

ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION
21st Legislative Day
Wednesday, May 28, 2025

The Speaker resumed the Chair.

The House met according to adjournment and was called to order by the Speaker.

Prayer by Reverend Sara Bartlett, Second Congregational Church of Norway.

National Anthem by The Bipartisan Choral Ensemble, Augusta.

Pledge of Allegiance.

The Journal of yesterday was read and approved.

Under suspension of the rules, members were allowed to remove their jackets.

The following items were taken up out of order by unanimous consent:

ENACTORS

Emergency Measure

An Act to Provide Funds for the Redevelopment of the Island Nursing Home in Hancock County into Affordable Senior Housing

(H.P. 725) (L.D. 1106)
(C. "A" H-230)

Was reported by the Committee on **Engrossed Bills** as truly and strictly engrossed. This being an emergency measure, a two-thirds vote of all the members elected to the House being necessary, a total was taken. 118 voted in favor of the same and 0 against, and accordingly the Bill was **PASSED TO BE ENACTED**, signed by the Speaker and sent to the Senate.

Acts

An Act Regarding the State Workforce Board

(H.P. 51) (L.D. 87)
(C. "A" H-220)

An Act to Require Health Insurance Coverage for Biomarker Testing

(H.P. 72) (L.D. 107)
(C. "A" H-237)

An Act to Create a For-hire Charter Boat Operator License and to Require Individuals Recreationally Fishing for Halibut in Coastal Waters to Register with the Saltwater Recreational Fishing Registry

(H.P. 137) (L.D. 214)
(C. "A" H-214)

An Act to Fund Staff Support for the State Board of Education

(H.P. 223) (L.D. 323)
(C. "A" H-209)

An Act to Support Diversion Efforts to Prevent Homelessness in Maine

(H.P. 409) (L.D. 641)
(C. "A" H-227)

An Act to Provide Funds to Reduce Student Homelessness

(H.P. 489) (L.D. 747)
(C. "A" H-228)

An Act to Increase Bridging Rental Assistance Program Housing Voucher Funding to Reduce the Current Partial Waiting List and Increase Housing Vouchers for Persons Living with Mental Health Challenges

(H.P. 490) (L.D. 748)
(C. "A" H-229)

An Act to Create a Rebuttable Presumption Related to Specialized Risk Screening for First Responders

(S.P. 343) (L.D. 784)
(C. "A" S-95)

An Act to Allow a Person or Organization Conducting a Raffle to Use an Approved Payment Management System

(H.P. 549) (L.D. 863)
(C. "A" H-226)

An Act to Increase State Funding for the Campuses of the University of Maine System

(S.P. 508) (L.D. 1219)
(C. "A" S-133)

An Act to Address Employee Retention of State Employees Who Are Firefighters at Bangor International Airport

(H.P. 811) (L.D. 1236)
(C. "A" H-217)

An Act to Create a Direct Investment Pilot Project Under the Maine Clean Energy and Sustainability Accelerator

(H.P. 1135) (L.D. 1700)
(C. "A" H-241)

Were reported by the Committee on **Engrossed Bills** as truly and strictly engrossed, **PASSED TO BE ENACTED**, signed by the Speaker and sent to the Senate.

Resolves

Resolve, to Require the Department of Transportation to Implement the Recommendations of the Lower Road Rail Use Advisory Council and the Calais Branch Rail Use Advisory Council

(S.P. 46) (L.D. 29)
(C. "A" S-44)

Resolve, to Direct the Department of Transportation to Implement the Recommendations of the Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council

(S.P. 47) (L.D. 30)
(C. "A" S-45)

Resolve, to Create a Working Group on the Status of School Libraries and on Public Libraries in Maine

(H.P. 926) (L.D. 1404)
(C. "A" H-210)

Were reported by the Committee on **Engrossed Bills** as truly and strictly engrossed, **FINALLY PASSED**, signed by the Speaker and sent to the Senate.

By unanimous consent, all matters having been acted upon were **ORDERED SENT FORTHWITH**.

CONSENT CALENDAR

First Day

In accordance with House Rule 519, the following item appeared on the Consent Calendar for the First Day:

(H.P. 1258) (L.D. 1887) Resolve, To Improve Air Quality and Ventilation in Newly Constructed Schools Committee on **EDUCATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-314)**

Under suspension of the rules, Second Day Consent Calendar notification was given.

There being no objection, the House Paper was **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED as Amended** and sent for concurrence.

ENACTORS

Emergency Measure

Resolve, to Establish the Commission to Recommend Methods for Preventing Deed Fraud in the State

(S.P. 139) (L.D. 353)

(C. "A" S-129)

Was reported by the Committee on **Engrossed Bills** as truly and strictly engrossed. This being an emergency measure, a two-thirds vote of all the members elected to the House being necessary, a total was taken. 122 voted in favor of the same and 0 against, and accordingly the Resolve was **FINALLY PASSED**, signed by the Speaker and sent to the Senate.

Acts

An Act to Authorize the Use of Funds Resulting from the Issuance of Securities by the Maine Governmental Facilities Authority for the Purpose of Developing or Improving New or Existing Court Facilities in Penobscot County

(S.P. 251) (L.D. 753)

(C. "A" S-130)

An Act to Increase Access to Protection from Abuse Orders by Allowing Children to File Protection from Abuse Orders on Their Own Behalf

(S.P. 405) (L.D. 950)

(C. "A" S-131)

An Act Regarding Apportionment of Stipends to Agricultural Fairs

(S.P. 502) (L.D. 1213)

(C. "A" S-135)

Were reported by the Committee on **Engrossed Bills** as truly and strictly engrossed, **PASSED TO BE ENACTED**, signed by the Speaker and sent to the Senate.

Resolve

Resolve, Establishing the Commission to Study the Maine Tort Claims Act

(S.P. 564) (L.D. 1347)

(C. "A" S-132)

Was reported by the Committee on **Engrossed Bills** as truly and strictly engrossed, **FINALLY PASSED**, signed by the Speaker and sent to the Senate.

By unanimous consent, all matters having been acted upon were **ORDERED SENT FORTHWITH**.

CONSENT CALENDAR

First Day

In accordance with House Rule 519, the following items appeared on the Consent Calendar for the First Day:

(S.P. 31) (L.D. 119) Bill "An Act to Include the Declaration of an Emergency by the President of the United States as a Basis to Allow the Governor to Provide Disaster Relief to Local Governments" Committee on **STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT** reporting **Ought to Pass**

(S.P. 532) (L.D. 1302) Bill "An Act Regarding the Number of Voters of a Municipality Required to Petition for Consideration of Deorganization of That Municipality" Committee on **STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT** reporting **Ought to Pass**

(S.P. 24) (L.D. 11) Bill "An Act Regarding Temperature Standards for School Buildings" Committee on **EDUCATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-142)**

(S.P. 152) (L.D. 361) Bill "An Act to Support the Francis Malcolm Science Center" Committee on **EDUCATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-143)**

(S.P. 387) (L.D. 898) Bill "An Act to Support Rural Workforce Recruitment by Allowing Pay Differentials Based on Work Site Location and Employee Experience and Credentials Under the Maine Equal Pay Law" Committee on **LABOR** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-144)**

(S.P. 443) (L.D. 1025) Bill "An Act to Allow Federal Civil Service to Count for Purposes of Maine Public Employees Retirement System Benefits" Committee on **LABOR** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-145)**

(S.P. 540) (L.D. 1310) Bill "An Act to Amend the Laws Governing Insurance Coverage of Preventive and Primary Health Services" Committee on **HEALTH COVERAGE, INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-148)**

(S.P. 581) (L.D. 1425) Bill "An Act to Improve Access to Sustainable and Low-barrier Trauma Recovery Services" Committee on **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-150)**

(S.P. 586) (L.D. 1445) Bill "An Act to Prevent Financial Exploitation of Maine Residents 62 Years of Age or Older" Committee on **HEALTH COVERAGE, INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-147)**

(S.P. 601) (L.D. 1483) Bill "An Act to Validate Certain Referendum Proceedings Conducted by the City of South Portland" (EMERGENCY) Committee on **STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-137)**

(H.P. 1320) (L.D. 1976) Resolve, Regarding Legislative Review of Chapter 379: Compensation for Impacts to High-Value Agricultural Land from Solar Energy Development, a Late-filed Major Substantive Rule of the Department of Environmental Protection (EMERGENCY) Committee on **ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES** reporting **Ought to Pass**

(H.P. 52) (L.D. 88) Bill "An Act Regarding Penalties for Violating the Laws Governing Agriculture and Animals and the Maine Weights and Measures Law" Committee on **AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-296)**

(H.P. 672) (L.D. 1043) Bill "An Act to Provide Free Admission to State Parks and Historic Sites for the Immediate Family Members of Veterans and Active Military Personnel" Committee on **AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-294)**

(H.P. 696) (L.D. 1074) Bill "An Act to Remove the Limit on the Length of Probation That May Be Served for Aggravated Attempted Murder" Committee on **CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-307)**

(H.P. 701) (L.D. 1079) Bill "An Act to Provide Comprehensive Perimenopause and Menopause Education" Committee on **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-301)**

(H.P. 882) (L.D. 1359) Resolve, to Direct the Department of Transportation to Develop Practices Regarding Public Transit Committee on **TRANSPORTATION** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-302)**

(H.P. 1026) (L.D. 1568) Bill "An Act to Allow the Use of a Siren in a Vehicle Used by a Harbor Master or Deputy Harbor Master" (EMERGENCY) Committee on **TRANSPORTATION** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-303)**

(H.P. 1197) (L.D. 1786) Bill "An Act to Require the Department of Environmental Protection to Provide Certain Information Regarding Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances to the Public and Private Drinking Water Well Owners" Committee on **ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-308)**

(H.P. 1239) (L.D. 1855) Bill "An Act to Impose an Excise Tax on Spirits-based Cocktails Containing No More than 12 Percent Alcohol" Committee on **VETERANS AND LEGAL AFFAIRS** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-297)**

Under suspension of the rules, Second Day Consent Calendar notification was given.

There being no objection, the Senate Papers were **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED** or **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED as Amended** in concurrence and the House Papers were **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED** or **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED as Amended** and sent for concurrence.

(H.P. 164) (L.D. 261) Bill "An Act Regarding the Authority of Municipalities to Regulate Timber Harvesting" Committee on **AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-295)**

On motion of Representative PLUECKER of Warren, was **REMOVED** from the First Day Consent Calendar.

The Unanimous Committee Report was **READ**.

On further motion of the same Representative, **TABLED** pending **ACCEPTANCE** of the Committee Report and later today assigned.

By unanimous consent, all matters having been acted upon were **ORDERED SENT FORTHWITH**.

SENATE PAPERS

Non-Concurrent Matter

Bill "An Act to Allow the Public Utilities Commission to Establish Performance-based Metrics and Rate-adjustment Mechanisms for a Public Utility in Any Proceeding"

(H.P. 201) (L.D. 301)

Minority (6) **OUGHT NOT TO PASS** Report of the Committee on **ENERGY, UTILITIES AND TECHNOLOGY** **READ** and **ACCEPTED** in the House on May 22, 2025.

Came from the Senate with the Majority (7) **OUGHT TO PASS AS AMENDED** Report of the Committee on **ENERGY, UTILITIES AND TECHNOLOGY** **READ** and **ACCEPTED** and the Bill **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED AS AMENDED BY COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" (H-243)** in **NON-CONCURRENCE**.

Speaker FECTEAU of Biddeford moved that the House **INSIST**.

Representative SACHS of Freeport **REQUESTED** a roll call on the motion to **INSIST**.

More than one-fifth of the members present expressed a desire for a roll call which was ordered.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Scarborough, Representative Warren.

Representative **WARREN**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to speak in support for the pending motion before this Body, in respectful opposition to LD 301, which aims to instruct the Public Utilities Commission to implement performance-based ratemaking in any rate case.

While I understand the potential benefits of PBR in incentivizing utility companies to improve performance and efficiency, I had several concerns that led me to oppose this bill and lead me to continue to voice respectful opposition. Number one and primarily, this is not an evidence-based policy to do the really great things that proponents want to see; that I also want to see. Bottom line, this proposal in the limited other states which have attempted this, even historically in Maine, have shown to lead utilities to gaming the system to receive even more ratepayer money than they already do, to do the things opponents like myself believe they ought to do already.

LD 301 has enormous financial implications without clear evidence, goals or defined outcomes well past my time in the Legislature, and I cannot in good conscience support that. I can't support using public dollars to hand out financial incentives to the same utilities that are causing immense problems in our State; record rising electric rates, bad investments and notoriously poor reliability; without evidence that it will work. What's being proposed, and what has been argued through this bill, is specifically the value of using financial incentives, effectively taking ratepayer money to reward our utilities for providing quote-unquote 'better performance.' To me, that's completely unacceptable, particularly without compelling evidence from other states with similar regulatory models and parameters of how much money or what performance.

I support our current law passed in 2022 via LD 1959, which says our utilities should be required to perform in certain ways or be penalized for failing to do so. The PUC has indeed used that fine and penalty authority to fine Versant, and Versant has responded by threatening to sue at the first implementation and use of that law. This was contemplated when we passed that bill, and we did so anyway, because it was and remains a good policy for Maine. But there is absolutely no evidence to point to for support of this theory; theory; around PBR for deregulated utilities. And this bill provides no cap in the level of financial incentives, no guardrails, not even a requirement for a study and report back to the Legislature before implementation,

as has previously been a core component included in rate design proposals that have been successful and effective.

Despite the ask of supporters, I cannot simply try it out, because too much money is at stake. Unintended consequences to rate design regarding energy policy can have absolutely enormous implications, as we know for certain clean energy subsidies and the previous use of PBR within the last 15 years here in our State. We know our utilities will seek to game this design. We must be rigorous if we seek to consider this proposal. If we do this, we cannot point to that guaranteed rate of return to explain our enormously high and growing rates; third rising in the nation. We will have to ask our Commission what performance they sought to incentivize and whether they thought it was worth the additional public money that we allowed them to give.

PBR in its modern context is acknowledged by supporters and critics like myself alike as a relatively new policy in the modern era. I remain absolutely committed to finding solutions that balance the needs of consumers, utility companies and the public interest. This session, for example, we will likely be implementing time of use rates, which is an extremely evidence-based, cost-effective proposal which will cut costs and right-size use and load buildout and costs by utilities for all Maine people. We also have an energy fairness proposal which will limit costs that our utilities can recover from elaborate lunches and arguing at the Public Utilities Commission for what feels like ever-growing rates on Maine people. There are good proposals that are evidence based that we must push forward with. It is simply this specific proposal, at this specific time that asks too much and goes too far, gives too much trust to our utilities and incentivizes behavior that they should be doing anyway, without any additional ratepayer money.

I hope that you will follow my light with this pending motion and in respectful opposition to LD 301. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Hiram, Representative Wadsworth.

Representative **WADSWORTH**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. This is my fourth term on the Energy, Utilities and Technology Committee. I agree with everything that the Good Representative from Scarborough just said, so, please follow our lights.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from South Portland, Representative Kessler.

Representative **KESSLER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With all due respect to the Representative from Scarborough, I disagree.

What this bill is trying to do is clarify the PUC's authority that we've granted them from LD 1959 last Session to hold Versant accountable for their poor performance. If we do not Insist, then Versant will continue to litigate that we did not give clear authority for them to do this. And let me be clear that this Amendment is very specific to a proceeding for general increases in rates. It's not across the board.

So, please follow my light. Please move to Insist on this motion. Thank you very much.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from York, Representative Runte.

Representative **RUNTE**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think it's important that we take a step back and look at what this bill really is and remember the fact that performance-based ratemaking already exists in Maine.

Three years ago, the Public Utilities Commission was directed to go put together a program. It took them a few years to come up with a scorecard and specific penalties for failure to meet performance. They began to want to implement this in rate

cases, they were challenged by Versant on their authority to do this. If we're talking about saving ratepayer money, that effort took time and resources away from the overall effort. All this bill does is provide an insurance policy to discourage those kinds of activities in future rate cases, and that's it.

Now, I think it's important to remind people that in Maine, the way this; there's an impression that performance-based ratemaking rewards utilities for doing what's expected of them. And the fact of the matter is, there's no such single definition of performance-based ratemaking; it differs from jurisdiction to jurisdiction; it's customized to meet certain goals. But in Maine, not only does it not reward utilities to do what they were expected to do, it says if you fail to meet expectations, deductions will be made from what your allowable return might be. Now, they are incentivized to perform to expectations, but that's not an incentivization in the form of a reward.

So, I urge the Body to take a careful look at what this bill really is and not get into the game of speculating what things might be downstream, what other Legislatures might do, what performance-based ratemaking might be in other states. We're dealing with what we have here, and it's a system that was designed for Maine. So, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and I hope you follow my light.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from South Portland, Representative Kessler.

Representative **KESSLER**: My apologies for rising a second time. I was mistaken on the procedural motion. I will be voting against the pending motion.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Freeport, Representative Sachs.

Representative **SACHS**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would just like to remind the Body why I am opposed to the pending motion. That again, this was intended as a utility accountability bill that the charge of the PUC is not to do anything without thinking about the ratepayer in mind and the best and highest use for ratepayers, that it is not a blanket positive incentive at all. But if we fail in this opportunity to keep utilities accountable, I would urge the Body, in the five seconds we have left, to go to the docket that I referenced the other day on page six, where the PUC lays out in plain English how Versant is currently gaming the system. This is designed to stop that. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: A roll call has been ordered. The pending question before the House is to Insist. All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

ROLL CALL NO. 204

YEA - Adams, Albert, Arata, Ardell, Babin, Bagshaw, Bishop, Blier, Boyer D, Campbell, Carlow, Caruso, Chapman, Cimino, Collamore, Collins, Cooper, Cray, Daigle, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eder, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foley, Foster, Fredericks, Fredette, Gifford, Greenwood, Griffin, Guerrette, Haggan, Henderson, Hymes, Jackson, Javner, Lance, Lavigne, Lemelin, Libby, Lyman, Mason, McIntyre, Mingo, Montell, Morris, Nutting, Olsen, Parry, Paul, Perkins, Pluecker, Poirier, Pomerleau, Quint, Rudnicki, Schmersal-Burgess, Simmons, Smith, Soboleski, Strout, Swallow, Thorne, Tuell, Wadsworth, Warren, White J, White R, Wood P, Wood S, Woodsome.

NAY - Abdi, Ankeles, Archer, Arford, Beck, Bell, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, Crockett, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Eaton, Faircloth, Farrin, Friedmann, Frost, Gattine, Geiger, Gere, Golek, Graham, Gramlich, Hasenfus, Hepler, Julia, Kessler, Kuhn, Lajoie, Lee, Lookner, Macias, Malon, Mastraccio, Mathieson, Matlack, McCabe, Meyer, Milliken, Mitchell, Moonen, Murphy, O'Halloran, Osher, Pugh, Rana, Ray, Rielly, Roberts, Roeder, Rollins, Runte, Sachs, Salisbury, Sargent,

Sato, Sayre, Shagoury, Sinclair, Skold, Stover, Supica, Terry, Webb, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

ABSENT - Hall, Lanigan, Underwood, Walker.

Yes, 72; No, 75; Absent, 4; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

72 having voted in the affirmative and 75 voted in the negative, with 4 being absent, and accordingly the motion to **INSIST FAILED**.

Subsequently, Speaker FECTEAU of Biddeford moved that the House **RECEDE AND CONCUR**.

Representative FAULKINGHAM of Winter Harbor **REQUESTED** a roll call on the motion to **RECEDE AND CONCUR**.

More than one-fifth of the members present expressed a desire for a roll call which was ordered.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Scarborough, Representative Warren.

Representative **WARREN**: I just wanted to rise briefly against the current motion.

I have great respect for those that are supportive of this bill and every intention behind it. The PUC has told us that they have confidence in the decisions that they make, they would like to have an extra assurance and additional authority to offer performance-based ratemaking for both negative and positive incentives, which is very different and outside the bounds of those proposed within LD 1959. This will provide an opportunity for returns that are separate from a reasonable rate of return, which is the profit they are guaranteed by a Supreme Court decision in line with our constitutional requirements around the Takings Clause.

I have a lot of respect and deference for our current law passed in 2022 around performance and a reaction by penalizing, or fining, for poor performance. The PUC has used this function for the first time, and the response had been a threat to sue. There are many issues on which our wealthy and powerful private interests threaten to sue for us putting our foot down and regulating in a way consistent with the will and the public good. I think this is an example of that.

I appreciate the Good Representative from York talking about the concern of future Legislatures and speculation. Unfortunately, there are no caps on the money that can be received, there's no specificity about the performance that is incentivized and I have to; and can only; speculate because none of those proposals for amendment or compromise were considered by the good members of our Committee.

And so, as such, simply a private company threatening to sue is not on its own merits a compelling reason to support positive financial incentives from all Maine ratepayers for a lack of definitive, specific performance and what some; myself included; would argue should be they perform or they're merely penalized or fined for doing so, and that is already in Maine state law.

I hope that you will oppose the current motion. I just strongly, respectfully, disagree and hope that we're mindful about the potential consequences here. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Freeport, Representative Sachs.

Representative **SACHS**: Just for the record, and I want to be on mic, Mr. Speaker. Lawsuits are not where I'm at. If somebody is going to sue, somebody is going to sue. Let me read you the reason why the PUC said this is necessary. Quote; if you haven't had a chance to look it up in the last five seconds; "Versant's reluctance to develop meaningful SQLs;" or service quality indexes; "through most of this proceeding reveals to the commission that Versant is not sufficiently motivated to improve

reliability or be held accountable through meaningful SQL." This is the way to do it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: A roll call has been ordered. The pending question before the House is to Recede and Concur. All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

ROLL CALL NO. 205

YEA - Abdi, Ankeles, Archer, Arford, Beck, Bell, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dill, Doudera, Eaton, Faircloth, Farrin, Friedmann, Frost, Gattine, Geiger, Gere, Golek, Graham, Gramlich, Hasenfus, Hepler, Julia, Kessler, Kuhn, Lajoie, Lee, Lookner, Macias, Malon, Mastraccio, Mathieson, Matlack, McCabe, Meyer, Milliken, Mitchell, Moonen, Murphy, O'Halloran, Osher, Pugh, Rana, Ray, Rielly, Roberts, Roeder, Rollins, Runte, Sachs, Salisbury, Sargent, Sato, Sayre, Shagoury, Sinclair, Skold, Stover, Supica, Terry, Webb, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

NAY - Adams, Albert, Arata, Ardell, Babin, Bagshaw, Bishop, Blier, Boyer D, Campbell, Carlow, Caruso, Chapman, Cimino, Collamore, Collins, Cooper, Cray, Crockett, Daigle, Dodge, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eder, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foley, Foster, Fredericks, Fredette, Gifford, Greenwood, Griffin, Guerrette, Haggan, Henderson, Hymes, Jackson, Javner, Lance, Lavigne, Lemelin, Libby, Lyman, Mason, McIntyre, Mingo, Montell, Morris, Nutting, Olsen, Parry, Paul, Perkins, Pluecker, Poirier, Pomerleau, Quint, Rudnicki, Schmersal-Burgess, Simmons, Smith, Soboleski, Strout, Swallow, Thorne, Tuell, Wadsworth, Warren, White J, White R, Wood P, Wood S, Woodsome.

