

*127th Legislature*  
*Senate of*  
*Maine*  
*Senate District 9*

*Senator Geoffrey M. Gratwick*  
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Senator James Hamper, Representative Margaret Rotundo  
Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee  
c/o Office of Fiscal and Program Review  
5 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333

June 5, 2015

Senator Hamper, Representative Rotundo, and Members of the Appropriations Committee:

I am writing to inform you that, with regret, I am requesting an Ought Not To Pass report on LD 211 "An Act To Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue To Prepare Maine To Respond to a Disease Outbreak."

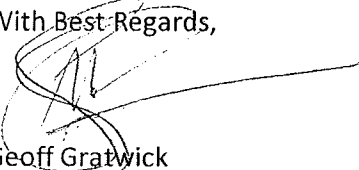
I submitted this bond proposal in response to a report that appeared in the *Bangor Daily News* in December 2014: "Maine Among States Unprepared For Disease Outbreaks." As a physician, I found this report troubling.

Two of the five indicators that Maine is failing in involve the capabilities of our public health lab, the Health and Environmental Testing Laboratory (HETL). I had the opportunity to tour the HETL earlier this year. While I was very impressed by the dedication of the employees to protecting public health, I was dismayed to find outdated facilities and some testing equipment that may be decades out of date. I left the facility convinced that something needs to be done. I have made several requests to the Department of Health and Human Services to provide information on the needs of the laboratory, but unfortunately have been met with silence. Without this information, I know that the Appropriations Committee will be unable to make an informed decision on the bond proposal before you.

The issue remains important to me and I intend to continue working to discover the information necessary to find a solution. At this time, however I do not wish to use the Committee's valuable time considering an issue when you do not have the proper background information.

Thank you for your work.

With Best Regards,

  
Geoff Gratwick  
Senate District 9