I focus my attention on a number of important issues facing our state and the nation. Among my top priorities are:

1. Working to lower costs and help the people of Maine and America deal with the challenging economy of the last few years. The rising cost of living has placed a significant strain on families across our country, making it harder to afford groceries, health care and prescription drugs, child care, and other critical necessities. I am working across party lines to advance commonsense policies that lower costs, expand economic opportunity, and help make it easier for the American people to earn a good living while keeping more of their hard-earned paychecks.
2. Increasing funding for lifesaving medical research. There simply is no investment that pays greater dividends to American families than our investment in medical research, which can lead to life-saving and life-enhancing discoveries. In 1997, I founded the Senate Diabetes Caucus and have led the effort to more than triple federal funding for diabetes research. As the founder and co-chair of the Congressional Task Force on Alzheimer's Disease, I have worked to increase funding for Alzheimer's research and to strengthen support for family caregivers. Last year, when the Administration proposed a 41% cut to medical research, I led the effort to reject those cuts. Instead of

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cutting medical research by 41%, we were able to increase it by \$400 million. The first hearing I held as Appropriations Chair was about maintaining American leadership in biomedical research. I blocked the Trump Administration's proposal to arbitrarily cap indirect costs that are part of NIH grants, and I blocked the Office of Management and Budget's sweeping proposed rule to overhaul the federal grants framework. This rule threatened to undermine medical research and other grants.

3. Delivering results and increasing opportunities for the people of Maine. In the past five years, I have secured nearly \$1.5 billion in Congressionally Directed Spending for 672 projects across communities in all 16 Maine counties. From hospitals risking closures to workforce programs needing new equipment; from roads, bridges, and airports in dangerous disrepair, to community centers for which local funding falls short; from fire stations in small, rural communities, to clean drinking water and wastewater projects that would otherwise rely on rate hikes, the federal funding I delivered has helped communities avoid delays and offset the costs they might otherwise have had to finance on their own. These and other long-term investments in critical infrastructure make a difference to all those who live, work, and raise families in Maine. Maine's nonprofit organizations are a key partner in this initiative. I have directed more than \$250 million to nearly 200 nonprofit entities across Maine. These federal investments have been transformational, and nonprofit organizations have been valuable partners.

Please provide specific ways in which, if elected, you would partner with the nonprofit sector to achieve the goals of your campaign.

Throughout my Senate service, I have valued working with the Maine Association of Nonprofits and its member organizations to accomplish many shared goals. I have helped Maine's nonprofit organizations access the resources and support they need to continue the important work they do in communities across Maine. We've worked together to increase access to health care, child care, afterschool programs, food banks, housing, and more, and I remain committed to that work. As the first Mainer to Chair the Senate Appropriations Committee in nearly a century, I will continue to use this position to advocate for Maine's nonprofits. One of the benefits of Congressionally Directed Spending is that it allows me to help Maine organizations tap directly into

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federal resources without having to navigate the complex federal grant system. Many organizations that would otherwise be unable to receive federal funding are able to secure funding with my assistance through these opportunities.

Nonprofits are often at the forefront of serving unmet needs. I look forward to continuing to work with your member organizations of all sizes and missions to better serve Maine families and communities.

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