ABSENT - Hall, Lanigan, Underwood, Walker.

Yes, 73; No, 74; Absent, 4; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

73 having voted in the affirmative and 74 voted in the negative, with 4 being absent, and accordingly the motion to **RECEDE AND CONCUR FAILED**.

Subsequently, on motion of Representative MOONEN of Portland, **TABLED** pending **FURTHER CONSIDERATION** and later today assigned.

Non-Concurrent Matter

Bill "An Act to Prohibit Businesses from Refusing to Accept Cash for In-person Payments"

(H.P. 764) (L.D. 1159)

Report "A" (8) **OUGHT TO PASS AS AMENDED** of the Committee on **HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT READ** and **ACCEPTED** and the Bill **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED AS AMENDED BY COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" (H-222)** in the House on May 22, 2025.

Came from the Senate with Report "C" (2) **OUGHT TO PASS AS AMENDED** of the Committee on **HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT READ** and **ACCEPTED** and the Bill **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED AS AMENDED BY COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "B" (H-223)** in **NON-CONCURRENCE**.

Speaker FECTEAU of Biddeford moved that the House **INSIST**.

Representative COLLAMORE of Pittsfield moved that the House **RECEDE AND CONCUR**.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Augusta, Representative Rollins.

Representative **ROLLINS**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will rise and second that. We talked about it pretty closely in caucus, and I feel that we had probably ought to Insist, but I don't know if that's going to get us anywhere. So, I'm disappointed that we're going under the gavel here and that there are going to be

people in the economy that aren't going to be able to freely go to shops and buy things that they want, but this is where we are right now, so.

Representative **KESSLER** of South Portland **REQUESTED** a roll call on the motion to **RECEDE AND CONCUR**.

More than one-fifth of the members present expressed a desire for a roll call which was ordered.

The **SPEAKER**: A roll call has been ordered. The pending question before the House is to Recede and Concur. All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

ROLL CALL NO. 206

YEA - Adams, Albert, Arata, Ardell, Babin, Bagshaw, Bishop, Blier, Brennan, Campbell, Carlow, Caruso, Cimino, Collamore, Collins, Cooper, Crafts, Cray, Daigle, Dodge, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eder, Farrin, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foley, Foster, Fredericks, Fredette, Frost, Gere, Gifford, Gramlich, Greenwood, Griffin, Guerrette, Haggan, Hasenfus, Henderson, Hepler, Hymes, Jackson, Javner, Lance, Lavigne, Lemelin, Lyman, Malon, Mason, McIntyre, Mingo, Montell, Moonen, Nutting, Olsen, Parry, Paul, Pluecker, Poirier, Pomerleau, Quint, Roberts, Rudnicki, Sayre, Schmersal-Burgess, Simmons, Smith, Soboleski, Strout, Swallow, Thorne, Tuell, Wadsworth, Warren, White J, White R, Wood P, Wood S, Woodsome, Yusuf.

NAY - Abdi, Ankeles, Archer, Arford, Beck, Bell, Boyer D, Boyer M, Bridgeo, Bunker, Chapman, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crockett, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dill, Doudera, Eaton, Faircloth, Friedmann, Gattine, Geiger, Golek, Graham, Julia, Kessler, Kuhn, Lajoie, Lee, Libby, Lookner, Macias, Mastraccio, Mathieson, Matlack, McCabe, Meyer, Milliken, Mitchell, Morris, Murphy, O'Halloran, Osher, Perkins, Pugh, Rana, Ray, Rielly, Roeder, Rollins, Runte, Sachs, Salisbury, Sargent, Sato, Shagoury, Sinclair, Skold, Stover, Supica, Terry, Webb, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

ABSENT - Hall, Lanigan, Underwood, Walker.

Yes, 81; No, 66; Absent, 4; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

81 having voted in the affirmative and 66 voted in the negative, with 4 being absent, and accordingly the House voted to **RECEDE AND CONCUR**.

By unanimous consent, all matters having been acted upon were **ORDERED SENT FORTHWITH**.

COMMUNICATIONS

The Following Communication: (H.C. 182)

**STATE OF MAINE
CLERK'S OFFICE
2 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0002**

May 28, 2025

Honorable Ryan D. Fecteau

Speaker of the House

2 State House Station

Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Speaker Fecteau:

Pursuant to Joint Rule 310, the following Joint Standing Committees have voted unanimously to report the following bills out "Ought Not to Pass:"

Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

L.D. 1762 An Act to Protect Recreational Trails by Establishing the Trails for the Future Program

Education and Cultural Affairs

L.D. 736 An Act to Improve Ferry Service Reliability by Providing Scholarships at the Maine Maritime Academy

Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services

L.D. 1152 An Act to Expand the Right to Shop for Health Care Services

L.D. 1197 An Act to Update the Maine Money Transmission Modernization Act by Removing Provisions of Law Regarding Unhosted Wallets (EMERGENCY)

L.D. 1314 An Act to Protect Cannabis Industry Workers' Access to Personal Credit

L.D. 1387 Resolve, to Increase the Emergency Medical Workforce by Allowing Military Medical Personnel to Become Eligible for Licensure as Emergency Medical Services Persons

L.D. 1470 An Act to Create a Liaison Program to Self-insured Entities and Consumers

L.D. 1512 An Act to Protect Patients from Health Care Discrimination and Guarantee Access to the Lowest Available Cost for Care

L.D. 1589 An Act to Improve Parity in Insurance Coverage for Outpatient Counseling Services in Maine

L.D. 1674 An Act to Require Insurers to Address Climate Risk in Their Business Activities

L.D. 1688 An Act to Encourage Continuing Education Relating to Certain Infection-associated Chronic Conditions for Physicians and Nurses

L.D. 1972 An Act to Enhance Transparency and Value in Substantial Health Care Transactions by Changing the Review and Approval Process for Those Transactions

Judiciary

L.D. 194 An Act to Improve the Maine Unfair Trade Practices Act

L.D. 425 An Act to Establish a Conviction Integrity Unit in the Attorney General's Office

L.D. 688 An Act to Authorize Department of the Secretary of State Law Enforcement Officers to Initiate a Libel Proceeding Regarding Catalytic Converters

L.D. 1284 An Act to Repeal Provisions of Law Governing the Privacy of Broadband Internet Customer Personal Information

L.D. 1408 An Act to Codify Judicial Deference to Agency Interpretations

L.D. 1645 An Act to Improve Legislative Access to Public Information

L.D. 1650 An Act to Allow Paralegals to Be Paid by the Maine Commission on Public Defense Services

L.D. 1683 An Act to Make a Freedom of Access Act Request Free of Charge upon Petition

L.D. 1742 An Act to Prohibit a State Social Media Platform Account from Restricting User Comments

L.D. 1825 An Act to Implement the Recommendations of the Maine Commission on Public Defense Services Regarding the Confidentiality of Attorney-Client Communications in Jails and Correctional Facilities

L.D. 1842 An Act to Establish Stepparent Visitation Rights

Taxation

L.D. 1047 An Act to Impose an Additional Tax on Certain Unearned Income

L.D. 1499 An Act to Revoke the Tax-exempt Status of an Organization That Fails to Report Sexual Assaults Committed by Employees, Board Members, Volunteers or Affiliates

- L.D. 1617 An Act to Lower the Exclusion Amount for the Estate Tax and Create an Exclusion for Family Farms and Aquaculture, Fishing and Wood Harvesting Businesses
- L.D. 1622 An Act to Exempt Certain Income from State Income Tax
- L.D. 1795 An Act to Change the Calculation for Municipal Service Charges for Tax-exempt Organizations
- L.D. 1807 An Act to Expand the Sales Tax to Luxury Services and Adjust the Sales Tax on Rental Cars
- L.D. 1818 RESOLUTION, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine to Limit Taxes, Spending or Debt Without Approval by the Voters
- L.D. 1889 An Act to Expand Tax Incentives for Certain Barn Renovations
- L.D. 1924 An Act to Encourage New Residential Housing Through a Tax Exemption for the Sale or Rental of Such Housing
Veterans and Legal Affairs
- L.D. 1831 An Act to Support Small Adult Use Cannabis Businesses by Establishing a Micro Cannabis Facility License

Sincerely,
S/Robert B. Hunt
Clerk of the House

READ and with accompanying papers **ORDERED PLACED ON FILE.**

The Following Communication: (H.C. 183)

**STATE OF MAINE
CLERK'S OFFICE
2 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0002**

May 28, 2025
Honorable Ryan D. Fecteau
Speaker of the House
2 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Speaker Fecteau:
Pursuant to Joint Rule 310, the Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety has approved the request by the sponsor, Representative Campbell of Orrington, to report the following "Leave to Withdraw:"

- L.D. 230 An Act to Protect Minors from Harmful Depictions Generated by Artificial Intelligence

Sincerely,
S/Robert B. Hunt
Clerk of the House

READ and with accompanying papers **ORDERED PLACED ON FILE.**

The Following Communication: (S.C. 476)

**MAINE SENATE
132ND LEGISLATURE
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY**

May 27, 2025
Honorable Robert B. Hunt
Clerk of the House
2 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

Dear Clerk Hunt:

Please be advised the Senate today insisted to its previous action whereby it accepted the Majority Ought to Pass as Amended Report and Engrossed Bill "An Act to Improve Training Opportunities for Law Enforcement Officers" (H.P. 407) (L.D. 639) in non-concurrence.

Best Regards,
S/Darek M. Grant
Secretary of the Senate

READ and ORDERED PLACED ON FILE.

By unanimous consent, all matters having been acted upon were **ORDERED SENT FORTHWITH.**

SPECIAL SENTIMENT CALENDAR

In accordance with House Rule 519 and Joint Rule 213, the following items:

Recognizing:

the University of Maine Alumni Association, of Orono, on the celebration of the association's 150th Anniversary. On August 5, 1875, six alumni of the University of Maine, then called the Maine State College of Agriculture and the Mechanical Arts, met to officially form an independent alumni association "to promote the prosperity of the College and to foster among the graduates a sentiment of regard for each other and an attachment to their alma mater." This was just 10 years after Maine Governor Samuel Cony signed a legislative act creating the College itself in 1865. In 1897, the name of the college was changed to the University of Maine, and the association followed suit. Today, the University of Maine Alumni Association is an independent, not-for-profit organization dedicated to advancing the best interests of the university and its former, current and future students by inspiring lifelong connection, passion and engagement among the alumni community. We extend our congratulations and best wishes;

(HLS 278)

Presented by Representative DILL of Old Town.
Cosponsored by Senator BAILEY of York, Senator BALDACCI of Penobscot, Senator BICKFORD of Androscoggin, Senator CYRWAY of Kennebec, Senator GROHOSKI of Hancock, Senator GUERIN of Penobscot, Senator HICKMAN of Kennebec, Senator INGWERSEN of York, Senator MOORE of Washington, Senator PIERCE of Cumberland, Senator ROTUNDO of Androscoggin, Senator STEWART of Aroostook, Senator TALBOT ROSS of Cumberland, Senator TIPPING of Penobscot, Speaker FECTEAU of Biddeford, Representative ANKELES of Brunswick, Representative ARCHER of Saco, Representative ARFORD of Brunswick, Representative BECK of South Portland, Representative BOYER of Poland, Representative BRENNAN of Portland, Representative BRIDGEO of Augusta, Representative BUNKER of Farmington, Representative CAMPBELL of Orrington, Representative CLOUTIER of Lewiston, Representative COLLAMORE of Pittsfield, Representative CRAFTS of Newcastle,

Representative CROCKETT of Portland, Representative DODGE of Belfast, Representative DRINKWATER of Milford, Representative DUCHARME of Madison, Representative FAIRCLOTH of Bangor, Representative FOLEY of Wells, Representative FROST of Belgrade, Representative GRAHAM of North Yarmouth, Representative GRAMLICH of Old Orchard Beach, Representative GRIFFIN of Levant, Representative HASENFUS of Readfield, Representative HEPLER of Woolwich, Representative LAJOIE of Lewiston, Representative LANCE of Paris, Representative LEE of Auburn, Representative MALON of Biddeford, Representative MATLACK of St. George, Representative MCCABE of Lewiston, Representative MOONEN of Portland, Representative MURPHY of Scarborough, Representative NUTTING of Oakland, Representative OSHER of Orono, Representative PARRY of Arundel, Representative ROBERTS of South Berwick, Representative ROLLINS of Augusta, Representative SACHS of Freeport, Representative SALISBURY of Westbrook, Representative SARGENT of York, Representative SAYRE of Kennebunk, Representative SCHMERSAL-BURGESS of Mexico, Representative TERRY of Gorham, Representative UNDERWOOD of Presque Isle, Representative WARREN of Scarborough, Representative WHITE of Ellsworth, Representative WOOD of Greene, Representative ZAGER of Portland.

On **OBJECTION** of Representative DILL of Old Town, was **REMOVED** from the Special Sentiment Calendar.

READ.

On motion of the same Representative, **TABLED** pending **PASSAGE** and later today assigned.

By unanimous consent, all matters having been acted upon were **ORDERED SENT FORTHWITH**.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

Divided Reports

Majority Report of the Committee on **CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY** reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on Bill "An Act to Amend Certain Provisions of Maine's Drug Laws Regarding Heroin, Fentanyl and Cocaine"

(S.P. 517) (L.D. 1288)

Signed:

Senators:

BEEBE-CENTER of Knox
CURRY of Waldo

Representatives:

HASENFUS of Readfield
ABDI of Lewiston
BUNKER of Farmington
LAJOIE of Lewiston
LOOKNER of Portland
MILLIKEN of Blue Hill

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought to Pass** on same Bill.

Signed:

Senator:

CYRWAY of Kennebec

Representatives:

ARDELL of Monticello
MCINTYRE of Lowell
NUTTING of Oakland
PERKINS of Dover-Foxcroft

Came from the Senate with the Majority **OUGHT NOT TO PASS** Report **READ** and **ACCEPTED**.

READ.

Representative HASENFUS of Readfield moved that the House **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report.

Representative NUTTING of Oakland **REQUESTED** a roll call on the motion to **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report.

More than one-fifth of the members present expressed a desire for a roll call which was ordered.

The **SPEAKER**: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Blue Hill, Representative Milliken.

Representative **MILLIKEN**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in strong opposition to this bill and in strong support of the pending motion.

This bill, under the guise of combating drug trafficking, doubles down on an approach that we all know has failed. Criminalizing addiction and low-level possession through arbitrary weight thresholds that do not distinguish between someone who is dealing drugs and someone who is desperately trying to survive a disorder. Let me be clear: fentanyl is dangerous, heroin is dangerous, cocaine is dangerous; but we cannot arrest our way out of this crisis. What the bill proposes is not a public health strategy; it is a return to the same punitive policies that has fueled mass incarceration, disproportionately harm low-income Mainers and failed to reduce overdose deaths.

Under this bill, a person carrying as little as 200 mg of heroin, barely enough for personal use, could be charged with furnishing, which is a felony-level offense; 2 grams, that would be trafficking. Regardless of circumstance, regardless of the evidence. This is not justice, it's not smart policy, this is a sledgehammer. Ask yourself, who are we going to lock up with this bill? Is it cartel kingpins, or is it some young woman in Bangor self-medicating for trauma or a young man in Lewiston unhoused and struggling to detox, a teenager maybe in Dover-Foxcroft who got hooked after a sports injury and has no access to treatment? LD 1288 pushes these people further into the shadows and makes them less likely to access harm reduction services or seek treatment for fear of prosecution and it wastes State resources, not on saving lives, but on jails and prisons.

Maine has already taken steps towards compassionate, evidence-based approaches towards substance use disorder. We've expanded access to naloxone and medication-assisted treatment and recovery services. This bill will unravel some of that progress. We should be focused on investment, not on incarceration, but in treatment. I urge my colleagues to please not advance this bill. Thank you.

The **SPEAKER**: A roll call has been ordered. The pending question before the House is Acceptance of the Majority Ought Not to Pass Report. All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

ROLL CALL NO. 207

YEA - Abdi, Ankeles, Archer, Arford, Beck, Bell, Boyer D, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, Crockett, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Eaton, Faircloth, Farrin, Friedmann, Frost, Gattine, Geiger, Gere, Golek, Graham, Gramlich, Hasenfus, Hepler, Julia, Kessler, Kuhn, Lajoie, Lee, Libby, Lookner, Macias, Malon, Mastraccio, Mathieson, Matlack, McCabe, Meyer, Milliken, Mitchell, Montell, Moonen, Murphy, O'Halloran, Osher, Pluecker, Pugh, Rana, Ray, Rielly, Roberts, Roeder, Rollins, Runte, Sachs, Salisbury, Sargent, Sato, Sayre, Shagoury, Sinclair, Skold, Stover, Supica, Terry, Warren, Webb, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

NAY - Adams, Albert, Arata, Ardell, Babin, Bagshaw, Bishop, Blier, Campbell, Carlow, Caruso, Chapman, Cimino, Collamore, Collins, Cooper, Cray, Daigle, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eder, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foley, Foster, Fredericks, Fredette, Gifford, Greenwood, Griffin, Guerrette, Haggan, Henderson, Hymes, Jackson, Javner, Lance, Lavigne, Lemelin, Lyman, Mason, McIntyre, Mingo, Morris, Nutting, Olsen, Parry, Paul, Perkins, Poirier, Pomerleau, Quint, Rudnicki, Schmersal-Burgess, Simmons, Smith, Soboleski, Strout, Swallow, Thorne, Tuell, Wadsworth, White J, White R, Wood P, Wood S, Woodsome.

ABSENT - Hall, Lanigan, Underwood, Walker.
Yes, 80; No, 67; Absent, 4; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

80 having voted in the affirmative and 67 voted in the negative, with 4 being absent, and accordingly the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report was **ACCEPTED** in concurrence.

Majority Report of the Committee on **EDUCATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS** reporting **Ought to Pass** on Bill "An Act Regarding Unallocated Balances in a School Administrative Unit School Budget"

(S.P. 466) (L.D. 1103)

Signed:
Senators:

RAFFERTY of York
LIBBY of Cumberland
PIERCE of Cumberland

Representatives:

MURPHY of Scarborough
BRENNAN of Portland
CARLOW of Buxton
CROCKETT of Portland
DODGE of Belfast
HAGGAN of Hampden
LYMAN of Livermore Falls
MITCHELL of Cumberland
SARGENT of York

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on same Bill.

Signed:

Representative:

BAGSHAW of Windham

Came from the Senate with the Majority **OUGHT TO PASS** Report **READ** and **ACCEPTED** and the Bill **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED**.

READ.

On motion of Representative MURPHY of Scarborough, the Majority **Ought to Pass** Report was **ACCEPTED**.

The Bill was **READ ONCE**.

Under suspension of the rules the Bill was given its **SECOND READING WITHOUT REFERENCE** to the Committee on **Bills in the Second Reading**.

Under further suspension of the rules the Bill was **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED** in concurrence.

Majority Report of the Committee on **EDUCATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-140)** on Bill "An Act to Establish the Maine Charter School Commission as a Public Instrumentality of the State"

(S.P. 671) (L.D. 1718)

Signed:

Senators:

RAFFERTY of York
PIERCE of Cumberland

Representatives:

MURPHY of Scarborough
BAGSHAW of Windham
BRENNAN of Portland
CARLOW of Buxton
CROCKETT of Portland
DODGE of Belfast
HAGGAN of Hampden
LYMAN of Livermore Falls
MITCHELL of Cumberland
SARGENT of York

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on same Bill.

Signed:

Senator:

LIBBY of Cumberland

Came from the Senate with the Majority **OUGHT TO PASS AS AMENDED** Report **READ** and **ACCEPTED** and the Bill **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED AS AMENDED BY COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" (S-140)**.

READ.

On motion of Representative MURPHY of Scarborough, the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended** Report was **ACCEPTED**.

The Bill was **READ ONCE**. **Committee Amendment "A" (S-140)** was **READ** by the Clerk and **ADOPTED**.

Under suspension of the rules the Bill was given its **SECOND READING WITHOUT REFERENCE** to the Committee on **Bills in the Second Reading**.

Under further suspension of the rules the Bill was **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-140)** in concurrence.

Majority Report of the Committee on **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-149)** on Bill "An Act to Include Food Provided or Served at Emergency Shelters in General Assistance Reimbursement"

(S.P. 434) (L.D. 1017)

Signed:

Senator:

INGWERSEN of York

Representatives:

MEYER of Eliot
DEBRITO of Waterville
GRAHAM of North Yarmouth
MCCABE of Lewiston
SHAGOURY of Hallowell
ZAGER of Portland

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on same Bill.

Signed:

Senator:

MOORE of Washington

Representatives:

DAIGLE of Fort Kent

GRIFFIN of Levant

JAVNER of Chester

LEMELIN of Chelsea

Came from the Senate with the Majority **OUGHT TO PASS AS AMENDED** Report **READ** and **ACCEPTED** and the Bill **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED AS AMENDED BY COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" (S-149)**.

READ.

Representative MEYER of Eliot moved that the House **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended** Report.

Representative JAVNER of Chester **REQUESTED** a roll call on the motion to **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended** Report.

More than one-fifth of the members present expressed a desire for a roll call which was ordered.

The **SPEAKER**: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Chester, Representative Javner.

Representative **JAVNER**: I apologize. I will make my brief statement.

This is not the time to expand the General Assistance program. I think that we all can agree that the General Assistance needs major overhaul. And there isn't even a Fiscal Note generated for this bill yet, because the municipalities keep the data, and it's always constantly changing. So, we don't even know how much this is going to cost the State yet. Thank you.

The **SPEAKER**: A roll call has been ordered. The pending question before the House is Acceptance of the Majority Ought to Pass as Amended Report. All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

ROLL CALL NO. 208

YEA - Abdi, Ankeles, Archer, Arford, Beck, Bell, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, Crockett, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Eaton, Faircloth, Farrin, Friedmann, Frost, Gattine, Geiger, Gere, Golek, Graham, Gramlich, Hasenfus, Hepler, Jackson, Julia, Kessler, Kuhn, Lajoie, Lee, Lookner, Macias, Malon, Mastraccio, Mathieson, Matlack, McCabe, Meyer, Milliken, Mitchell, Montell, Moonen, Murphy, O'Halloran, Osher, Pluecker, Pugh, Rana, Ray, Rielly, Roberts, Roeder, Rollins, Runte, Sachs, Salisbury, Sargent, Sato, Sayre, Shagoury, Sinclair, Skold, Stover, Supica, Terry, Warren, Webb, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

NAY - Adams, Albert, Arata, Ardell, Babin, Bagshaw, Bishop, Blier, Boyer D, Campbell, Carlow, Caruso, Chapman, Cimino, Collamore, Collins, Cooper, Cray, Daigle, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eder, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foley, Foster, Fredericks, Fredette, Gifford, Greenwood, Griffin, Guerrette, Haggan, Henderson, Hymes, Javner, Lance, Lavigne, Lemelin, Libby, Lyman, Mason, McIntyre, Mingo, Morris, Nutting, Olsen, Parry, Paul, Perkins, Poirier, Pomerleau, Quint, Rudnicki, Schmersal-Burgess, Simmons, Smith, Soboleski, Strout, Swallow, Thorne, Tuell, Wadsworth, White J, White R, Wood P, Wood S, Woodsome.

ABSENT - Hall, Lanigan, Underwood, Walker.

Yes, 79; No, 68; Absent, 4; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

79 having voted in the affirmative and 68 voted in the negative, with 4 being absent, and accordingly the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended** Report was **ACCEPTED**.

The Bill was **READ ONCE**. **Committee Amendment "A" (S-149)** was **READ** by the Clerk and **ADOPTED**.

Under suspension of the rules the Bill was given its **SECOND READING WITHOUT REFERENCE** to the Committee on **Bills in the Second Reading**.

Under further suspension of the rules the Bill was **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-149)** in concurrence.

Majority Report of the Committee on **LABOR** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-146)** on Bill "An Act to Protect State Retiree Pensions from Inflation"

(S.P. 389) (L.D. 900)

Signed:

Senators:

TIPPING of Penobscot

RAFFERTY of York

Representatives:

ROEDER of Bangor

ARCHER of Saco

BECK of South Portland

GEIGER of Rockland

MACIAS of Topsham

SKOLD of Portland

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on same Bill.

Signed:

Senator:

BRADSTREET of Kennebec

Representatives:

COLLINS of Sidney

DRINKWATER of Milford

SOBOLESKI of Phillips

Came from the Senate with the Majority **OUGHT TO PASS AS AMENDED** Report **READ** and **ACCEPTED** and the Bill **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED AS AMENDED BY COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" (S-146)**.

READ.

Representative ROEDER of Bangor moved that the House **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended** Report.

Representative DRINKWATER of Milford **REQUESTED** a roll call on the motion to **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended** Report.

More than one-fifth of the members present expressed a desire for a roll call which was ordered.

The **SPEAKER**: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Milford, Representative Drinkwater.

Representative **DRINKWATER**: Thank you. Mr. Speaker, this is not the first time we've dealt with this type of bill on the Labor Committee, and up until this point in time, it's usually been a unanimous Report that we support COLAs for our State retirees. But the Minority felt that the price tag was just too high, and I'd just like to read a couple paragraphs from MainePERS on their testimony. "This bill will have a fiscal impact as the Maine Constitution does not permit the creation of new or additional benefits unless they are immediately and fully funded." Which means, obviously, we have to write a check up front in order for them to start the program. And the Fiscal Note, Mr. Speaker, on this proposal is \$1.6 billion. And we just felt that

we should be telling retirees the truth and not give them any false hope. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Bangor, Representative Roeder.

Representative **ROEDER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of LD 900, a bill that seeks to restore the pensions of Maine State retirees, and that is a promise we made to those who dedicated their careers to serving this State.

I do want to be clear, as my colleague from Milford was, this bill may pass, but it will likely die on the Appropriations Table. That's a shame. A deep and, in my opinion; unforgivable shame. The Fiscal Note attached to this bill is \$1.6 billion, and I know that figure looms large. I understand that in a perfect world, the State would have the resources to meet that need. But in the world we live in, it's clear that our State has chosen other priorities.

Over the years that I've had the honor of being on the Labor Committee, I have seen the Committee work in unison to help our State retirees, as my colleague from Milford did state. Though this is a Divided Report, I think I'm correct in saying that the Committee's hearts haven't changed, though their votes may have. I see the Divided Report as an indication of lost hope, and I want to acknowledge that. It's a shame that this issue has been so intractable that it stole the belief that anything can be done from some of our Committee Members. A budget is a moral document. Any budget that continues to ignore this issue tells Maine's retirees that their decades of service don't matter. It tells them that they're expendable. Every year we fail to restore these pensions, we are complicit in perpetuating the injustice.

We know that this bill will likely die on the Appropriations Table, but I won't stop pushing for pension fairness. We must keep bringing these bills forward year after year until we get it right, until we make good on the promises we made. Because the truth is, it's not just about numbers on a page, it's about peoples' lives, it's about justice and it's about time we started acting like it. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair would remind Members to not question the motives of other Members.

The Chair reminded all Members that it was inappropriate to question the motives of other Members of the House.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Phillips, Representative Soboleski.

Representative **SOBOLESKI**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen. I rise today in opposition of LD 900 as Amended, not because I oppose supporting retirees, but because this bill places an unsustainable financial burden on our State, jeopardizing essential services that Mainers rely on daily.

While ensuring the well-being of our public employees in retirement is a priority, we must legislate responsibly, balancing our obligations to retirees with the broader need for Maine's working families, businesses and public services. This legislation proposes, as we've heard a few times already, \$1.6 billion one-time allocation for the General Fund to cover the unfunded actuarial liability created by expanding cost of living adjustments; COLAs. This is a staggering financial statement. One that could force our State to reallocate resources away from critical areas like education, health care and infrastructure. Mainers deserve safe roads, well-funded schools and accessible health care. Approving this measure, as written, risks undermining these priorities, placing future generations in a difficult position.

The Divided Report is actually a statement of fiscal responsibility to our State. Additionally, this bill sets a precedent for continued COLA increases, raising the maximum adjustment from three to four percent in Fiscal Years '26-'27 and '27-'28, then to five percent in '28-'29. While well intended, this approach fails to provide a substantial funding plan, which could result in future shortfalls that may require tax increases or cuts to other essential services.

Maine's taxpayers should not be forced to bear the weight of an unfunded mandate that lacks a long-term fiscal financial strategy. We must take a balanced approach. One that protects retirees while also ensuring Maine remains fiscally responsible for all citizens. By passing LD 900 in its current form, we risk diverting resources from working Mainers, small businesses and struggling families. Instead, I urge my colleagues to consider alternatives that support retirees without destabilizing Maine's financial future.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge a no vote on LD 900 as Amended. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: A roll call has been ordered. The pending question before the House is Acceptance of the Majority Ought to Pass as Amended Report. All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

ROLL CALL NO. 209

YEA - Abdi, Ankeles, Archer, Arford, Beck, Bell, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, Crockett, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Eaton, Faircloth, Farrin, Friedmann, Frost, Gattine, Geiger, Gere, Golek, Graham, Gramlich, Hasenus, Hepler, Jackson, Julia, Kessler, Kuhn, Lajoie, Lee, Lookner, Lyman, Macias, Malon, Mastraccio, Mathieson, Matlack, McCabe, Meyer, Milliken, Mitchell, Montell, Moonen, Murphy, O'Halloran, Osher, Pluecker, Pugh, Rana, Ray, RIELLY, Roberts, Roeder, Rollins, Runte, Sachs, Salisbury, Sargent, Sato, Sayre, Shagoury, Sinclair, Skold, Stover, Supica, Terry, Warren, Webb, Wood S, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

NAY - Adams, Albert, Arata, Ardell, Babin, Bagshaw, Bishop, Blier, Boyer D, Campbell, Carlow, Caruso, Chapman, Cimino, Collamore, Collins, Cooper, Cray, Daigle, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eder, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foley, Foster, Fredericks, Fredette, Gifford, Greenwood, Griffin, Guerrette, Haggan, Henderson, Hymes, Javner, Lance, Lavigne, Lemelin, Libby, Mason, McIntyre, Mingo, Morris, Nutting, Olsen, Parry, Paul, Perkins, Poirier, Pomerleau, Quint, Rudnicki, Schmersal-Burgess, Simmons, Smith, Soboleski, Strout, Swallow, Thorne, Tuell, Wadsworth, White J, White R, Wood P, Woodsome.

ABSENT - Hall, Lanigan, Underwood, Walker.

Yes, 81; No, 66; Absent, 4; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

81 having voted in the affirmative and 66 voted in the negative, with 4 being absent, and accordingly the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended Report was ACCEPTED.**

The Bill was **READ ONCE. Committee Amendment "A" (S-146) was READ by the Clerk and ADOPTED.**

Under suspension of the rules the Bill was given its **SECOND READING WITHOUT REFERENCE** to the Committee on **Bills in the Second Reading.**

Under further suspension of the rules the Bill was **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-146) in concurrence.**

Majority Report of the Committee on **STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT** reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on Bill "An Act to Designate the Second Congressional District 'Acadia'" (S.P. 503) (L.D. 1214)

Signed:
Senator:

BALDACCI of Penobscot

Representatives:

SALISBURY of Westbrook
ADAMS of Lebanon
COPELAND of Saco
FARRIN of Jefferson
MATLACK of St. George
ROLLINS of Augusta
UNDERWOOD of Presque Isle

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-138)** on same Bill.

Signed:
Senator:

MARTIN of Oxford

Representatives:

GREENWOOD of Wales
POMERLEAU of Standish
TUELL of East Machias

Came from the Senate with the Majority **OUGHT NOT TO PASS** Report **READ** and **ACCEPTED**.

READ.

On motion of Representative SALISBURY of Westbrook, the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report was **ACCEPTED** in concurrence.

Six Members of the Committee on **STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT** report in Report "A" **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-141)** on Bill "An Act to Restore Balanced Emergency Powers" (S.P. 203) (L.D. 551)

Signed:
Senator:

MARTIN of Oxford

Representatives:

ADAMS of Lebanon
GREENWOOD of Wales
POMERLEAU of Standish
TUELL of East Machias
UNDERWOOD of Presque Isle

Six Members of the same Committee report in Report "B" **Ought Not to Pass** on same Bill.

Signed:
Senator:

BALDACCI of Penobscot

Representatives:

SALISBURY of Westbrook
COPELAND of Saco
FARRIN of Jefferson
MATLACK of St. George
ROLLINS of Augusta

Came from the Senate with Report "B" **OUGHT NOT TO PASS** **READ** and **ACCEPTED**.

READ.

Representative SALISBURY of Westbrook moved that the House **ACCEPT** Report "B" **Ought Not to Pass**.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Wales, Representative Greenwood.

Representative **GREENWOOD**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in opposition to the pending motion and request a Roll Call.

Representative GREENWOOD of Wales **REQUESTED** a roll call on the motion to **ACCEPT** Report "B" **Ought Not to Pass**.

More than one-fifth of the members present expressed a desire for a roll call which was ordered.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from East Machias, Representative Tuell.

Representative **TUELL**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House, I rise today to oppose the pending motion and in support of LD 551, a bill that serves not only as a check on concentrated authority during times of crisis, but also as a reaffirmation of our constitutional commitments to the separation of powers in Mainers from all walks of life.

LD 551 is not about limiting the ability of our government to respond to a crisis. It is about ensuring that in doing so, we preserve the very liberties that define our republic. The bill draws clear constitutional lines: Only the Chief Executive may issue orders that affect fundamental rights, and even then, those orders must be narrowly tailored, time bound and subject to review by this Legislature.

It is a responsible, balanced approach. As Amended, it no longer wanders into the judicial minefield of judicial interpretation. The change made in good faith and with full respect for the independence of our court system. That Amendment reflects our willingness to listen, collaborate and ensure that this legislation targets only those areas of government most directly responsible for issuing and enforcing emergency orders. When the people are asked to temporarily yield freedom for safety, they deserve the confidence and reassurance that such decisions are not open-ended, unchecked or unevenly applied. This legislation makes that promise real. It ensures that no emergency order will last indefinitely without legislative oversight. It prevents the reissuance of substantially similar emergency declarations without the consent of this Body or the Other Body and it recognizes the role of the Legislature not as a bystander, but as a co-equal Branch entrusted with the voice of the people.

The pandemic taught us many lessons, some of them hard. One of the most important is this: when emergencies stretch beyond weeks or months, extraordinary powers must not persist without accountability. LD 551 ensures that Mainers' rights are not suspended by executive fiat but are protected even, and especially, in times of crisis.

This bill is sharply focused. It safeguards liberty, it strengthens legislative responsibility and it honors the principles that underline our system of self-government. I urge everyone in this Chamber to vote against the pending motion, move on to another and acknowledge that five years after the pandemic, we have truly learned from our collective experiences. Let's stand together for balance, transparency and the constitutional integrity this State was founded upon 205 years ago. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Auburn, Representative Lee.

Representative **LEE**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in reluctant and somewhat frustrated support of the pending motion.

I think there was a mechanism to solve a great number of the issues that the Representative from East Machias presented that the Committee had in front of it, one which garnered significant bipartisan support in the 131st. Unfortunately, that bill was recommended not to pass by a unanimous vote. I would have supported that bill, I cannot support this one.

The SPEAKER: A roll call has been ordered. The pending question before the House is Acceptance of Report "B" Ought Not to Pass. All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

ROLL CALL NO. 210

YEA - Abdi, Ankeles, Archer, Arford, Beck, Bell, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, Crockett, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Eaton, Faircloth, Farrin, Friedmann, Frost, Gattine, Geiger, Gere, Graham, Gramlich, Hasenfus, Hepler, Julia, Kessler, Kuhn, Lajoie, Lee, Lookner, Macias, Malon, Mastraccio, Mathieson, Matlack, McCabe, Meyer, Milliken, Mitchell, Montell, Moonen, Murphy, O'Halloran, Osher, Pluecker, Pugh, Rana, Ray, Rielly, Roberts, Roeder, Rollins, Runte, Sachs, Salisbury, Sargent, Sato, Sayre, Shagoury, Sinclair, Skold, Stover, Supica, Terry, Warren, Webb, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

NAY - Adams, Albert, Arata, Ardell, Babin, Bagshaw, Bishop, Blier, Boyer D, Campbell, Carlow, Caruso, Chapman, Cimino, Collamore, Collins, Cooper, Cray, Daigle, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eder, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foley, Foster, Fredericks, Fredette, Gifford, Greenwood, Griffin, Guerrette, Haggan, Henderson, Hymes, Jackson, Javner, Lance, Lavigne, Lemelin, Libby, Lyman, Mason, McIntyre, Mingo, Morris, Nutting, Olsen, Parry, Paul, Perkins, Poirier, Pomerleau, Quint, Rudnicki, Schmursal-Burgess, Simmons, Smith, Soboleski, Strout, Swallow, Thorne, Tuell, Wadsworth, White J, White R, Wood P, Wood S, Woodsome.

ABSENT - Golek, Hall, Lanigan, Underwood, Walker.

Yes, 77; No, 69; Absent, 5; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

77 having voted in the affirmative and 69 voted in the negative, with 5 being absent, and accordingly Report "B" **Ought Not to Pass** was **ACCEPTED** in concurrence.

Majority Report of the Committee on **CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-305)** on Bill "An Act Requiring the Maine Criminal Justice Academy to Develop a Nonresidential Basic Law Enforcement Training Program" (H.P. 462) (L.D. 723)

Signed:

Senators:

BEEBE-CENTER of Knox
CURRY of Waldo

Representatives:

HASENFUS of Readfield
ABDI of Lewiston
BUNKER of Farmington
LAJOIE of Lewiston
LOOKNER of Portland
MILLIKEN of Blue Hill

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on same Bill.

Signed:

Senator:

CYRWAY of Kennebec

Representatives:

ARDELL of Monticello

MCINTYRE of Lowell

PERKINS of Dover-Foxcroft

READ.

Representative HASENFUS of Readfield moved that the House **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended** Report.

Representative NUTTING of Oakland **REQUESTED** a roll call on the motion to **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended** Report.

More than one-fifth of the members present expressed a desire for a roll call which was ordered.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Oakland, Representative Nutting.

Representative **NUTTING**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Men and Women of the House. If you will for a moment, allow me to take you back to last week when we talked about a bill which was virtually identical to this bill. LD 639 is now in the dead file, having failed to pass by a bipartisan vote in this Chamber.

LD 723 is very similar. It requires; or it originally required; that the Criminal Justice Academy set up a nonresidential Basic Law Enforcement Training Program. It is now a Resolve to ask them to look at this issue. But allow me to read just one short paragraph from the testimony of Jack Peck; who is the director of the Maine Criminal Justice Academy. He says the NLTP; which is the Nonresidential Law Enforcement Training Program; 'the NLTP has presented to the Board of Trustees of the Criminal Justice Academy as a request.' They were requested to study the option for an offsite training program by the Maine Chiefs of Police Association in late 2022. 'After an extensive review, the Board found several structural, operational and logistic obstacles that did not warrant further consideration. The findings of the study were presented to the Maine Criminal Justice Academy, and the members ended the request. The Board did agree to bring the option back for consideration if new data presented a reason to do so.'

So, now, back to LD 723. What we have now is a Resolve. And you wouldn't think there'd be much contrarian thought about a Resolve to ask them to look at the issue, but they just looked at the issue in 2022. Barely two years ago, they convened a study, they looked at it, they said it's too expensive, it's hard to get instructors, it's not a good idea, all the sheriffs are opposed. So, they decided not to. So, now, we have a Resolve to ask them to do it again, barely two years later. It kind of begs the question, or brings to mind the quote that 'the beatings shall continue until the morale improves.' Are we to continue to do Resolve after Resolve? I think, in my opinion, we do too many Resolves, and we use Resolves to save bills that don't have good reason to pass, instead of just killing them.

So, I would ask you to remember your vote last week. This bill, or the intent of this bill, is very similar and I hope you will join me in defeating the current motion so that we can defeat this bill. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Lewiston, Representative Lajoie.

Representative **LAJOIE**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker and Ladies and Gentlemen of the House, this bill that we have was turned into a Resolve. The Resolve, of course, is

to study the process by which the Academy is training, as well as the needs of the local police enforcement community.

That will come up many times every year as they may have differences of opinion with regards as to training and the needs of their training. However, many times, they don't talk to themselves within a specific group; we'll say a study group; to identify the needs of both sides. So, I think this Resolve is a positive direction, even though we had one three, four years ago, whatever it is. I know that being on Committees myself, we do have protocols that every three to five years, we do a complete review of our needs and the needs of the community. I also understand from the police associations and their concerns is that they cannot get their individuals newly hired that have not had any experience and do the Academy immediately. Well, the Academy basically can handle two classes a year. They can, really tight, handle three. However, they have to be careful because of the total number of beds that they have to accommodate the training.

So, as you can see, there's some areas there of concern, both with the needs of having trainees almost immediately. The police that talked to me; the police chiefs that spoke to me; is that when they hire a new individual, they must keep them on the payroll if they want to keep them in the department, until such a time as the Academy is ready to accept that particular individual. Also with that, on the Academy's side, is that they have a number of volunteers from different departments that will come in and train the trainees. And the availability of those individuals at times are somewhat cumbersome.

So, as you can see, we have concerns on both sides. The Academy, in my opinion, is a terrific; and I mean a terrific training area where you build camaraderie, you have the exact same type of training for every individual that goes there and for myself, having been in the service and gone to basic training, I know that that camaraderie stayed with us all through the time we were there and beyond. So, that's a big plus. Can you do that in public? I believe you can do it as well. So, there's those sides.

I believe that doing this Resolve, to me, will get both the police community or the law enforcement community together with the Academy, so they can look at a path that they can take to move forward. So, I encourage you to please follow my light, which will be green.

I'd like to leave you with one last thing. The Resolve should not be looked at as a dead end to the Academy. The Resolve should be looked at as an opportunity for the Academy, the law enforcement community, to move in through an immediate future with a better understanding as to the needs of the Academy, law enforcement and the communities they represent. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and Ladies and Gentlemen of the House.

The SPEAKER: A roll call has been ordered. The pending question before the House is Acceptance of the Majority Ought to Pass as Amended Report. All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

ROLL CALL NO. 211

YEA - Abdi, Ankeles, Archer, Arford, Beck, Bell, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, Crockett, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dodge, Doudera, Eaton, Faircloth, Farrin, Friedmann, Frost, Gattine, Geiger, Gere, Graham, Gramlich, Hasenfus, Hepler, Julia, Kessler, Kuhn, Lajoie, Lee, Lookner, Macias, Malon, Mastraccio, Mathieson, Matlack, McCabe, Meyer, Milliken, Mitchell, Montell, Moonen, Murphy, Osher, Pluecker, Pugh, Rana, Ray, Rielly, Roberts, Roeder, Rollins, Runte, Sachs, Sargent, Sato, Sayre, Shagoury, Sinclair,

Skold, Stover, Supica, Terry, Warren, Webb, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

NAY - Adams, Albert, Arata, Ardell, Babin, Bagshaw, Bishop, Blier, Boyer D, Campbell, Carlow, Caruso, Chapman, Cimino, Collamore, Collins, Cooper, Cray, Daigle, Dill, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eder, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foley, Foster, Fredericks, Fredette, Gifford, Greenwood, Griffin, Guerrette, Haggan, Henderson, Hymes, Jackson, Javner, Lance, Lavigne, Lemelin, Libby, Lyman, Mason, McIntyre, Mingo, Morris, Nutting, O'Halloran, Olsen, Parry, Paul, Perkins, Poirier, Pomerleau, Quint, Rudnicki, Salisbury, Schmersal-Burgess, Simmons, Smith, Soboleski, Strout, Swallow, Thorne, Tuell, Wadsworth, White J, White R, Wood P, Wood S, Woodsome.

ABSENT - Golek, Hall, Lanigan, Underwood, Walker.

Yes, 74; No, 72; Absent, 5; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

74 having voted in the affirmative and 72 voted in the negative, with 5 being absent, and accordingly the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended Report was ACCEPTED.**

The Bill was **READ ONCE. Committee Amendment "A" (H-305) was READ** by the Clerk and **ADOPTED.**

Under suspension of the rules the Bill was given its **SECOND READING WITHOUT REFERENCE** to the Committee on **Bills in the Second Reading.**

Under further suspension of the rules the Bill was **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-305)** and sent for concurrence.

Majority Report of the Committee on **CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY** reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on Bill "An Act to Protect Municipalities' Investment in Law Enforcement Officers"

(H.P. 465) (L.D. 726)

Signed:

Senators:

BEEBE-CENTER of Knox
CURRY of Waldo
CYRWAY of Kennebec

Representatives:

HASENFUS of Readfield
ABDI of Lewiston
BUNKER of Farmington
LAJOIE of Lewiston
MILLIKEN of Blue Hill

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-306)** on same Bill.

Signed:

Representatives:

ARDELL of Monticello
MCINTYRE of Lowell
NUTTING of Oakland
PERKINS of Dover-Foxcroft

READ.

On motion of Representative HASENFUS of Readfield, the Majority **Ought Not to Pass Report was ACCEPTED** and sent for concurrence.

Majority Report of the Committee on **CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY** reporting **Ought to Pass** on Bill "An Act to Require Law Enforcement Agencies to Adopt Written Policies Regarding Compliance with Certain Constitutional Obligations Related to Disclosure of Evidence"

(H.P. 1061) (L.D. 1607)

Signed:

Senators:

BEEBE-CENTER of Knox
CURRY of Waldo
CYRWAY of Kennebec

Representatives:

HASENFUS of Readfield
ABDI of Lewiston
BUNKER of Farmington
LAJOIE of Lewiston
LOOKNER of Portland
MILLIKEN of Blue Hill
NUTTING of Oakland

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on same Bill.

Signed:

Representatives:

ARDELL of Monticello
MCINTYRE of Lowell
PERKINS of Dover-Foxcroft

READ.

On motion of Representative HASENFUS of Readfield, the Majority **Ought to Pass** Report was **ACCEPTED**.

The Bill was **READ ONCE**.

Under suspension of the rules the Bill was given its **SECOND READING WITHOUT REFERENCE** to the Committee on **Bills in the Second Reading**.

Under further suspension of the rules the Bill was **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED** and sent for concurrence.

Majority Report of the Committee on **EDUCATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-289)** on Bill "An Act to Ensure Behavioral and Mental Health Services Are Available to Students by Providing Grants to Schools That Contract for Those Services"

(H.P. 544) (L.D. 858)

Signed:

Senators:

RAFFERTY of York
PIERCE of Cumberland

Representatives:

MURPHY of Scarborough
BRENNAN of Portland
CROCKETT of Portland
DODGE of Belfast
MITCHELL of Cumberland
SARGENT of York

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on same Bill.

Signed:

Senator:

LIBBY of Cumberland

Representatives:

BAGSHAW of Windham
HAGGAN of Hampden
LYMAN of Livermore Falls

READ.

Representative MURPHY of Scarborough moved that the House **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended** Report.

Representative LYMAN of Livermore Falls **REQUESTED** a roll call on the motion to **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended** Report.

More than one-fifth of the members present expressed a desire for a roll call which was ordered.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Livermore Falls, Representative Lyman.

Representative **LYMAN**: Mr. Speaker, Members of the House, I rise in opposition to this bill. Not because I question the need for behavioral and mental health services in our schools, but because this bill raises serious concerns about fiscal responsibility, transparency and parental rights.

This proposal commits over \$1.3 million in ongoing funding during a time when our State is already facing pressing financial challenges. At a moment when we should be prioritizing efficiency and accountability, this bill establishes a new grant program without clear guardrails or outcome-based benchmarks. More concerning, however, is the lack of clarity around the scope of services being provided. What specific behavioral or mental health interventions are we funding? Who decides what is appropriate for each child? And how will parents be informed or asked for consent? This bill does not sufficiently protect a parent's right to know and direct the mental and behavioral care their child receives in a school setting. We should not expand State spending or compromise parental involvement without answering these critical questions. For these reasons, I urge you to vote no. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Old Orchard Beach, Representative Gramlich.

Representative **GRAMLICH**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in support of the pending motion.

Maine kids are facing serious mental health challenges. One in six Maine children have been diagnosed with anxiety and seven percent are struggling with depression. Furthermore, 20% of Maine children have experienced two or more adverse childhood experiences; known as ACEs; an even higher rate than the national average of 17%. ACEs includes experiences like violence, abuse and other traumatic events, and the stress and trauma that accompanies these experiences can have lasting negative impacts on the child's well-being, both mental and physical, and for their future, Mr. Speaker. That means one in five Maine children are dealing with not just one, but multiple life-altering experiences. Experiences that they are not emotionally or developmentally equipped to process on their own. Because these are kids. And no child should have to process traumatic events without help. And despite their need for support as they navigate these challenges, Maine children do not have adequate access to mental and behavioral health, the care they need to overcome the adversity they face. This harms all of our kids and everyone in our communities. Our educators tell us they are struggling to retain teachers, in large part because the stress created by unmet behavioral needs that are in the classroom.

LD 858 would provide Maine's school-age children with the support they need by meeting them where they are most often, and that is their school. It establishes a grant program within the Department of Education which provides funding to schools in order to offer much needed evidence-based services through contracts with licensed behavioral and mental health service providers. Some school districts do offer these types of services in a school-based setting, but the current availability of school-

based services is nowhere near adequate. Even when these school-based services are currently available, the funding of these services is so lean and precarious that the future of these programs is constantly in question.

In testimony on this bill, for example, Mr. Speaker, Sweetser, one of the organizations providing these vital services, told the Committee that in recent years, they had to reduce the number of schools they serve from 100 to just around 45 because of inadequate funding. My understanding is that Sweetser offered these services at a loss of \$1.2 million last year. That is simply not sustainable.

The support this bill will provide is much needed. It is also extremely time sensitive. These kids need help now, Mr. Speaker. LD 858 would be an important step toward ensuring Maine students have the mental and behavioral health services they need, when and where they need them. These kids are our entire future. I ask you, Mr. Speaker, to consider this: what more important investment can we make than to invest in their current and future well-being and ability to succeed? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Windham, Representative Bagshaw.

Representative **BAGSHAW**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Men and Women of the House. I agree wholeheartedly with the Good Representative from Livermore Falls. We spent millions and millions of dollars last year asking taxpayers and parents to pay for these mental health services in the school. Now, the counselor and the child can have privileged communication that the parents are footing the bill for, and they have no rights as parents to know who's talking what to their child? I strongly oppose this.

The SPEAKER: A roll call has been ordered. The pending question before the House is Acceptance of the Majority Ought to Pass as Amended Report. All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

ROLL CALL NO. 212

YEA - Abdi, Ankeles, Archer, Arford, Beck, Bell, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Cloutier, Cluchey, Crafts, Cray, Crockett, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Eaton, Faircloth, Farrin, Friedmann, Frost, Gattine, Geiger, Gere, Graham, Gramlich, Hasenfus, Hepler, Jackson, Julia, Kessler, Kuhn, Lajoie, Lee, Lookner, Macias, Malon, Mastraccio, Mathieson, Matlack, McCabe, Meyer, Milliken, Mitchell, Montell, Moonen, Murphy, O'Halloran, Osher, Pluecker, Poirier, Pugh, Rana, Ray, Rielly, Roberts, Roeder, Rollins, Runte, Sachs, Salisbury, Sargent, Sato, Sayre, Shagoury, Sinclair, Skold, Stover, Supica, Terry, Warren, Webb, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

NAY - Adams, Albert, Arata, Ardell, Babin, Bagshaw, Bishop, Blier, Boyer D, Campbell, Carlow, Caruso, Chapman, Cimino, Collamore, Collins, Cooper, Daigle, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eder, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foley, Foster, Fredericks, Fredette, Gifford, Greenwood, Griffin, Guerrette, Haggan, Henderson, Hymes, Javner, Lance, Lavigne, Lemelin, Libby, Lyman, Mason, McIntyre, Mingo, Nutting, Olsen, Parry, Paul, Perkins, Pomerleau, Quint, Rudnicki, Schmersal-Burgess, Simmons, Smith, Soboleski, Strout, Swallow, Thorne, Tuell, Wadsworth, White J, White R, Wood P, Wood S, Woodsome.

ABSENT - Copeland, Golek, Hall, Lanigan, Morris, Underwood, Walker.

Yes, 79; No, 65; Absent, 7; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

79 having voted in the affirmative and 65 voted in the negative, with 7 being absent, and accordingly the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended Report was ACCEPTED.**

The Bill was **READ ONCE. Committee Amendment "A" (H-289) was READ** by the Clerk and **ADOPTED.**

Under suspension of the rules the Bill was given its **SECOND READING WITHOUT REFERENCE** to the Committee on **Bills in the Second Reading.**

Under further suspension of the rules the Bill was **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-289)** and sent for concurrence.

Majority Report of the Committee on **ENERGY, UTILITIES AND TECHNOLOGY** reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on Bill "An Act to Include Nuclear Power in the State's Renewable Portfolio Standard"

(H.P. 242) (L.D. 342)

Signed:

Senators:

LAWRENCE of York
GROHOSKI of Hancock

Representatives:

SACHS of Freeport
GEIGER of Rockland
KESSLER of South Portland
RUNTE of York
WEBB of Durham

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought to Pass** on same Bill.

Signed:

Senator:

HARRINGTON of York

Representatives:

FOSTER of Dexter
MCINTYRE of Lowell
PAUL of Winterport
WADSWORTH of Hiram
WARREN of Scarborough

READ.

Representative SACHS of Freeport moved that the House **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report.

Representative PAUL of Winterport **REQUESTED** a roll call on the motion to **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report.

More than one-fifth of the members present expressed a desire for a roll call which was ordered.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Winterport, Representative Paul.

Representative **PAUL**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This bill simply adds nuclear generation to Maine's renewable portfolio standard.

We've heard a lot of the long-term energy goals about reaching 100% clean electricity by 2040. But even our own State agencies had to walk that back. Maine has already moved from targeting 100% renewable energy to 90% renewable energy and 10% clean energy. Why? Because good intentions don't power hospitals, homes or factories. A goal without a realistic path isn't a plan, it's a placeholder. It's something you put in a press release. But it does not lower bills or keep the lights on in January. That is why I'm bringing forward this bill, to fix the gap between our clean energy ambitions and our current energy policy. It's time to include nuclear power in Maine's renewable portfolio standard, just like many other states have done. Because when it comes to reliability, sustainability, emissions and cost over time, nuclear is not just part of the solution, it is the best solution on the table. Full stop.

Let's compare it honestly. Wind and solar are intermittent. They depend on the weather. They don't show up when we need them the most: at night, in storms, during peak demand. That means we still need backup fossil fuel generation running behind the scenes. That's not decarbonization, that's displacement; partial, inconsistent and, ultimately, incomplete. Now consider nuclear. It produces power 24/7, in every season, in any weather. It is the only zero-emission baseload energy source that we have. It doesn't spike the grid, it steadies it. And it doesn't depend on foreign supply chains for rare earth minerals or lithium. It runs on uranium, which is an abundant source and can even be recycled in advanced reactors. That's not just clean, that is sovereign, secure and sustainable.

We already call biomass a renewable in Maine, even though it emits carbon. Meanwhile, nuclear emits nothing during operation, not a puff of carbon. So, why is biomass in the RPS and nuclear locked out? That's not science, that's politics. That is a foot on the scale, and it is not serving the Maine ratepayer.

Let's talk about the environmental cost of so-called 'green technologies.' Solar panels and wind turbines require cobalt, neodymium, lithium and other minerals mined under brutal conditions, often in politically unstable countries, with devastating impacts on local communities and ecosystems. Less than one percent of these materials can be recycled. Meanwhile, nuclear waste can be and is safely stored and in the future reused. In fact, up to 96% of spent nuclear fuel can be reprocessed into new fuel. Try doing that with a retired wind turbine blade or a solar panel. And then there's longevity. A nuclear plant runs for 60 years or more. Wind and solar installations often require major reinvestments or total replacement within 20 years, if not sooner. That means more cost, more material and more waste. Nuclear is built to last, and that stability means lower costs over time, not more.

Maine ratepayers are already paying some of the highest electricity prices in the country. Over 100,000 households are struggling to pay their electricity bills. Yet we're locking ourselves out of the most effective long-term, zero-carbon electricity source available. That's not innovation, that is self-sabotage. Eight states; blue, red, coastal and inland; have already recognized this and adjusted their standards to include nuclear power. They've acknowledged that without it, the math simply does not work. You cannot run a clean, affordable and reliable grid on variable sources alone. That's not my opinion, that's energy physics.

We've been told for years that wind and solar will get us there, but they haven't, and they can't on their own. That is not an attack on renewables, it is a recognition that they're not enough, and they never were. If we keep defining renewable in a way that excludes the most renewable, most reliable energy source on earth, then we are choosing ideology over outcome, and Mainers will keep paying the price for that.

This bill is about course correction. It is about telling the truth. It is about making sure our renewable energy standard actually includes the most renewable energy source that we have. I urge this Body, don't defend a broken definition. Defend Mainers; defend affordability; defend a real, workable, clean energy future. And that future includes nuclear. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Lowell, Representative McIntyre.

Representative **McINTYRE**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House, I rise today in strong support of LD 342 and against the pending motion.

Mr. Speaker, there are a couple things I know, and there are also a couple things I believe. One thing I know very well is how fission-based reactors work, because I am a graduate of the U.S. Naval Nuclear Propulsion Training Pipeline and have seven years of actual hands-on operational experience acquired by my time in uniformed service to my country. I know just how much steady-state baseload power these amazing systems are capable of producing, and I also know how efficient and safe they can be when operated properly and in accordance with very stringent policies and procedures.

I am aware of at least two colleagues from your side of the aisle that also possess in-depth knowledge of this technology. So, I am comforted to know if I accidentally slip into geek-speak, at least these two gentlemen will understand where I'm coming from.

As an unclassified example of the power levels I am speaking about, I offer that the aircraft carrier I served on had two reactor systems; one fore and one aft; each individually capable of producing 550 megawatts of power. We could produce so much reliable and clean power that when we pulled into a foreign port, as an act of international good will; if the host country had the dockside infrastructure available; we could run a conductor line over the side of the ship and feed free electricity into that grid for the three or four days while the sailors were out having fun. And we still had more than enough sufficient power to take care of all of the needs of the ship, which basically was a floating city unto itself.

I know how clean these energy systems are in terms of very minimal radioactive particulate byproducts that occasionally need to be scrubbed from the primary fluid media. I've heard this phrase here before, so, here's my first attempt: 'here's a fun fact.' At the end of a six-month western Pacific cruise, running both reactors at near full capacity, we extracted one pint of fluid from the primary, which contained approximately the same curie content as 400 pounds of bananas. Yes, Mr. Speaker, bananas; amongst many other foods a lot of us eat regularly; are naturally radioactive. Any random Google search will validate that.

I know how safe these systems can be. Some will harken immediately to Three Mile Island or Chernobyl or Fukushima. I pose to opponents of this technology that each and all of those situations were avoidable. When a reactor system is designed, built and operated properly in accordance with U.S. Navy standards; Hooyah; they are inherently safe and have multiple redundant safeguards installed to prevent hazardous operating conditions. Mr. Speaker, in the decades of naval reactor applications, there have been zero accidents or incidents.

Some opponents will want to speak to the end-of-lifecycle disposal of the spent core material. There are already existing responsible and secure solutions. And frankly, the reprocessing and repurposing technologies of fuel rods has advanced even since I left the Navy.

As to the initial capital investments required for entry into this arena, Mr. Speaker, I will not minimize or obfuscate in an attempt to simply convert opponents. This technology has a price tag, no doubt. However, I would pose there is also a tangible cost associated with continuing to miss opportunities and by continuing to stymie ourselves by risk avoidance and analysis paralysis.

Mr. Speaker, I started this discussion by saying I know a couple things and that I also believe a couple things. The preceding was what I know; here's what I believe. A well-diversified and strategic energy plan is the key underpin to a prosperous economy, which has easily identifiable corollaries. A strong economy is consistently showed to yield measurable

improvements in larger societal issues and challenges: housing affordability, education and academic achievement, reduction of unemployment levels and robust career development opportunities, improved general and mental health resulting in reduced suicide rates, reduced crime rates, reduced drug and alcohol dependencies and myriad other aspects of our daily lives.

Mr. Speaker, in this Chamber, we do not have to have a class on reactor physics. Geek-speak has been omitted to the maximum, despite that I was really itching to talk about photoelectric effect and pair production and Compton scattering and share the analogy of the four types of radioactive cookies. Perhaps another time. I'm just wicked excited by having had this opportunity to maybe open up some people to the possibility of expanding our energy portfolio.

Good colleagues, I thank you for your time today, and in closing, I ask only this: what does our State motto mean to you? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Freeport, Representative Sachs.

Representative **SACHS**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to go on the record and say I look forward and am wicked excited for those conversations as well with my good friend, the Representative from Lowell.

This bill, Mr. Speaker; why I support the pending motion; this bill is not about lowering your bills. In fact, if we included nuclear in the renewable portfolio standard, it would actually lead this technology to be eligible for the many carveouts and credits that are involved in renewable portfolio standards.

This is not about baseload versus intermittent, this is not about longevity, this is not about land use, this is not about zero emissions; although, I'm really excited to hear some of these pieces, Mr. Speaker, as the colleagues who are against the pending motion also voted against putting nuclear into the clean energy standard, which is really where we're talking about the emissions. This is the Renewable Portfolio Standards. For those who are not familiar with that, these are standards that 30 other states have that talk about diversifying their energy resources, promoting domestic energy production, encouraging economic development and reducing reliance on fossil fuels and have specific targets for that renewable resource, so that utilities have to buy their supply in certain percentages from these buckets of renewables.

The Majority Report, the why I support the pending motion, Mr. Speaker, is because it was determined by the majority of the Committee not as to whether that technology was good or bad, whether it was evil or not, whether it was intermittent or baseload; it was about is it renewable. And three other states, only three, have included nuclear in their renewable portfolio status, because it is not renewable. Uranium, while may be abundant, is finite. It is not renewable per our definition, per the definitions of many, many other states. So, I encourage the Body to follow my light. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Phillips, Representative Soboleski.

Representative **SOBOLESKI**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen. I rise in support of LD 342, a critical piece of legislation that modernizes Maine's approach to renewable energy by formally recognizing nuclear power as a renewable capacity resource under State law.

This Amendment to Title 35-A is a strategic and necessary step towards ensuring long-term energy stability, affordability and environmental responsibility for our State. The positive effects of LD 342 for Mainers cannot be overstated. Energy prices continue to fluctuate due to dependence on volatile

markets and unpredictable generation sources. By incorporating nuclear energy into Maine's portfolio of renewable energy resources, this bill provides a solution that guarantees consistent and affordable electricity, protecting residents from price spikes and supply disruptions. Nuclear energy offers a continuous and reliable power source that can support our growing energy demands without interruption.

Furthermore, LD 342 stimulates economic growth by creating high wage jobs in engineering, construction and technology sectors. The development of nuclear infrastructure would bring career opportunities for thousands of workers, fueling local economies and attracting investment in advanced energy innovation. We have the potential to become a leader in next-generation clean energy technologies, positioning our State at the forefront of sustainable energy solutions while reinforcing national commitments to carbon reduction.

Additionally, this bill has direct consequences for our environmental goals. Nuclear power provides a zero-carbon energy source, meaning that it significantly reduces greenhouse gas emissions compared to fossil fuels. By legally recognizing nuclear energy as a renewable resource, we take decisive action to meet climate objectives while ensuring a stable energy supply. Without such legislation, the State risks continuing to rely on energy imports, missing the opportunity to develop homegrown sustainable power solutions. Failure to pass this bill would mean continued uncertainty for our energy market, leaving residents exposed to unpredictable costs and weakening our ability to compete in the clean energy economy.

Mainers deserve reliable, affordable, and sustainable electricity, and this bill provides the legal framework necessary to achieve that. For these reasons, I urge my colleagues to support LD 342 and vote no on the Ought Not to Pass motion, recognizing the economic, environmental and practical benefits it offers Maine. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: A roll call has been ordered. The pending question before the House is Acceptance of the Majority Ought Not to Pass Report. All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

ROLL CALL NO. 213

YEA - Abdi, Ankeles, Archer, Arford, Beck, Bell, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, Crockett, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dodge, Doudera, Eaton, Faircloth, Farrin, Friedmann, Frost, Gattine, Geiger, Gere, Graham, Gramlich, Hasenfus, Hepler, Julia, Kessler, Kuhn, Lajoie, Lee, Lookner, Macias, Malon, Mastraccio, Mathieson, Matlack, McCabe, Meyer, Milliken, Mitchell, Montell, Moonen, Murphy, O'Halloran, Osher, Pluecker, Pugh, Rana, Ray, Rielly, Roberts, Roeder, Rollins, Runte, Sachs, Salisbury, Sargent, Sato, Sayre, Shagoury, Sinclair, Skold, Stover, Supica, Terry, Webb, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

NAY - Adams, Albert, Ardell, Babin, Bagshaw, Bishop, Blier, Boyer D, Campbell, Carlow, Caruso, Chapman, Cimino, Collamore, Collins, Cooper, Cray, Daigle, Dill, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eder, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foley, Foster, Fredericks, Fredette, Gifford, Greenwood, Griffin, Guerrette, Haggan, Henderson, Hymes, Jackson, Javner, Lance, Lavigne, Lemelin, Libby, Lyman, Mason, McIntyre, Mingo, Morris, Nutting, Olsen, Parry, Paul, Perkins, Poirier, Pomerleau, Quint, Rudnicki, Schmersal-Burgess, Simmons, Smith, Soboleski, Strout, Swallow, Thorne, Tuell, Wadsworth, Warren, White J, White R, Wood P, Wood S, Woodsome.

ABSENT - Arata, Golek, Hall, Lanigan, Underwood, Walker.

Yes, 75; No, 70; Absent, 6; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

75 having voted in the affirmative and 70 voted in the negative, with 6 being absent, and accordingly the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report was **ACCEPTED** and sent for concurrence.

By unanimous consent, all matters having been acted upon were **ORDERED SENT FORTHWITH**.

Majority Report of the Committee on **ENERGY, UTILITIES AND TECHNOLOGY** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-285)** on Bill "An Act to Direct the Public Utilities Commission to Seek Informational Bids Regarding Small Modular Nuclear Reactors in the State" (H.P. 243) (L.D. 343)

Signed:

Senator:

HARRINGTON of York

Representatives:

FOSTER of Dexter

KESSLER of South Portland

MCINTYRE of Lowell

PAUL of Winterport

WADSWORTH of Hiram

WARREN of Scarborough

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on same Bill.

Signed:

Senators:

LAWRENCE of York

GROHOSKI of Hancock

Representatives:

SACHS of Freeport

GEIGER of Rockland

RUNTE of York

WEBB of Durham

READ.

Representative SACHS of Freeport moved that the House **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended** Report.

The same Representative **REQUESTED** a roll call on her motion to **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended** Report.

More than one-fifth of the members present expressed a desire for a roll call which was ordered.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Freeport, Representative Sachs.

Representative **SACHS**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like the Body to note that I did put forward the Majority Report. However, I would like to speak against my own pending motion, please.

The reason I'm doing so, Sir, is because cost is really a factor. Again, agnostic as to the technology itself, for me, personally. For me, directing the Public Utilities Commission to seek informational bids every three years, in perpetuity, on one piece of technology around nuclear; just small modular reactors; at a time when the cost implications of that technology, where it's not cost effective, it will not get us to our climate goals and has implications for waste are tremendous. It is premature, as the GEO; our Governor's Energy Office; talked about, given the scope of the proposal. They suggested instead that we do, which this Committee has done, which is continue to monitor the market conditions and without investing or putting our own money on such a nascent technology that keeps saying it's

promised, but has not come to fruition, despite massive subsidies in other places. And also noting from the PUC, indeed they called this a very uncertain proposal, I would say; not their words, mine; in terms of all of the rest of the work that would be needed in order to facilitate what was requested in the bill, there were opportunities to amend the bill, they were not offered or taken.

So, with that, Mr. Speaker, given the cost implications and use of resources, I would urge us to defeat the pending motion. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Rockland, Representative Geiger.

Representative **GEIGER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, rise in opposition to the motion before us.

My colleagues across the aisle are painting a beautiful picture of a nuclear future just over the rainbow, but here are the problems. The last nuclear power plant built in the United States; it's been 30 years until the most recent one in Georgia; the Georgia plant came online a few months ago. It was seven years late, \$17 billion in cost overruns, and will cost the average ratepayer in Georgia \$420 annually. It is the most expensive kilowatt-hour in America.

But this bill isn't talking about regular nuclear power plants; it's talking about modular plants. Here's the reality on those. It's an idea that's been around for decades. How many commercial modular nuclear power plants have been built in the world; and the answer is zero. There are plans out there, there are companies that would love to build one, but they are not proven, they haven't been built anywhere, we don't know what the cost would be. Now, New Brunswick in Canada is thinking of building one, Virginia is thinking of building one. It may turn out to be a great, sustainable, year-round baseload power. The problem is, we don't know. So, to ask Maine to get out in front and build something that hasn't been built anywhere else, is not proven, we don't know the cost of, doesn't make a lot of sense.

The PUC and the Governor's Energy Office is constantly surveilling the environment. We don't need expensive studies every three years to look at how things are going. There aren't any in the world. When there are, I think Maine should pay attention. But that's not where we are right now. We are a decade, at least, away from a single modular nuclear power plant being online. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Winterport, Representative Paul.

Representative **PAUL**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in support of the pending motion. And I'd like the record to reflect that is the first time I've ever said that, so, I'm letting that sink in.

Maine stands at a defining moment, with the chance to forge a clean, affordable and resilient energy future. Last session, I introduced a bill nearly identical to the one before us, seeking only to gather information about small modular nuclear reactors and their potential for the State of Maine. It earned a bipartisan Ought to Pass as Amended Majority Report from the EUT Committee, and the same occurred this session.

The Chief Executive's energy plan acknowledges nuclear's potential and calls for a clean energy standard that includes it. This bill delivers on that vision, seeking hard data to bridge ambition with reality. On May 22nd of this year, federal leaders launched a sweeping plan to quadruple U.S. nuclear capacity by 2050, streamlining regulations and fast-tracking SMR deployment. The very next day, Executive Orders reinforced this 'nuclear renaissance' as declared by the Department of Energy.

Maine has a golden opportunity to align with this national momentum and lead with clean, reliable energy. SMRs are transformative. They emit near-zero carbon, operate with a 92.5% capacity factor and power 300,000 homes from just 35 acres, compared to 32,000 or 256,000 acres for equivalent solar or wind output. SMRs preserve Maine's forests, farmland and coastline, while ensuring grid stability when renewables falter. Critically, modern SMRs can recycle their nuclear waste during operation, addressing a key concern. In fact, all the nuclear waste ever produced in the U.S. could fit on a single football field, stacked just a few feet high. A powerful rebuttal to waste fears.

Safety is non-negotiable, and SMRs deliver. Often built underground, they use passive cooling systems to prevent meltdowns and are factory sealed and fueled, minimizing the risk of handling nuclear materials. The U.S. nuclear industry has a flawless record: zero radiation-related deaths. Even the Three Mile Island incident caused no fatalities or measurable health impacts. Opponents fears of safety risks are outdated and overstated.

Economically, SMRs are a powerhouse. In New Brunswick, nuclear added one billion; with a B; one billion dollars to GDP and created 750 jobs annually for 15 years. Connecticut secures nuclear power at five cents per kilowatt-hour, and federal data shows nuclear costs around seven cents; cheaper than solar, wind or offshore wind.

Recent Executive Orders will cut permitting delays in half and bolster domestic fuel supply, making SMRs even more competitive and accessible for Maine. Once again, I will remind this Body: SMRs are not a rival to renewables; they're the perfect partner, providing steady, dispatchable power to stabilize the grid when the sun isn't shining or the wind isn't blowing.

Critics argue SMRs don't exist in the U.S., but the Tennessee Valley Authority is already investing in these, and New Brunswick targets about 2028 to 2030 for full deployment of their SMRs, with federal goals as early as 2026. Some point to the high cost of Georgia's Vogtle plant, but that's a conventional reactor, not an SMR. Meanwhile, we study unproven offshore wind with no floating turbines anywhere in the U.S., but we hesitate to explore SMRs, which are proven, safe and ready. So, I ask, why the double standard? This bill carries no Fiscal Note. It does not authorize construction and imposes nothing on communities. It simply seeks information. Waiting another decade to explore nuclear is reckless when bipartisan leaders from Senator Angus King; who called nuclear 'an enormous boon for our economy and our environment;' to Oliver Stone; whose documentary called *Nuclear Now* champions its climate role; see the value in nuclear power.

As legislators, we are called to be analysts, not activists. We must not tip the scales for or against any energy source, but evaluate all options with clear-eyed reason. Opposing this bill defies the Chief Executive's 2040 clean energy goals and ignores bipartisan Committee support twice over. It risks forcing Mainers to pay some of the nation's highest energy prices while sacrificing our landscapes to sprawling wind and solar farms. Maine can't afford fear or obstruction. This is our moment for bold, informed leadership. Let's seize it. Support this bill to unlock a future of clean, reliable, affordable energy that safeguards our environment, fuels our economy and empowers our people. Maine can lead the nation with courage and vision, starting with the facts, and that time is now. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from York, Representative Runte.

Representative **RUNTE**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker and Members of the House, I urge you to vote Ought Not to Pass on this bill.

It requires the Public Utility Commission to spend time and resources seeking information from an industry that is not yet in a position to provide useful information. And there are other ways to achieve the intent of this bill. And I say this because the bill relies on two underlying assumptions: that small modular reactors; SMR; development companies are working on new groundbreaking technologies, and if we don't act now, we'll be late to the table. And secondly, that polling these startup companies would yield actionable information.

Based on my decades of experience in the commercial nuclear sector, as well as someone who has also led and advised emerging energy tech startups, including an SMR development company, I can tell you both assumptions are incorrect. So, how soon will we see commercially viable SMRs; and that's the key phrase, by the way, 'commercially viable.' Of course, there are examples of small modular reactors in the nuclear Navy, as was mentioned earlier, and there have been a number of experimental and test reactors that have demonstrated the technologies can work. The key is, how do the economics work out?

Now, in terms of understanding where the state of the market is, SMR development is remarkably transparent. That's because commercializing nuclear technology is not like the typical startup world, where some small company can come out of nowhere, introduce a product and leapfrog all the other participants. SMRs have to survive the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's detailed, lengthy and transparent licensing process, and because of that, there's no secrets about where they stand in terms of their overall development. And in fact, any one of you can go today to the NRC website and look up "Advanced Reactor" section, and you can see who all the participants are, where they stand in the licensing queue and what their likely outcomes are going to be. Right now, there are 21 SMR startups that have begun the licensing process. They span four very distinctly different nuclear reactor technologies. However, there's nothing new about these technologies. They all began development in the '50s and the '60s. And after the last 75 years, there have been a lot of those tests and experimental versions that demonstrated the technologies work, but as was mentioned earlier, there really is no truly commercial small modular reactor operating in the world.

So, let's go back to the licensing process. Of all these startup companies, only one potential SMR product has ever gotten to NRC design certification, a step about halfway between being granted an operating license. That company, NuScale, took 14 years to get there. I know because I helped edit a small part of their preliminary license application in 2009. Shortly after this design was certified in 2023, they announced they couldn't meet delivery promises, and the cost of the project product had doubled and it was still at least a decade away from a commercial product. Their only customers, a group of Utah municipal utilities, all pulled out and as a consequence, their stock tanked, half its workforce was laid off and the project was scrapped. NuScale has since restarted the whole licensing process with a different design. All the other ones in that category are in experimental phase.

Now, yeah, there's a lot of press at the moment about the nuclear renaissance, and that's also nothing new. When you have spare time, go Google 'nuclear renaissance,' but limit the

search to January 2012. And what you'll see is all the same kind of articles --

Representative **CHAPMAN**: Point of Order, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Member will defer. The Chair will inquire as to the Representative from Auburn's Point of Order.

Representative **CHAPMAN**: I do believe he should be speaking to you, not to us.

On **POINT OF ORDER**, Representative CHAPMAN of Auburn asked the Chair to remind Representative RUNTE of York to address the Speaker and not turn to the rest of the House.

The SPEAKER: The Chair will remind the Member to address his comments to the Chair.

The Chair reminded Representative RUNTE of York to address his comments toward the Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Member may proceed.

Representative **RUNTE**: My apologies, Mr. Speaker. If you Google the term 'nuclear renaissance,' you will see the same kind of articles that it's just over the horizon, lots of optimism; this time not for SMRs, but for what was called at the time Gen3 reactors. But the fact of the matter is, is that no matter what you call them, the SMRs under development today are startup companies and operating licenses and economic viability are well over a decade away. They're being developed by an industry where each new generation of product has proven more expensive, not less.

Since 1970, the average delivery delay has been eight years, and the delivered price nearly two and a half times the original budget. So, it's very important to note that just getting a license doesn't mean the project is economically viable. We heard before about the plant in Georgia that has come in at a price that's approximately five times the cost of offshore wind and 15 times more than the cost of solar, plus storage at today's costs, not some future estimate. You'll hear these costs are high because the U.S. regulatory regime is too cumbersome, and we need to streamline it. Well, the fact is that regulation is not the defining factor for how expensive these plants are. Two other plants of similar design to the Georgia plant began operation recently in Finland and France. They were about the same cost, and they came in at about the same delay. A third plant in the UK is still under construction, and it's going to come in more expensive.

Now, back to SMRs. As was mentioned by the Representative from Winterport, last week, the Tennessee Valley Authority announced it hopes to install four GE Hitachi SMRs starting in 2032. What they also announced was that their installed cost was about \$25,000 a kilowatt. That's more than one and a half times expensive than the Vogtle plant. So, even if it achieves that budget and delivery date; and those are subject to change; a plant at that cost cannot be considered a commercial product and would be the most expensive power plant ever built.

So, what do we gain by issuing invitational bids? I can tell you from firsthand experience that what you'll get are best-case guesses taken from a speculative business plan. Dividing a forecast of commercial viability is a challenge faced by every developer of new technologies in an uncertain market with a long planning horizon. So, let's not burden the PUC with an unfunded mandate to seek information we can find ourselves, asking SMR development companies for information that they are not yet in a position to answer. Now, it's certainly possible that commercially viable SMR products may emerge someday. Many of the technologies that are being worked on now have been demonstrated. But the issue is not whether these are technically feasible. The issue is whether or not an operator can

own and operate one and generate electricity at a price that makes sense in our electricity grid. And I can tell you that ever since I began work in this industry in 1975, every new generation was more expensive than the last, and the cost of alternatives have dropped.

Now, yes, you've heard a lot of skepticism from me, but regardless of that skepticism, I don't think there's any question that we do need to stay abreast of SMR development. If it meets some of the criteria, some of the promises that have been made, at some point in time, it certainly has a role in our energy portfolio. What I also believe are far more effective and cost-effective course of action than what's proposed in this bill is to have the Governor's Energy Office monitoring the NRC licensing process, learning when actual commercial products are available and which companies might be the owner-operator. They could then determine when the right time would be to issue RFPs to companies that actually had commercial products.

So, in closing, I think the intent of this bill makes sense, the execution is a real problem and I urge you Ought Not to Pass. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Scarborough, Representative Warren.

Representative **WARREN**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in support of the pending motion.

I just hadn't heard it yet, so, I felt compelled to rise, that this information-gathering bill is before us because of the climate crisis. The waste, the harm, the real cost, the carbon cost, the societal costs are all here now; and many have drowned, and their homes have been burned, and their crops have been felled and we are experiencing a crisis that is setting our planet on fire. In light of that, I am looking for answers, and I am looking for information and I'm seeking to do that in good faith and from any resource that is before us that provides that opportunity.

There are no easy answers on issues of energy generation. That's my analysis, that's my understanding. There are no silver bullets. I am under no illusions that there are any easy or clear answers coming which will save us all from the consequences of fossil fuels. If this is not useful information, we will not use it. If it does not provide a reasonable, cost-effective solution, it will not be adopted.

I agree with all the concerns and questions and history and context around nuclear energy, Mr. Speaker, but I also am burdened by the reality of climate change and the consequences of fossil fuels, which are a form of waste which is destroying our planet and our hopes for a future as a species on this planet. And so, I feel compelled to seek support for a bill with no Fiscal Note that asks for informational bids that when the first one comes in, we can look at the information and make it better. But it feels no harm and only a benefit to support information gathering, particularly in a bipartisan way.

For that reason, I'm supporting the pending motion, and I hope that's useful for colleagues that are considering which way to go here. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from South Portland, Representative Kessler.

Representative **KESSLER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Please rest assured, I will keep this brief. My decision for supporting the pending motion has nothing to do with nuclear energy. It has to do with the status of our politics.

We can; I do not disagree with some of the positions of my colleagues on this side of the aisle as to why they don't support this. I certainly don't agree with the Representative from Winterport on her positions, either. But what is important is that we allow the government to work for everybody, including the

Minority Party. And we can cite facts until we are blue in the face, but unless you trust the messenger, the message will not be received. And so, I felt as though, allowing this process to play out, that the folks who are seeking this information will get what they're seeking. And if the numbers don't work out, if the logistics don't work out, I hope that they will accept that. But given the resources that we spend to debate this bill Session after Session versus the resources it takes to just put out an informational bid, I felt that that was the least harm and I would like to see those answers delivered to the folks who want to receive it.

So, that is the reason for my position on this Report. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Dexter, Representative Foster.

Representative FOSTER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you. I'll be brief.

Ladies and Gentlemen of the House, my seven years now on the Energy, Utilities, Technology Committee, I have seen many times when we have asked the PUC to go out and find information or do a study or, many times on what I consider to be frivolous or nonproductive wild goose chases. This bill has no Fiscal Note, it's very simple, it asks them to go out and get information on these. Contrary to some what you may have heard, this is being done in many other states, they are looking into this, they are realizing that if we want to have stable carbon-free energy produced in the future, this is one very viable opportunity. I ask you to vote for the pending motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: A roll call has been ordered. The pending question before the House is Acceptance of the Majority Ought to Pass as Amended Report. All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

ROLL CALL NO. 214

YEA - Adams, Albert, Ardell, Babin, Bagshaw, Bishop, Blier, Boyer D, Campbell, Carlow, Caruso, Chapman, Cimino, Collamore, Collins, Cooper, Cray, Daigle, Dodge, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eder, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foley, Foster, Fredericks, Fredette, Gifford, Greenwood, Griffin, Guerrette, Haggan, Hasenfus, Henderson, Hepler, Hymes, Jackson, Javner, Julia, Kessler, Lance, Lavigne, Lemelin, Libby, Lyman, Macias, Mason, McIntyre, Milliken, Mingo, Morris, Nutting, Olsen, Parry, Paul, Perkins, Poirier, Pomerleau, Quint, Roberts, Rudnicki, Schmearsal-Burgess, Simmons, Smith, Soboleski, Strout, Swallow, Thorne, Tuell, Wadsworth, Warren, White J, White R, Wood P, Wood S, Woodsome.

NAY - Abdi, Ankeles, Arata, Archer, Arford, Beck, Bell, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, Crockett, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dill, Doudera, Eaton, Faircloth, Farrin, Friedmann, Frost, Gattine, Geiger, Graham, Gramlich, Kuhn, Lajoie, Lee, Lookner, Malon, Mastraccio, Mathieson, Matlack, McCabe, Meyer, Mitchell, Montell, Moonen, Murphy, O'Halloran, Osher, Pluecker, Pugh, Rana, Ray, Rielly, Roeder, Rollins, Runte, Sachs, Salisbury, Sargent, Sato, Sayre, Shagoury, Sinclair, Skold, Stover, Supica, Terry, Webb, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

ABSENT - Gere, Golek, Hall, Lanigan, Underwood, Walker.

Yes, 77; No, 68; Absent, 6; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

77 having voted in the affirmative and 68 voted in the negative, with 6 being absent, and accordingly the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended** Report was **ACCEPTED**.

The Bill was **READ ONCE**. **Committee Amendment "A" (H-285)** was **READ** by the Clerk and **ADOPTED**.

Under suspension of the rules the Bill was given its **SECOND READING WITHOUT REFERENCE** to the Committee on **Bills in the Second Reading**.

Under further suspension of the rules the Bill was **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-285)** and sent for concurrence.

PETITIONS, BILLS AND RESOLVES REQUIRING REFERENCE Pursuant to Statute Revisor of Statutes

Representative KUHN for the **Revisor of Statutes** pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 1, section 94 asks leave to report that the accompanying Bill "An Act to Correct Inconsistencies, Conflicts and Errors in the Laws of Maine" (EMERGENCY)

(H.P. 1328) (L.D. 1984)

Be **REFERRED** to the Committee on **JUDICIARY** and printed pursuant to Joint Rule 218.

The Report was **READ** and **ACCEPTED** and the Bill was **REFERRED** to the Committee on **JUDICIARY** and ordered printed pursuant to Joint Rule 218.

Sent for concurrence.

By unanimous consent, all matters having been acted upon were **ORDERED SENT FORTHWITH**.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEE Divided Reports

Majority Report of the Committee on **ENERGY, UTILITIES AND TECHNOLOGY** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-291)** on Resolve, to Increase Access to Energy Efficiency Programs by Low-income and Moderate-income Residents

(H.P. 611) (L.D. 946)

Signed:

Senators:

LAWRENCE of York
GROHOSKI of Hancock

Representatives:

SACHS of Freeport
GEIGER of Rockland
KESSLER of South Portland
RUNTE of York
WARREN of Scarborough
WEBB of Durham

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on same Resolve.

Signed:

Senator:

HARRINGTON of York

Representatives:

FOSTER of Dexter
MCINTYRE of Lowell
PAUL of Winterport
WADSWORTH of Hiram

READ.

On motion of Representative SACHS of Freeport, the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended** Report was **ACCEPTED**.

The Resolve was **READ ONCE**. **Committee Amendment "A" (H-291)** was **READ** by the Clerk and **ADOPTED**.

Under suspension of the rules the Resolve was given its **SECOND READING WITHOUT REFERENCE** to the Committee on **Bills in the Second Reading**.

Under further suspension of the rules the Resolve was **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-291)** and sent for concurrence.

Majority Report of the Committee on **ENERGY, UTILITIES AND TECHNOLOGY** reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on Bill "An Act to Reduce Electricity Rates by Removing Limitations on the Ownership of Generation by an Affiliate of an Investor-owned Transmission and Distribution Utility"

(H.P. 881) (L.D. 1358)

Signed:

Senators:

LAWRENCE of York
GROHOSKI of Hancock

Representatives:

SACHS of Freeport
GEIGER of Rockland
KESSLER of South Portland
PAUL of Winterport
RUNTE of York
WARREN of Scarborough
WEBB of Durham

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-282)** on same Bill.

Signed:

Senator:

HARRINGTON of York

Representatives:

FOSTER of Dexter
MCINTYRE of Lowell
WADSWORTH of Hiram

READ.

Representative SACHS of Freeport moved that the House **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report.

Representative FOSTER of Dexter **REQUESTED** a roll call on the motion to **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report.

More than one-fifth of the members present expressed a desire for a roll call which was ordered.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Dexter, Representative Foster.

Representative **FOSTER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. This bill would simply allow an affiliate of one of our utilities to own generation. The PUC would maintain their complete separation from the T&D utility. As many of you know, we have many large corporations in this country and in other countries that own affiliates, often connected or not connected to each other in any particular way.

The main reason that I wish you would vote against the pending motion and to support this bill is we need as much reliable generation and as many people to bid on those opportunities as possible to try to keep the cost down in the State of Maine for our ratepayers. In our case, in the State of Maine, Mr. Speaker, we are the only state in the country that does not allow this. So, I ask that you follow my light and overturn the pending motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Newport, Representative Fredette.

Representative **FREDETTE**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House, I look at the title of the bill, "An Act to Reduce Electricity Rates by Removing Limitations on the Ownership of Generation by an Affiliate of an Investor-owned Transmission and Distribution Utility."

Mr. Speaker, I'm aware of a report that came out about a month ago that Maine is third in the nation in terms of cost of energy, behind California and Massachusetts. Now, I don't necessarily think that's a distinction that we need to carry, given the amount of poverty that we have in this State. When you look at the cost of electricity and that high cost, that's a regressive tax, essentially, or a regressive cost on people living on fixed income. So, I don't see how we can't support a bill that talks about reducing electrical rates, whether it's by a generation by an affiliate investor-owned transmission or distribution utility or not. It goes back to my comment yesterday in regards to, you know, our systems are broken. There's no reason why we need to be the third-most expensive in the country in regards to cost, and if this bill moves us in that direction, we ought to be doing that for ratepayers and for the citizens of the State of Maine. I am opposed to the motion and ask you to follow my light.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Freeport, Representative Sachs.

Representative **SACHS**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In 1997, about 25 years ago, the Maine Legislature enacted comprehensive legislation called the Restructuring Act, which did this very thing that the bill is seeking to undo, which was separated generation from distribution. There was no evidence that the title actually was correct. There was no evidence presented that having these things combined again after the ratepayers already had to reimburse utilities for their divestment of generation. We've already paid for that once. There were no cost savings presented other than vague promises at the hearing, Mr. Speaker. In fact, the reason for deregulation was to let competition ensue.

The Public Utilities Commission actually said this creates several risks, including that the utility could favor the affiliate, potentially creating an environment where the utility makes it more difficult to interconnect, and we saw real-time examples of that that were presented to us. Mr. Speaker, another person testifying said that this process that would be allowed in LD 1358 is the energy infrastructure equivalent of letting Robert Kraft referee the Super Bowl, with the Patriots playing, and giving him the authority to pick the winner, regardless of the score. I urge you to support the pending motion. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Arundel, Representative Parry.

Representative **PARRY**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. I bought my first house just over 40 years ago. So, I've been buying power long enough to remember before 1997, when we made all the changes that were going to save us all kinds of money. Well, as I recall, it was much better before we deregulated, and since this would all be regulated under the PUC, I don't see why there would be an issue with allowing affiliates; in my opinion, I think we should allow CMP and Versant to produce power. They always did. CMP was 38%, the largest shareholder in Maine Yankee.

If we want to do new projects; if it's nuclear, if it's solar, if it's whatever; why not have the power companies do it themselves? And we have regulation on them, so, I don't see why this wouldn't be a good first step in allowing more generation. And if CMP or Versant wants to put solar panels on everybody's house and rent the space, doesn't that get us

towards our climate goals? Doesn't that get us to a lot of these different areas?

But as I said, I paid for my power under both systems. This system that we currently have is much worse than the system we had when CMP and at the time Bangor Hydro was producing power. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Winter Harbor, Representative Faulkingham.

Representative **FAULKINGHAM**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in opposition to the pending motion.

The way that this bill would lower electricity rates is by adding competition, Mr. Speaker. The changes that the Representative from Freeport noted were made many years ago were to do that; were to add competition. But the opposition that I heard from this bill was to prevent that competition from being added. I think that you can look at the other 49 states and see that Maine is the only state that has this prohibition, Mr. Speaker, as a reason why we should move away from it.

I heard it said that if this bill were to pass, that the electric companies would favor the affiliate. What was spoken about was a type of coordination. Imagine that, Mr. Speaker. Imagine a coordination where you located generation in areas where it makes sense, not just out in the willy-whacks somewhere setting up solar panels, hoping that somebody's going to run a power line to them. Coordination would be a good thing. And, Mr. Speaker, this bill ensures that the PUC would regulate that and make sure that no unethical practices were happening.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the Members to vote against the pending motion.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from St. George, Representative Matlack.

Representative **MATLACK**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the title of the bill is "An Act to Reduce Electricity Rates..." Could somebody please give me a ballpark figure of what the reduction in energy rates will look like if this were to take place?

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Dexter, Representative Foster.

Representative **FOSTER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't have an answer to that question, but; however, I did want to make sure and clarify before we vote, this bill in no way gives the utilities a right to own generation. It is strictly an affiliate company for the company that owns them, to allow them to do that. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Newport, Representative Fredette.

Representative **FREDETTE**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask a question through the Chair.

The SPEAKER: The Member may proceed.

Representative **FREDETTE**: Mr. Speaker, I think we all know, and I think we all have constituents in our district that talk about the high cost of electricity, and I'd like to know, what have we done in this Body so far this year to lower the cost of electricity for consumers, but not only consumers, for businesses in the State that require on the cost of electricity that are the third-highest in the country, what are we doing about that? Which I would purport this bill might be a start.

The SPEAKER: The Representative from Newport, Representative Fredette, has posed a question through the Chair to any Member who wishes to answer.

The SPEAKER: A roll call has been ordered. The pending question before the House is Acceptance of the Majority Ought Not to Pass Report. All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

ROLL CALL NO. 215

YEA - Abdi, Adams, Ankeles, Archer, Arford, Beck, Bell, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Cloutier, Cluchey, Collins, Copeland, Crafts, Crockett, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Eaton, Faircloth, Farrin, Friedmann, Frost, Gattine, Geiger, Graham, Gramlich, Hasenfus, Hepler, Julia, Kessler, Kuhn, Lajoie, Lee, Lookner, Macias, Malon, Mastraccio, Mathieson, Matlack, McCabe, Meyer, Milliken, Mitchell, Montell, Moonen, Murphy, O'Halloran, Osher, Paul, Pluecker, Pugh, Quint, Rana, Ray, Rielly, Roberts, Roeder, Rollins, Runte, Sachs, Salisbury, Sargent, Sato, Sayre, Shagoury, Sinclair, Skold, Stover, Strout, Supica, Terry, Warren, Webb, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

NAY - Albert, Arata, Ardell, Babin, Bagshaw, Bishop, Blier, Boyer D, Campbell, Carlow, Caruso, Chapman, Cimino, Collamore, Cooper, Cray, Daigle, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eder, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foley, Foster, Fredericks, Fredette, Gifford, Greenwood, Griffin, Guerrette, Haggan, Henderson, Hymes, Jackson, Javner, Lance, Lavigne, Lemelin, Libby, Lyman, Mason, McIntyre, Mingo, Morris, Nutting, Olsen, Parry, Perkins, Poirier, Pomerleau, Rudnicki, Schmursal-Burgess, Simmons, Smith, Soboleski, Swallow, Thorne, Tuell, Wadsworth, Walker, White J, White R, Wood P, Wood S, Woodsome.

ABSENT - Gere, Golek, Hall, Lanigan, Underwood.

Yes, 81; No, 65; Absent, 5; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

81 having voted in the affirmative and 65 voted in the negative, with 5 being absent, and accordingly the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report was **ACCEPTED** and sent for concurrence.

Majority Report of the Committee on **ENERGY, UTILITIES AND TECHNOLOGY** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-286)** on Bill "An Act to Increase Contingency Reserves for Maine's Consumer-owned Electric Transmission and Distribution Utilities"

(H.P. 934) (L.D. 1412)

Signed:

Senators:

LAWRENCE of York
GROHOSKI of Hancock
HARRINGTON of York

Representatives:

SACHS of Freeport
GEIGER of Rockland
KESSLER of South Portland
MCINTYRE of Lowell
PAUL of Winterport
RUNTE of York
WADSWORTH of Hiram
WARREN of Scarborough
WEBB of Durham

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "B" (H-287)** on same Bill.

Signed:

Representative:

FOSTER of Dexter

READ.

On motion of Representative SACHS of Freeport, the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended** Report was **ACCEPTED**.

The Bill was **READ ONCE**. **Committee Amendment "A" (H-286)** was **READ** by the Clerk and **ADOPTED**.

Under suspension of the rules the Bill was given its **SECOND READING WITHOUT REFERENCE** to the Committee on **Bills in the Second Reading**.

Under further suspension of the rules the Bill was **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-286)** and sent for concurrence.

Majority Report of the Committee on **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-300)** on Bill "An Act to Expand Testing for Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances to Private Drinking Water Wells"

(H.P. 322) (L.D. 493)

Signed:

Senators:

INGWERSEN of York
NANGLE of Cumberland

Representatives:

MEYER of Eliot
DEBRITO of Waterville
GRAHAM of North Yarmouth
MCCABE of Lewiston
SHAGOURY of Hallowell
ZAGER of Portland

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on same Bill.

Signed:

Senator:

MOORE of Washington

Representatives:

DAIGLE of Fort Kent
GRIFFIN of Levant
JAVNER of Chester
LEMELIN of Chelsea

READ.

Representative MEYER of Eliot moved that the House **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended** Report.

Representative JAVNER of Chester **REQUESTED** a roll call on the motion to **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended** Report.

More than one-fifth of the members present expressed a desire for a roll call which was ordered.

The **SPEAKER**: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Chester, Representative Janver.

Representative **JAVNER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Men and Women of the House. What this bill does is it adds to the burden of the landlords to produce a water test that includes PFAS now, and the cost of those are going to be exponential for some of our landlords in the State, and so, I just don't believe that this is the right time for this. Thank you.

The **SPEAKER**: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Eliot, Representative Meyer.

Representative **MEYER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Women and Men of the House. PFAS contamination poses significant health risks, including kidney and testicular cancer, reduced vaccine response, elevated cholesterol, reduced infant birth weight, developmental delays and weakened immune systems. Low-income communities, communities of color, Tribal and rural

communities are disproportionately impacted and more susceptible to health and financial impacts of PFAS contamination. Children are disproportionately exposed to the contaminant. Yet we currently don't require landlords to provide information about potential contamination of their tenant's drinking water, which may unknowingly be impacting renters statewide.

Over 50% of Mainers get their drinking water from residential wells, which is the highest percentage in the nation. Statewide, 29% of renters are serviced by a residential drinking water well. LD 493 requires residential landlords that have residential drinking water wells to test the wells for PFAS and other contaminants every five years and provide those results to tenants within 10 days of notification of the results. This information must be provided to both current and new tenants. Landlords are not required to treat the drinking water contamination under this bill; they are only required to test and notify their tenants of those test results. This bill also would require homeowners to disclose if a residential well has been tested for PFAS at the point of sale for homeowners selling their property. This is similar to the current requirement for disclosure of information regarding arsenic, radon and other testing for residential wells.

The reality is that transparency around contamination in our drinking water is critical to maintaining the health and wellness of all Mainers. While I applaud any voluntary actions from landlords to test for drinking water contaminants, ultimately, knowing what is in your drinking water should be a right for us all.

The **SPEAKER**: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Orono, Representative Osher.

Representative **OSHER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in support of the pending motion.

Over the course of the last several years, our understanding of the health risks associated with PFAS have evolved significantly. Most importantly, in 2022, the National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine shared a comprehensive meta-analysis identifying health conditions with a strong evidence base linking them to PFAS exposure, including decreased antibody response, high cholesterol, decreased fetal and infant growth and kidney cancer. Evolving evidence exists linking PFAS to breast and testicular cancers. As more human and animal studies accumulated over the past decade, the adverse health effects of PFAS exposure became apparent at lower and lower levels. The EPA states PFAS exposure over a long period of time can cause cancer and other serious illnesses that decrease quality of life or result in death. PFAS exposure during critical life stages such as pregnancy or early childhood can also result in adverse health impacts. In addition, there is enormous mental stress associated with wondering if your drinking water is making you sick. Low-income communities, communities of color, Tribal and rural communities are disproportionately impacted and more susceptible to health impacts of PFAS contamination. Children are disproportionately exposed and impacted due to their growing bodies to the contaminate. Yet we currently don't require landlords to provide information about potential contamination of their tenant's drinking water, which may unknowingly be impacting renters statewide.

As we look at the levels of some of the most common PFAS in drinking water, one major drinking water contaminant is PFOA. It's one of the most toxic chemicals in our environment. In 2022, the EPA announced a new PFOA health advisory, which is the concentration of chemicals in drinking water at or below which adverse health effects are not

anticipated to occur. It's four parts per quadrillion. That's rare to see an advisory that low. That is below the level that we can detect in water. In essence, the EPA is saying there's no safe level of exposure to PFOA in drinking water.

LD 493 simply requires that landlords test and notify their tenants about possible contaminants. It doesn't require them to treat. How the issue is handled is up to the landlord and the tenant and what works for them, but tenants should know what they are drinking. Clean water is a basic human right. Where you live should not determine if you have clean drinking water. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Buxton, Representative Blier.

Representative **BLIER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. I call this bill the 'dripping faucet bill.' The reason for that is, it's only \$300 per test. Landlords will do it. The increase of property taxes is only \$300, increased insurance is only \$150. Old Orchard Beach requires \$500 a year for licensing of rental units. We're already at \$1,200 here. It's \$100 a month I have to raise my rent just to cover the costs. They're all just dripping faucets. Pretty soon, the sink is full. If your party wants affordable housing, stop raising the rent. That's what it boils down to. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Guilford, Representative White.

Representative **WHITE**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've been receiving a whole bunch of phone calls this weekend and even today. The reevaluation of the unorganized territory has been mailed out, and my constituents are receiving their notifications in the mail. Some of the notifications notify them that their property values are being evaluated at over 100%. Some are 700%. One even went up 1,000%. But why not another tax if they choose to sell their home? Because this most definitely affects the rural communities disproportionate. But that's all right, Mr. Speaker. We've heard all Session that it's okay, because it doesn't affect some communities. It affects those that are in rural areas with wells. Just par for the course, Mr. Speaker. We're prepared to deal with this as this Session continue on. Thank you for letting me speak.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Winter Harbor, Representative Faulkingham.

Representative **FAULKINGHAM**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I just want to rise for a minute to acknowledge what the Representative from Buxton just said. And he doesn't speak a lot, but when he speaks, he rises when he knows what he's talking about. And we talk a lot about affordable housing in here. This man provides that. He provides that. Listen to him. He's telling you bills like this raise the cost of living. It has to, there's no other function, there's no other way that it can happen, other than that. He's speaking from experience. Listen to what he says and vote against the pending motion.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Phillips, Representative Soboleski.

Representative **SOBOLESKI**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen. The testing of perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances is already being done by the Department of Environmental Protection, Water Quality Standards. Adding it as a contaminant to HHS, it's already a contaminant under the DEP. And the DEP does extensive testing throughout the State. If you sit and talk to them, look at the records. It shows by community; they pick out locations. Some are rental apartments, some are hospitals, some are schools. They have an extensive list of where they do this. So, everything that's being asked for in this bill is already being

done. It's not cost effective, and it's redundant; it's already being done.

The SPEAKER: A roll call has been ordered. The pending question before the House is Acceptance of the Majority Ought to Pass as Amended Report. All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

ROLL CALL NO. 216

YEA - Abdi, Ankeles, Archer, Arford, Beck, Bell, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Carlow, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, Crockett, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Eaton, Faircloth, Farrin, Friedmann, Frost, Gattine, Geiger, Gere, Graham, Gramlich, Hasenfus, Hepler, Julia, Kessler, Kuhn, Lajoie, Lee, Lookner, Macias, Malon, Mastraccio, Mathieson, Matlack, McCabe, Meyer, Milliken, Mitchell, Montell, Moonen, Murphy, O'Halloran, Osher, Pluecker, Pugh, Rana, Ray, Rielly, Roberts, Roeder, Rollins, Runte, Sachs, Salisbury, Sargent, Sato, Sayre, Shagoury, Sinclair, Skold, Stover, Supica, Terry, Warren, Webb, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

NAY - Adams, Albert, Arata, Ardell, Babin, Bagshaw, Bishop, Blier, Boyer D, Campbell, Caruso, Chapman, Cimino, Collamore, Collins, Cooper, Cray, Daigle, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eder, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foley, Foster, Fredericks, Fredette, Gifford, Greenwood, Griffin, Guerrette, Haggan, Henderson, Hymes, Jackson, Javner, Lance, Lavigne, Lemelin, Libby, Lyman, Mason, McIntyre, Mingo, Morris, Nutting, Olsen, Parry, Paul, Perkins, Poirier, Pomerleau, Quint, Rudnicki, Schmursal-Burgess, Simmons, Smith, Soboleski, Strout, Swallow, Thorne, Tuell, Wadsworth, Walker, White J, White R, Wood P, Wood S, Woodsome.

ABSENT - Golek, Hall, Lanigan, Underwood.
Yes, 78; No, 69; Absent, 4; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

78 having voted in the affirmative and 69 voted in the negative, with 4 being absent, and accordingly the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended Report was ACCEPTED.**

The Bill was **READ ONCE. Committee Amendment "A" (H-300) was READ** by the Clerk and **ADOPTED.**

Under suspension of the rules the Bill was given its **SECOND READING WITHOUT REFERENCE** to the Committee on **Bills in the Second Reading.**

Under further suspension of the rules the Bill was **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-300)** and sent for concurrence.

Majority Report of the Committee on **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-288)** on Bill "An Act to Ensure Access to Safe Drinking Water from Household Wells in Rural Areas by Expanding Testing"

(H.P. 329) (L.D. 500)

Signed:

Senators:

INGWERSEN of York
NANGLE of Cumberland

Representatives:

MEYER of Eliot
DEBRITO of Waterville
GRAHAM of North Yarmouth
MCCABE of Lewiston
SHAGOURY of Hallowell
ZAGER of Portland

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on same Bill.

Signed:

Senator:

MOORE of Washington

Representatives:

DAIGLE of Fort Kent

GRIFFIN of Levant

JAVNER of Chester

LEMELIN of Chelsea

READ.

Representative MEYER of Eliot moved that the House **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended** Report.

Representative JAVNER of Chester **REQUESTED** a roll call on the motion to **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended** Report.

More than one-fifth of the members present expressed a desire for a roll call which was ordered.

The **SPEAKER**: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Chester, Representative Javner.

Representative **JAVNER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We did not object to this bill in the policy piece. The Department asked us to wait on this policy simply for the fact that they are actually doing a test this year on whether or not the actual water test; that they could get it down to the \$80 test and not the \$300 test. So, thank you.

The **SPEAKER**: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Eliot, Representative Meyer.

Representative **MEYER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Women and Men of the House. Over the past several years, we have unfortunately learned a lot about PFAS contamination across Maine and the significant health risks associated with exposure to these forever chemicals, including increased rates of certain types of cancer, fertility issues and neurodevelopmental issues in kids. Long-term exposure can lead to thyroid disease and liver damage. These toxic chemicals have polluted our farmland and drinking water throughout the State.

While the State is currently assisting those that have contaminated wells due to the land application of sludge, many Mainers have contaminated wells that are not a result of sludge spreading. Other sources of contamination could include AFFF firefighting foam, leachate from landfills and even aerial application of pesticides. Over half of Maine residents get their drinking water from a residential well; highest percentage in the nation. Residential wells are not regulated under the Safe Drinking Water Act, so, residents are responsible for the cost of testing and remediation. The cost of testing a residential well for PFAS can cost from \$250 to \$300, and many people cannot afford that. Those who rely on residential wells are more likely to live in rural communities, which have higher poverty rates and lower median incomes than their urban and suburban counterparts. Those who need this testing are the least able to afford it.

LD 500 will require the State cover the cost of PFAS well water testing for low-income Mainers who qualify for SNAP and for WIC. LD 500 will require the Department to add PFAS to the list of contaminants it covers the cost of testing for when helping low-income Mainers test their wells. Paying for these tests is much more affordable than the health care costs associated with PFAS. As an example of health care costs, the cost of a PFAS blood serum test averages about \$600 and not all insurance carriers cover that cost. It is money well spent. If a well tests high for PFAS or any other contaminants, there is a program under the Maine Housing Authority that helps low-income

individuals pay for the cost of remediation for contaminated wells. So, if contamination is found, there are resources available to help cover the cost of treatment.

Everyone deserves access to safe drinking water, regardless of income. It is a basic human right. LD 500 would provide necessary resources to low-income Mainers who may otherwise not be able to afford to test their drinking water. Thank you.

The **SPEAKER**: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Orrington, Representative Campbell.

Representative **CAMPBELL**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Men and Women of the House. Just a little FYI. I was on ENR when we heard of the plight of the farmer who had spread sludge on his farm because the DEP encouraged it, allowed it; and he lost his product, his milk, his farm, his herd and his livelihood. So, we've been following this thing called PFAS for some time. And I've been fortunate enough to talk; whether in person or Zoom; with many people throughout the State, throughout the United States and throughout the world, and I just have one question: How many people have died from PFAS? And every one of these people that we talk to, at every level, comes up with the same answer: zero.

If we are going to put in the most expensive rules/laws in the State of Maine, far exceeding the federal, we ought to be able to do it with information. The first thing we should do is make sure every autopsy is tested for this evil forever chemical. Until we do that, we really should understand this to take care of it.

Just one more piece of information, the State is paying for testing; for a period of time; of wells in Fairfield because of the spreading. And that cost is between two and seven thousand dollars. Which is fine, it's only money. But very soon, the State's going to stop testing. So, if we mandate all these rules and regulations on this forever chemical, we ought to know more about it. So, mandating; as the prior bill did; expanded testing, that's a burden on rural Maine. So, let's just be a little careful and be informed before we go off the rails. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The **SPEAKER**: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Warren, Representative Pluecker.

Representative **PLUECKER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to say that no farmer who's been injured by the spreading of PFAS on their land, by the contamination of their water, owes it to any person in this House to prove how sick they are, how sick their family is, what they have to do and the conversations they have with their doctor. I've heard that question come up many times in the ENR Committee, and it's just not right.

If you have a problem; if anyone in this Body or anyone in the State has a problem with how PFAS science is conducted, how the testing is conducted, the fact that scientists don't want to say that this causes this; but they want to say that this is a carcinogen, that this is something hurting human beings, this is hurting farmers and this is hurting rural people; we have to listen to the scientists. We can't sit back and say, 'I need somebody from this State to tell me that they've died,' or 'I need a family member to tell me that they have died.' That's not how it works.

And this bill does stand up for rural communities who are affected by this; especially they're affected by the fact that they don't have the money you need; if you don't have \$300 at the end of the month to pay for a test, that means you have to go by and say, 'I don't know if my kid is drinking poisoned water, is bathing in poisoned water, because I don't have the \$300 in my pocket.' This bill fixes that. And they don't owe it to us to say, 'I'm getting sicker,' and 'my family is getting sicker.' What we

owe it to them to say we are providing a safe and secure environment; we're providing safe and secure soil, water, food, deer, turkey, the rest of it. And that's what we're doing here today, and so, I urge you to support the motion.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Waterville, Representative Julia.

Representative **JULIA**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I grew up at 359 Ohio Hill Road in Fairfield, Maine, which is the house next door to the first PFAS site in the State. I grew up with a 100-acre field spread with sludge every single summer and a 50-acre field to the side of my house. I just want to thank everybody for speaking today and helping me realize that helping people pay for their water testing, well testing and PFAS levels is actually very important and could have a real impact on people's lives going forward. So, thank you all for speaking.

The SPEAKER: A roll call has been ordered. The pending question before the House is Acceptance of the Majority Ought to Pass as Amended Report. All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

ROLL CALL NO. 217

YEA - Abdi, Ankeles, Archer, Arford, Beck, Bell, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Carlow, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, Crockett, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Eaton, Faircloth, Farrin, Friedmann, Gattine, Geiger, Gere, Graham, Gramlich, Hasenfus, Hepler, Julia, Kessler, Kuhn, Lajoie, Lee, Lookner, Macias, Malon, Mastraccio, Mathieson, Matlack, McCabe, Meyer, Milliken, Mitchell, Montell, Moonen, Murphy, O'Halloran, Osher, Parry, Pluecker, Pugh, Rana, Ray, Rielly, Roberts, Roeder, Rollins, Runte, Sachs, Salisbury, Sargent, Sato, Sayre, Shagoury, Sinclair, Skold, Stover, Supica, Terry, Warren, Webb, Woodsome, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

NAY - Adams, Albert, Arata, Ardell, Babin, Bagshaw, Bishop, Blier, Boyer D, Campbell, Caruso, Chapman, Cimino, Collamore, Collins, Cooper, Cray, Daigle, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eder, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foley, Foster, Fredericks, Fredette, Gifford, Greenwood, Griffin, Guerrette, Haggan, Henderson, Hymes, Javner, Lance, Lavigne, Lemelin, Libby, Lyman, Mason, McIntyre, Mingo, Morris, Nutting, Olsen, Paul, Perkins, Poirier, Pomerleau, Quint, Rudnicki, Schmersal-Burgess, Simmons, Smith, Soboleski, Strout, Swallow, Thorne, Tuell, Wadsworth, Walker, White J, White R, Wood P, Wood S.

ABSENT - Frost, Golek, Hall, Jackson, Lanigan, Underwood.

Yes, 79; No, 66; Absent, 6; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

79 having voted in the affirmative and 66 voted in the negative, with 6 being absent, and accordingly the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended Report was ACCEPTED.**

The Bill was **READ ONCE. Committee Amendment "A" (H-288) was READ** by the Clerk and **ADOPTED.**

Under suspension of the rules the Bill was given its **SECOND READING WITHOUT REFERENCE** to the Committee on **Bills in the Second Reading.**

Under further suspension of the rules the Bill was **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-288)** and sent for concurrence.

Majority Report of the Committee on **HEALTH COVERAGE, INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-281)** on Bill "An Act to Implement the Recommendations of the Commission Regarding Foreign-trained Physicians Living in Maine to Establish a Sponsorship Program for Internationally Trained Physicians"

(H.P. 70) (L.D. 105)

Signed:

Senators:

BAILEY of York
BALDACCI of Penobscot
HAGGAN of Penobscot

Representatives:

MATHIESON of Kittery
ARFORD of Brunswick
BOYER of Cape Elizabeth
CLUCHEY of Bowdoinham
FLYNN of Albion
FOLEY of Wells
MASTRACCIO of Sanford
MORRIS of Turner
OLSEN of Raymond

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on same Bill.

Signed:

Representative:

CIMINO of Bridgton

READ.

On motion of Representative MATHIESON of Kittery, the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended Report was ACCEPTED.**

The Bill was **READ ONCE. Committee Amendment "A" (H-281) was READ** by the Clerk and **ADOPTED.**

Under suspension of the rules the Bill was given its **SECOND READING WITHOUT REFERENCE** to the Committee on **Bills in the Second Reading.**

Under further suspension of the rules the Bill was **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-281)** and sent for concurrence.

Majority Report of the Committee on **HEALTH COVERAGE, INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-304)** on Bill "An Act to Change the Professional Title and Identification of Physician Assistants to Physician Associates"

(H.P. 771) (L.D. 1166)

Signed:

Senators:

BAILEY of York
BALDACCI of Penobscot
HAGGAN of Penobscot

Representatives:

MATHIESON of Kittery
ARFORD of Brunswick
BOYER of Cape Elizabeth
CLUCHEY of Bowdoinham
FLYNN of Albion
FOLEY of Wells
MASTRACCIO of Sanford
MORRIS of Turner
OLSEN of Raymond

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on same Bill.

Signed:
Representative:
CIMINO of Bridgton

READ.

On motion of Representative MATHIESON of Kittery, the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended** Report was **ACCEPTED**.

The Bill was **READ ONCE**. **Committee Amendment "A" (H-304)** was **READ** by the Clerk and **ADOPTED**.

Under suspension of the rules the Bill was given its **SECOND READING WITHOUT REFERENCE** to the Committee on **Bills in the Second Reading**.

Under further suspension of the rules the Bill was **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-304)** and sent for concurrence.

By unanimous consent, all matters having been acted upon were **ORDERED SENT FORTHWITH**.

Majority Report of the Committee on **TAXATION** reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on Bill "An Act to Abolish the Maine Income Tax and Establish a Zero-based Budget"

(H.P. 439) (L.D. 671)

Signed:
Senators:
GROHOSKI of Hancock
BICKFORD of Androscoggin
TIPPING of Penobscot

Representatives:
CLOUTIER of Lewiston
CROCKETT of Portland
FRIEDMANN of Bar Harbor
LAVIGNE of Berwick
MATLACK of St. George
SAYRE of Kennebunk
SWALLOW of Houlton

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-299)** on same Bill.

Signed:
Representatives:
QUINT of Hodgdon
RUDNICKI of Fairfield
WHITE of Ellsworth

READ.

Representative CLOUTIER of Lewiston moved that the House **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report.

Representative RUDNICKI of Fairfield **REQUESTED** a roll call on the motion to **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report.

More than one-fifth of the members present expressed a desire for a roll call which was ordered.

The **SPEAKER**: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Fairfield, Representative Rudnicki.

Representative **RUDNICKI**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. I'll be giving a speech for the Good Representative from Auburn, who has been denied her right to speak.

I rise today in strong support of LD 671, not because it's easy, but because it's necessary. Maine's income tax is a penalty on work. It punishes productivity, deters investment and stifles opportunity, and in doing so, it sends a clear and dangerous message to every working Mainer: the more you strive, the more the government will take.

Let's be clear. Mainers are already paying more than their fair share. We are the fourth-highest-taxed state in the nation. That is not a statistic to be proud of; that is a red flag, a warning that something is deeply wrong with the way we fund our government. And what do Mainers get for it? A bloated State budget that has nearly doubled in size in just a few years, from \$7 billion to nearly \$12 billion, a growing list of crises in our communities: child abuse, opiate addiction, homelessness and declining education outcome. New taxes and fees at every turn, including the latest payroll tax for paid leave, and on top of already crushing burden for Maine families and small businesses.

This bill is about charting a different path. One rooted in accountability, transparency and economic freedom. Removing the State income tax won't just lighten the load on our workers, it will unlock economic growth that's currently held back by government overreach. It sends a signal that Maine is open for business. It invites job creators and entrepreneurs to build and expand here. It gives Maine families room to breathe and to plan for their future without fear of yet another tax hike.

Just look at our neighbor, New Hampshire. They've built a thriving economy without an income tax. We don't have to reinvent the wheel; we just need the political courage to act. For far too long, government spending has operated on autopilot. Programs are funded not based on merit or impact, but simply because they've existed last year. This bill changes that. Zero-based budgeting requires every program to justify its existence, its outcomes and its costs. No more rubber-stamping, no more bureaucrat inertia. Every dollar must be justified. For those not under zero-based review during the current year, we still ask for five or 10 percent budget reduction scenarios, because even incremental accountability is better than none. This is how we begin to restore trust in government. This is how we start putting the taxpayers first again.

Mr. Speaker, I understand the political reality. I understand that everyone on your side of the aisle will say this bill is impractical. But I ask you this: has the status quo been working for Maine people? Are Mainers better off after years of record spending? Is our economy more competitive? Is our government more accountable? The answer is no, and we must act. We must stop managing decline and start building prosperity. We owe it to the working families, the small business owners, the retirees and every Mainer who is doing more with less while the government keeps doing less with more. Let's show the people of Maine that we hear them. Please follow my light. Thank you.

The **SPEAKER**: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Lewiston, Representative Cloutier.

Representative **CLOUTIER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker and Women and Men of the House, this bill proposes to abolish the income tax all together, without consideration of the impact of those cuts on the services offered by the State of Maine and the people who rely on those services. Everything the State funds, from education to health care to municipal revenue sharing to important supports like child care, housing and substance use recovery, would be put in jeopardy by this proposal. In short, every one of our communities would be negatively impacted if Maine eliminated the income tax.

In Fiscal Year 2023, Maine personal income taxes accounted for 43% of General Fund revenues. This bill offers no suggestion on how to replace those revenues if passed. And since we've heard a lot about Fiscal Notes and the current fiscal climate this morning and afternoon, I think it's important to note that this bill would cost \$1.4 billion in the '25-'26 biennium and a whopping \$2.6 billion in the '26-'27 biennium in lost revenue. These costs only increase in the out-years. Please join me in support of the bipartisan Report out of the Taxation Committee and vote Ought Not to Pass.

The SPEAKER: A roll call has been ordered. The pending question before the House is Acceptance of the Majority Ought Not to Pass Report. All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

ROLL CALL NO. 218

YEA - Abdi, Ankeles, Arata, Archer, Arford, Beck, Bell, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Campbell, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, Crockett, Daigle, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Eaton, Faircloth, Farrin, Foley, Friedmann, Gattine, Geiger, Gere, Graham, Gramlich, Hasenfus, Hepler, Julia, Kessler, Kuhn, Lajoie, Lavigne, Lee, Lookner, Macias, Malon, Mastraccio, Mathieson, Matlack, McCabe, Meyer, Milliken, Mitchell, Montell, Moonen, Murphy, O'Halloran, Olsen, Osher, Pluecker, Pugh, Rana, Ray, Rielly, Roberts, Roeder, Rollins, Runte, Sachs, Salisbury, Sargent, Sato, Sayre, Shagoury, Sinclair, Skold, Stover, Supica, Swallow, Terry, Tuell, Warren, Webb, White R, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

NAY - Adams, Albert, Ardell, Babin, Bagshaw, Bishop, Blier, Boyer D, Carlow, Caruso, Chapman, Cimino, Collamore, Collins, Cooper, Cray, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eder, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foster, Fredericks, Gifford, Greenwood, Griffin, Guerrette, Haggan, Henderson, Javner, Lance, Lemelin, Libby, Lyman, Mason, McIntyre, Mingo, Morris, Nutting, Parry, Paul, Poirier, Pomerleau, Quint, Rudnicki, Schmearsal-Burgess, Simmons, Smith, Soboleski, Strout, Thorne, Wadsworth, Walker, White J, Wood P, Wood S, Woodsome.

ABSENT - Fredette, Frost, Golek, Hall, Hymes, Jackson, Lanigan, Perkins, Underwood.

Yes, 85; No, 57; Absent, 9; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

85 having voted in the affirmative and 57 voted in the negative, with 9 being absent, and accordingly the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report was **ACCEPTED** and sent for concurrence.

By unanimous consent, all matters having been acted upon were **ORDERED SENT FORTHWITH**.

Representative MOONEN of Portland assumed the Chair. The House was called to order by the Speaker Pro Tem.

Majority Report of the Committee on **TRANSPORTATION** reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on Bill "An Act to Identify United States Citizenship Status on Driver's Licenses and Nondriver Identification Cards"

(H.P. 864) (L.D. 1329)

Signed:

Senators:

NANGLE of Cumberland
PIERCE of Cumberland

Representatives:

CRAFTS of Newcastle
ANKELES of Brunswick
EATON of Deer Isle
MONTELL of Gardiner
RAY of Lincolnville

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-292)** on same Bill.

Signed:

Senator:

FARRIN of Somerset

Representatives:

ALBERT of Madawaska
BISHOP of Bucksport
MASON of Lisbon
PARRY of Arundel
WHITE of Guilford

READ.

Representative CRAFTS of Newcastle moved that the House **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report.

Representative GREENWOOD of Wales **REQUESTED** a roll call on the motion to **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report.

More than one-fifth of the members present expressed a desire for a roll call which was ordered.

The SPEAKER PRO TEM: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Wales, Representative Greenwood.

Representative **GREENWOOD**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. Let me just reread the title of this bill: "An Act to Identify United States Citizenship Status on Driver's Licenses and Nondriver Identification Cards." Why is that important? During a conversation I had with Secretary of State Bellows, I questioned how a noncitizen might possibly be registered to vote. She insisted that wasn't possible with our current system. And during that discussion, the self-attestation of the citizenship topic came into further question. I agree a person may be legally present, obtain a Maine driver's license or ID card and then self-register to vote by checking the box that says, 'I am a U.S. citizen.' Poof, they are registered to vote. Of course, outside of that special period where, before an election, those rules are different. However, during the bulk of the year, it is so easy to fraudulently and illegally register to vote here in Maine.

Now, I have no direct evidence that that has been the case, but we read from an exclusive article in the *Maine Wire* that there were verified cases of noncitizens that actually voted in the 2024 election. That was concerning to me, Mr. Speaker, and it should be concerning to you.

With voter ID approved to be on the ballot this year, I made the prediction in Committee and I'll make it again here today, it's going to pass and it's going to pass overwhelmingly, Mr. Speaker. The new proposed enhancement would make it super easy: when a person requests a ballot, they must provide an ID to receive that ballot. Given the check-in person will be asking

for photo identification after voter ID passes, there will be a box on the license that would indicate whether that person is a citizen as an additional safeguard in keeping our elections secure. Using some documents presented to me by Chief Deputy Secretary of State Kate McBrien, there's already a nice process in the Department rules on legal presence: "In addition to proving residency, you cannot obtain or renew a driver's license or a nondriver identification card unless you prove acceptable valid documentary evidence of legal presence here in the United States."

Mr. Speaker, let me try to tie these things together. In respectful opposition, the Secretary of State indicated that she felt this bill should be in VLA, not in Transportation. The purpose of a driver's license is to determine if a person is approved to drive on the road, but it is also to prove who they say they are. We use a driver's license to make a return at Walmart without a receipt, purchase a bottle of wine; that says who you are. But what's concerning is somebody can do; somebody can be here lawfully present, go get a driver's license, two or three years down the road, when their asylum hearing has come and gone, and they didn't receive asylum, they were denied, it's obvious they don't self-deport, Mr. Speaker, they're still here. However, they have that Maine driver's license or Maine identification card, and they use that in all methods. When they go register to vote, they've self-attested that box that says they're a citizen, and they're applying to vote. The municipal registrar has no idea if that person is or is not a citizen. However, we heard during testimony of the Secretary of State that they're very thorough. When somebody applies for their driver's license and they're not a citizen, lawful presence is checked and verified. The Secretary of State maintains that list.

It is important that we keep our elections secure, Mr. Speaker. I ask you to oppose the pending motion, so we can pass the bill that would put citizenship on our driver's licenses. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER PRO TEM: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Bangor, Representative Supica.

Representative **SUPICA**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will be brief. I didn't plan on speaking, but I just want to clarify that the myth of noncitizens voting in Maine elections is simply that, a myth. Thank you, and please follow my light in defeating this measure.

The SPEAKER PRO TEM: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Newcastle, Representative Crafts.

Representative **CRAFTS**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand to speak in support of the pending motion and just want to clarify the role of the Maine driver's license is to, as the Good Representative from Wales said, to identify who you are, to demonstrate what vehicles you are authorized to drive and to indicate what restrictions are in place in your driving ability.

To apply for the Maine driver's license, you have to demonstrate proof of residency, you also have to have valid documentary evidence of legal presence in the State. It seems to me that this bill is attempting to politicize a process to obtain an identification that's strictly intended to identify who you are and what vehicles you're able to operate. As the Representative from Wales said, he has no direct evidence that there's a case for fraudulent voting. I think mixing the role of the State of Maine driver's license with the allegation of fraudulent voting in the State is false, and I hope that you'll support the pending motion.

The SPEAKER PRO TEM: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Guilford, Representative White.

Representative **WHITE**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The ability to notify that you are not a citizen goes beyond just voting. Driver's licenses are used for identification. They're used for

identification in my business, where I sell firearms. It would be very nice to know if the person filling out the form was a citizen or a noncitizen. There are noncitizens that do purchase firearms if they're here on visas or for different things.

So, who would like to vote when they're not a lawful citizen? Well, maybe someone that's here on a visa for many years that's working that may have children in a community, a spouse, a home. I would like to vote in local elections to regulate my property tax bill, *et cetera*. We all in this room exercise that privilege, and we're not talking about only those new Mainers that have come here seeking asylum, but those that come here seeking monetary gain. If you're here for a number of years working and maintain your citizenship in another country, wouldn't you want to; wouldn't you be tempted to sign that form and have a say in where your tax dollars are going? That's a debate for another day, whether or not local elections should allow noncitizens; however, currently, it is not lawful and having that simple notification on your ID would simplify the process.

We have no way to judge, at this point, when the Secretary of State was asked if she compared the voter rolls to the driver's licenses and State IDs, she said, no, she has not, and has no intention to, unless someone can prove to her that there's some fraudulent voting going on. Well, it's pretty hard to prove if you know where the lists are, however, you have no access to them and the person that does refuses to compare the two lists, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for paying attention and have a great afternoon.

The SPEAKER PRO TEM: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Auburn, Representative Chapman.

Representative **CHAPMAN**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I see no harm in this. There's no Fiscal Note, so, there's no cost; there's no real issue. We're talking about just putting a simple identifying mark on this ID. And it would put this conspiracy to bed and nobody would ever debate it again. It affected the election, or it didn't. Done. I don't see why you wouldn't vote opposing not to pass. Thank you.

The SPEAKER PRO TEM: A roll call has been ordered. The pending question before the House is Acceptance of the Majority Ought Not to Pass Report. All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

ROLL CALL NO. 219

YEA - Abdi, Ankeles, Arata, Archer, Arford, Beck, Bell, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, Crockett, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Eaton, Faircloth, Farrin, Friedmann, Gattine, Geiger, Gere, Graham, Gramlich, Hasenfus, Hepler, Julia, Kessler, Kuhn, Lajoie, Lee, Lookner, Macias, Malon, Mastraccio, Mathieson, Matlack, McCabe, Meyer, Milliken, Mitchell, Montell, Moonen, Murphy, O'Halloran, Osher, Pluecker, Pugh, Rana, Ray, Rielly, Roberts, Roeder, Rollins, Runte, Sachs, Salisbury, Sargent, Sato, Sayre, Shagoury, Sinclair, Skold, Stover, Supica, Terry, Warren, Webb, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

NAY - Adams, Albert, Ardell, Babin, Bagshaw, Bishop, Blier, Boyer D, Campbell, Carlow, Caruso, Chapman, Cimino, Collamore, Collins, Cooper, Cray, Daigle, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eder, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foley, Foster, Fredericks, Gifford, Greenwood, Griffin, Guerrette, Haggan, Henderson, Javner, Lance, Lavigne, Lemelin, Libby, Lyman, Mason, McIntyre, Mingo, Morris, Nutting, Olsen, Parry, Paul, Perkins, Poirier, Pomerleau, Quint, Rudnicki, Schmursal-Burgess, Simmons, Smith, Soboleski, Strout, Swallow, Thorne, Tuell, Wadsworth, Walker, White J, White R, Wood P, Wood S, Woodsome.

ABSENT - Fredette, Frost, Golek, Hall, Hymes, Jackson, Lanigan, Underwood.

Yes, 77; No, 66; Absent, 8; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

77 having voted in the affirmative and 66 voted in the negative, with 8 being absent, and accordingly the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report was **ACCEPTED** and sent for concurrence.

Majority Report of the Committee on **VETERANS AND LEGAL AFFAIRS** reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on Bill "An Act to Allow a Political Party to Determine How That Party's Nominee Is Selected in a Primary Election"

(H.P. 209) (L.D. 309)

Signed:

Senators:

HICKMAN of Kennebec
DUSON of Cumberland

Representatives:

SUPICA of Bangor
FROST of Belgrade
GRAHAM of North Yarmouth
GRAMLICH of Old Orchard Beach
MALON of Biddeford
TERRY of Gorham

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-283)** on same Bill.

Signed:

Senator:

TIMBERLAKE of Androscoggin

Representatives:

BOYER of Poland
CHAPMAN of Auburn
FREDERICKS of Sanford
HYMES of Waldo

READ.

Representative SUPICA of Bangor moved that the House **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report.

The SPEAKER PRO TEM: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Poland, Representative Boyer.

Representative **BOYER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House, this bill would simply allow private political parties to determine how we select our nominee; ranked choice voting, plurality, cornhole, whatever; it would allow at our State convention to determine what makes sense for our party. And our parties are private; they're not public.

Our laws in our State and our country gives great deference to these political parties, Mr. Speaker. I mean, heck, the majority party put forth a nominee for President that no one voted for in the primary, so, that was okay. And that's all we're asking for this. I mean, I'm not even sure if House Democrats used ranked choice voting to elect leadership, so, you know, I think there's; I'm not sure why House Democrats didn't use ranked choice voting for their election, what's good for the goose should be good for the gander; but we disagree in this case and don't think; I know some folks say, 'well, it's confusing, we use ranked choice voting for this and that and voters;' well, that's already the law of the land, Mr. Speaker, because as we know, we're not allowed to use ranked choice voting in the general elections for State races.

So, I don't think it would add any confusion, and Republicans simply just want to have the plurality, and it'd be great if you all would let us. And I ask for a Roll Call. Thank you.

Representative BOYER of Poland **REQUESTED** a roll call on the motion to **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report.

More than one-fifth of the members present expressed a desire for a roll call which was ordered.

The SPEAKER PRO TEM: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Bangor, Representative Supica.

Representative **SUPICA**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This bill is unnecessary and it will lead to voter confusion, because parties could switch from cycle to cycle what type of primary election they're holding.

As far as I'm aware, no other state allows parties to choose what style of primary they have. Voters, particularly unenrolled voters, who can choose which party's primary to participate in, will not easily understand what type of election we would have, depending on which ballot they would select and it would just unnecessarily put burden on the Division of Elections and the Secretary of State's office. It's really kind of a solution in search of a problem. Simply don't ranked-choice vote if you don't want to in your primary.

The SPEAKER PRO TEM: A roll call has been ordered. The pending question before the House is Acceptance of the Majority Ought Not to Pass Report. All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

ROLL CALL NO. 220

YEA - Abdi, Ankeles, Archer, Arford, Beck, Bell, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, Crockett, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Eaton, Faircloth, Farrin, Friedmann, Gattine, Geiger, Gere, Graham, Gramlich, Hasenfus, Hepler, Julia, Kessler, Kuhn, Lajoie, Lee, Lookner, Macias, Malon, Mastraccio, Mathieson, Matlack, McCabe, Meyer, Milliken, Mitchell, Montell, Moonen, Murphy, O'Halloran, Osher, Pluecker, Pugh, Rana, Ray, Rielly, Roberts, Roeder, Rollins, Runte, Sachs, Salisbury, Sargent, Sato, Sayre, Shagoury, Sinclair, Skold, Stover, Supica, Terry, Warren, Webb, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

NAY - Adams, Albert, Arata, Ardell, Babin, Bagshaw, Bishop, Blier, Boyer D, Campbell, Carlow, Caruso, Chapman, Cimino, Collamore, Collins, Cooper, Cray, Daigle, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eder, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foley, Foster, Fredericks, Gifford, Greenwood, Griffin, Guerrette, Haggan, Henderson, Javner, Lance, Lavigne, Lemelin, Libby, Lyman, Mason, McIntyre, Mingo, Morris, Nutting, Olsen, Parry, Paul, Perkins, Poirier, Pomerleau, Quint, Rudnicki, Schmersal-Burgess, Simmons, Smith, Soboleski, Strout, Swallow, Thorne, Tuell, Wadsworth, Walker, White J, White R, Wood P, Wood S, Woodsome.

ABSENT - Fredette, Frost, Golek, Hall, Hymes, Jackson, Lanigan, Underwood.

Yes, 76; No, 67; Absent, 8; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

76 having voted in the affirmative and 67 voted in the negative, with 8 being absent, and accordingly the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report was **ACCEPTED** and sent for concurrence.

Majority Report of the Committee on **VETERANS AND LEGAL AFFAIRS** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-298)** on Bill "An Act to Allow a Home Distiller to Distill and Share Homemade Spirituous Liquor" (H.P. 399) (L.D. 631)

Signed:

Senators:

HICKMAN of Kennebec
DUSON of Cumberland
TIMBERLAKE of Androscoggin

Representatives:

SUPICA of Bangor
BOYER of Poland
CHAPMAN of Auburn
FREDERICKS of Sanford
HYMES of Waldo
TERRY of Gorham

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on same Bill.

Signed:

Representatives:

FAIRCLOTH of Bangor
FROST of Belgrade
GRAHAM of North Yarmouth
MALON of Biddeford

READ.

On motion of Representative SUPICA of Bangor, the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended** Report was **ACCEPTED**.

The Bill was **READ ONCE**. **Committee Amendment "A" (H-298)** was **READ** by the Clerk and **ADOPTED**.

Under suspension of the rules the Bill was given its **SECOND READING WITHOUT REFERENCE** to the Committee on **Bills in the Second Reading**.

Under further suspension of the rules the Bill was **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-298)** and sent for concurrence.

Majority Report of the Committee on **VETERANS AND LEGAL AFFAIRS** reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on RESOLUTION, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine to Specify the Qualifications of Electors in State and Local Elections

(H.P. 946) (L.D. 1437)

Signed:

Senator:

HICKMAN of Kennebec

Representatives:

SUPICA of Bangor
FAIRCLOTH of Bangor
FROST of Belgrade
GRAHAM of North Yarmouth
TERRY of Gorham

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-290)** on same RESOLUTION.

Signed:

Senator:

TIMBERLAKE of Androscoggin

Representatives:

BOYER of Poland
CHAPMAN of Auburn
FREDERICKS of Sanford
HYMES of Waldo

READ.

Representative SUPICA of Bangor moved that the House **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report.

The same Representative **REQUESTED** a roll call on her motion to **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report.

More than one-fifth of the members present expressed a desire for a roll call which was ordered.

The SPEAKER PRO TEM: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Bangor, Representative Supica.

Representative **SUPICA**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today in strong opposition to LD 1437. It's a Resolution that proposes an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine to, quote, "Specify the Qualifications of Electors in State and Local Elections." And so, let us be very clear today: It is already the law, only citizens can vote in Maine elections. That is not disputed, that is not unclear, that is not ambiguous. It is codified in Article II of our State Constitution. It is affirmed in federal law signed by President Bill Clinton and it is reiterated the Maine Statutes governing municipal elections. This is not a gray area.

The myth; as I've spoken of earlier; that noncitizens are voting in Maine elections is just that, a myth. It is not rooted in fact, it is not supported by evidence and it does not reflect the reality of how our election system functions. Let us not spend our time chasing ghosts or entertaining conspiracy theories that seek to erode public trust in our democratic institutions. These narratives have been imported from national political fights that have no bearing here in Maine and they only serve to divide us and sow suspicion where none is warranted. We've seen this proposal before, we've rejected it before. Because we know it's unnecessary; because we know it's harmful, because we know it distracts us from the real work of strengthening democracy, which is expanding access, not limiting it; by telling the truth, not amplifying misinformation.

We are the stewards of Maine's democracy, and as such, we have a duty to ensure that our laws are grounded in fact, not fear; in principle, not politics. So, I urge this Body to vote Ought Not to Pass. Let us put this falsehood to rest once and for all. Let's trust in the truth. Let's trust in each other. And let's keep Maine a place where democracy is defended with clarity, with courage and, yes, compassion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER PRO TEM: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Poland, Representative Boyer.

Representative **BOYER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. This is a simple Resolution that would clarify that you must be a citizen of the United States to vote in our State, our county or municipal elections. You know, I appreciate what the Good Representative from Bangor said, but it was just a couple years ago that the City of Portland had an open question on whether noncitizens should vote in their Charter Commission. So, that's not a conspiracy theory. And if we all agree that noncitizens shouldn't vote in Maine, adding this to our Constitution shouldn't be an issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER PRO TEM: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Winter Harbor, Representative Faulkingham.

Representative **FAULKINGHAM**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to put this to rest myself. A quick Google search comes up March 10, 2022: 'Portland Charter Commission endorses local voting rights for noncitizens.' March 24, 2022, from WGME: 'Portland could be first in the State to allow noncitizens and undocumented residents to vote.' April 11, 2022: "Portland looking again at voting rights for noncitizens in municipal elections." Mr. Speaker, this is an issue that we can put to rest, and the way to do that: with a Constitutional

Amendment. Send it out to the voters, to the people of the State of Maine, and let them make this crystal clear going forward and we won't have to deal with this anymore. Vote no on the pending motion.

The SPEAKER PRO TEM: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Hodgdon, Representative Quint.

Representative **QUINT**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I am speaking on behalf of the Good Representative from Auburn.

If it is a myth, then there is no harm in making this clear in the Constitution. The only reason not to codify citizenship as a requirement for voting is to reserve the option to allow noncitizens to vote in the future. Let Maine people decide at the polling booth. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER PRO TEM: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Readfield, Representative Hasenfus.

Representative **HASENFUS**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker Pro Tem. I do believe that only citizens should vote in statewide elections. And in reading this, seeing that it's a Constitutional Amendment, we have these little books that you all know we're referring to there, the first part of that is the Constitution of Maine. And in Article II of that Constitution, it says that "Electors;" that's the title of it, "Electors;" and 'every citizen of the United States of the age of 18 and upwards, having his or her residence in the State, shall be an elector for Governor, Senators and Representatives.' Now, this is a necessary precondition for an individual to vote in a statewide election, which means that if you are not a citizen, not over 18 and not a resident of Maine, in the Constitution of Maine, you cannot vote in statewide elections. Further, there is federal law that prohibits; the Federal Code says that 'it shall be unlawful for any alien to vote in any election held solely or in part for the purpose of electing a candidate for President, Vice President, Senate or House.' That is punishable by a fine or imprisonment. Further, Maine Statute 21-A, Section 111 that deals with voting says that a person must be a citizen to vote in a municipal election.

Mr. Speaker, the law is clear and has fully satisfied me. The law is clear that noncitizens are not lawful voters in Maine. Thank you.

The SPEAKER PRO TEM: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Biddeford, Representative Malon.

Representative **MALON**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've reviewed this bill several times when we were in the Attorney General's office. Our lawyers looked at it; they confirmed everything that the Good Representative from Readfield had to say, and they also affirmed that towns can pass whatever provisions in their Charter that they want to; they do not supersede State Statute. So, even if the City of Portland decided that they think noncitizens should vote in their elections, Statute would still win out and they would not be legally allowed to. This measure is unnecessary. I urge you to support the pending motion.

The SPEAKER PRO TEM: A roll call has been ordered. The pending question before the House is Acceptance of the Majority Ought Not to Pass Report. All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

ROLL CALL NO. 221

YEA - Ankeles, Archer, Arford, Beck, Bell, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, Crockett, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Eaton, Faircloth, Farrin, Friedmann, Gattine, Geiger, Gere, Graham, Gramlich, Hasenfus, Hepler, Julia, Kessler, Kuhn, Lajoie, Lee, Lookner, Macias, Malon, Mastraccio, Mathieson, Matlack, McCabe, Meyer, Milliken, Mitchell, Montell, Moonen, Murphy, O'Halloran, Osher, Pluecker, Pugh, Rana, Ray, Rielly, Roberts,

Roeder, Rollins, Runte, Sachs, Salisbury, Sargent, Sato, Sayre, Shagoury, Sinclair, Skold, Stover, Supica, Terry, Warren, Webb, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

NAY - Adams, Albert, Arata, Ardell, Babin, Bagshaw, Bishop, Blier, Boyer D, Campbell, Carlow, Caruso, Chapman, Cimino, Collamore, Collins, Cooper, Cray, Daigle, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eder, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foster, Fredericks, Gifford, Greenwood, Griffin, Guerrette, Haggan, Henderson, Javner, Lance, Lavigne, Lemelin, Libby, Lyman, Mason, McIntyre, Mingo, Morris, Nutting, Olsen, Parry, Paul, Perkins, Poirier, Pomerleau, Quint, Rudnicki, Schmearsal-Burgess, Simmons, Smith, Soboleski, Strout, Swallow, Thorne, Tuell, Wadsworth, Walker, White J, White R, Wood P, Wood S, Woodsome.

ABSENT - Abdi, Foley, Fredette, Frost, Golek, Hall, Hymes, Jackson, Lanigan, Underwood.

Yes, 75; No, 66; Absent, 10; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

75 having voted in the affirmative and 66 voted in the negative, with 10 being absent, and accordingly the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report was **ACCEPTED** and sent for concurrence.

By unanimous consent, all matters having been acted upon were **ORDERED SENT FORTHWITH**.

Majority Report of the Committee on **EDUCATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS** reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on Bill "An Act Regarding Human Trafficking Prevention Instruction and Dissemination of and Access to Obscene Material in Schools" (H.P. 917) (L.D. 1395)

Signed:

Senators:

RAFFERTY of York
PIERCE of Cumberland

Representatives:

MURPHY of Scarborough
BRENNAN of Portland
CROCKETT of Belfast
DODGE of Belfast
MITCHELL of Cumberland
SARGENT of York

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-284)** on same Bill.

Signed:

Senator:

LIBBY of Cumberland

Representatives:

BAGSHAW of Windham
CARLOW of Buxton
HAGGAN of Hampden
LYMAN of Livermore Falls

READ.

Representative MURPHY of Scarborough moved that the House **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report.

Representative LYMAN of Livermore Falls **REQUESTED** a roll call on the motion to **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report.

More than one-fifth of the members present expressed a desire for a roll call which was ordered.

The SPEAKER PRO TEM: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Winterport, Representative Paul.

Representative **PAUL**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in opposition to the pending motion.

LD 1395 is not just a bill, it's a line in the sand. It is a vital step to protect Maine's children from obscene content and the growing threat of human trafficking in our schools and libraries. In today's digital age, our children face unprecedented threats. Online educational vendors, funded by public dollars, are exposing students to sexually explicit or exploitative content. EBSCO, a resource used in Maine schools, was recently placed on the National Center on Sexual Exploitation's "Dirty Dozen List" for linking to pornography. While some improvements were noted in 2020, as of 2023, high school databases still allow access to graphic content, including detailed discussions of sexual practices. Springer, ProQuest and others also host mature academic material, often without content warnings or centralized oversight. The Digital Maine Library's lack of centralized oversight leaves parents blind to what their children encounter. That isn't education, it's perversion.

Meanwhile, human trafficking is no abstract threat. It is happening here. In 2023 alone, the National Human Trafficking Hotline identified 26 trafficking cases in Maine; 64 victims, many of them minors. Local cases underscore the urgency. In 2025, a Rockland massage parlor was exposed as a trafficking front. A Bangor man was sentenced for trafficking a minor across state lines. Those are not statistics. These are our students in our classrooms, our lunchrooms, our communities. The most heartbreaking truth; many of them never saw the danger coming. A 2012 Preble Street study found that a quarter of homeless youth in Maine were offered drugs for sex. Let me repeat that: a quarter of homeless youth in Maine were offered drugs for sex.

Without awareness, a student might not recognize grooming, and without training, a teacher might miss the signs. LD 1395 offers a proactive solution. It holds digital offenders accountable by requiring them to block access to obscene material and sexual exploitation, aligning with existing Maine law under Title 17 and Title 17-A. It eliminates the outdated educational exemption that currently allows obscene content to slip through, as long as it's labeled purely educational. It also empowers schools to offer age-appropriate education on human trafficking, teaching students to recognize red flags and training educators to spot vulnerable youth before traffickers do.

This is exactly the kind of upstream prevention experts have long been calling for. In fact, the Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault, MECASA, has said that LD 1395 fulfills part of a directive first laid out in a bill from 2023, which was LD 1092. LD 1092, sponsored by a member of the majority party, recognized the urgent need for a coordinated statewide approach to preventing and responding to the commercial sexual exploitation of children, which refers to the sexual exploitation of minors for profit, including child sex trafficking. In response, the Department of Health and Human Services and MECASA co-convened a coalition, and one of their findings determined that a tangible, high-impact step Maine can take to combat commercial sexual exploitation of children is integrating a dedicated commercial sexual exploitation of children module in the child sexual abuse prevention education curriculum. And now, a sponsor from the minority party is advancing a bill to finally put that policy into practice, offering a path forward to protect our kids. And what happened? The majority party on the Education Committee, despite MECASA's testimony, despite the data, despite the Legislature's support of LD 1092 in the 131st Legislature, voted it down. Even a simple Amendment

suggested by MECASA, which would've removed the more controversial elements of the bill but kept the trafficking prevention intact, was too much for them. We should all be asking, why? Why is it acceptable to pass a directive one year, then reject the action to fulfill it in the next? Just because the political jersey has changed? Why is MECASA's expert-backed solution being ignored, and why are we hesitating when children are the ones paying the price? Other states aren't waiting. Texas, California, Virginia and more have implemented trafficking prevention education. Utah, Oklahoma and Indiana are tightening digital content standards. Why shouldn't Maine lead?

This bill is not just policy, it is a lifeline for Maine's children. It says to every student: you are seen, you are valued and we will arm you with the tools necessary to stay safe. To every educator: we are trusting you to be the first line of defense. And to every trafficker: Maine is watching, and we are fighting back. Let's protect our students, let's support our educators. I urge everyone in this Chamber to vote down the pending motion and support this bill.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER PRO TEM: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Scarborough, Representative Murphy.

Representative **MURPHY**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Good Representative from Winterport for bringing this bill before us.

We agree the health and safety of our children is the highest priority, and this legislation asks us to be sure that children in Maine are safe when they're online. That's why it was a relief to hear copious testimony informing the Committee that these safety measures are already required and in use in Maine's public schools. The federal requirements of the Children's Internet Protection Act, CIPA, already exists. CIPA imposes certain requirements on schools or libraries that receive discounts for internet access or internet connections through the E-Rate program, a program that makes certain communications services and products more affordable for eligible schools and libraries. Schools and libraries subject to CIPA may not receive the discounts offered by the E-Rate program unless they certify that they have an internet safety policy that includes technology protection measures. The protection measures must block or filter internet access to pictures that are obscene, child pornography or harmful to minors. Schools subject to CIPA have two additional certification requirements. Their internet safety policies must include monitoring the online activities of minors and, as required by the Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act, they must provide for educating minors about appropriate online behavior. Schools and libraries subject to CIPA are required to adopt and implement an internet safety policy addressing access by minors to inappropriate matter on the internet; the safety and security of minors when using electronic mail, chat rooms and other forms of direct electronic communications; unauthorized access, including so-called hacking and other unlawful activities by minors online; unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of personal information regarding minors and measures restricting minors access to materials harmful to them.

Schools and libraries must certify they are in compliance with CIPA before they can receive E-Rate funding. SAUs are already able to offer instruction on human trafficking prevention if they wish. We have a local control in Maine, and those curriculums would be developed at the local level. LD 1395 additionally, if enacted, may impact existing contracts, and may implicate the Contract Clause of the United States Constitution.

There is no doubt that there are dangers online, but the majority of the Committee felt that, after hearing testimony from library and information specialists across the State, administrators and others, that this is already happening; that filtering measures are already in place and school employees, staff and administrators are looking out for kids when they are online. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER PRO TEM: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Windham, Representative Bagshaw.

Representative **BAGSHAW**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Men and Women of the House. I rise today to say that I am in the minority on the Education Committee, and I remember this bill and I support this bill. And I simply stated some information about a librarian that keeps coming to defend keeping pornography and instructional books in the schools, and I got my seat changed because I pointed out the fact that it's okay to have an instructional guide on how to give a blowjob to a strap-on dildo in my Committee. I find that inappropriate for children in school, and I find that not to be filtered.

There are wildly inappropriate books in the library, information going out in the schools. It's inappropriate, but since it's in cartoon form or whatever hoops they jump through to put this information out in the schools; there is a need for this bill, and there's wildly inappropriate information in the schools. And if my Committee was offended by my comments, all adults on a horseshoe, this stuff needs to be out of the schools and there needs to be protection for children from trafficking and pornography. I can't even believe I have to say that. Thank you.

The SPEAKER PRO TEM: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Bridgton, Representative Cimino.

Representative **CIMINO**: Thank you, Speaker Pro Tem. I am in support of this bill.

There just a lot of garbage that is in the schools these days. And not too long ago, a few minutes ago, this Body actually voted for mental health services to be for children inside different schools and different facilities, to make that available. Do we wonder why kids are having mental problems? I think a big contribution to the status of children right now is because they are being exposed. They are being exposed to so much garbage in school. So, maybe with a bill like this, we wouldn't have to have as many children seeking medical and mental care, and maybe our test grades would go up as well. Just a thought.

The SPEAKER PRO TEM: A roll call has been ordered. The pending question before the House is Acceptance of the Majority Ought Not to Pass Report. All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

ROLL CALL NO. 222

YEA - Ankeles, Archer, Arford, Beck, Bell, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, Crockett, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Eaton, Faircloth, Farrin, Friedmann, Gattine, Geiger, Gere, Golek, Graham, Gramlich, Hasenfus, Hepler, Julia, Kessler, Kuhn, Lajoie, Lee, Lookner, Macias, Malon, Mastraccio, Mathieson, Matlack, McCabe, Meyer, Milliken, Mitchell, Montell, Moonen, Murphy, O'Halloran, Osher, Pluecker, Pugh, Rana, Ray, Rielly, Roberts, Roeder, Rollins, Runte, Sachs, Salisbury, Sargent, Sato, Sayre, Shagoury, Sinclair, Skold, Stover, Supica, Terry, Warren, Webb, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

NAY - Adams, Albert, Arata, Ardell, Babin, Bagshaw, Bishop, Blier, Boyer D, Campbell, Carlow, Caruso, Chapman, Cimino, Collamore, Collins, Cooper, Daigle, Drinkwater, Eder, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foley, Foster, Fredericks, Gifford, Greenwood, Griffin, Guerrette, Haggan, Henderson, Javner, Lance, Lavigne, Lemelin, Libby, Lyman, Mason, McIntyre,

Mingo, Morris, Nutting, Olsen, Parry, Paul, Perkins, Poirier, Pomerleau, Quint, Rudnicki, Schmearsal-Burgess, Simmons, Smith, Soboleski, Strout, Swallow, Thorne, Tuell, Wadsworth, Walker, White J, White R, Wood P, Wood S, Woodsome.

ABSENT - Abdi, Cray, Ducharme, Fredette, Frost, Hall, Hymes, Jackson, Lanigan, Underwood.

Yes, 76; No, 65; Absent, 10; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

76 having voted in the affirmative and 65 voted in the negative, with 10 being absent, and accordingly the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report was **ACCEPTED** and sent for concurrence.

By unanimous consent, all matters having been acted upon were **ORDERED SENT FORTHWITH**.

The Chair laid before the House the following item which was **TABLED** earlier in today's session:

Bill "An Act to Allow the Public Utilities Commission to Establish Performance-based Metrics and Rate-adjustment Mechanisms for a Public Utility in Any Proceeding" (H.P. 201) (L.D. 301)

Which was **TABLED** by Representative MOONEN of Portland pending **FURTHER CONSIDERATION**.

Speaker Pro Tem MOONEN of Portland moved that the House **INSIST**.

Representative FECTEAU of Biddeford **REQUESTED** a roll call on the motion to **INSIST**.

More than one-fifth of the members present expressed a desire for a roll call which was ordered.

The SPEAKER PRO TEM: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Freeport, Representative Sachs.

Representative **SACHS**: I was going to request a Roll Call. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: A roll call has been ordered. The pending question before the House is to Insist. All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

Representative **LIBBY**: Point of Order.

The SPEAKER PRO TEM: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Auburn, Representative Libby, and inquires as to her Point of Order.

Representative **LIBBY**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker Pro Tem. I am having some confusion on the motion at hand. Can you please clarify what a yea vote and what a nay vote would equal with this motion, please?

The SPEAKER PRO TEM: The pending question is, shall the House Insist? A yes vote would be yes on Insisting on the House's previous action; a no vote would be against Insisting on the House's previous action.

A roll call has been ordered. The pending question before the House is to Insist. All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

ROLL CALL NO. 223

YEA - Adams, Albert, Arata, Ardell, Babin, Bagshaw, Bishop, Blier, Boyer D, Campbell, Carlow, Caruso, Chapman, Cimino, Collamore, Collins, Cooper, Crockett, Daigle, Dodge, Drinkwater, Eder, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foley, Foster, Gifford, Greenwood, Griffin, Guerrette, Haggan, Henderson, Javner, Lance, Lavigne, Lemelin, Libby, Mason, McIntyre, Mingo, Montell, Morris, Nutting, Olsen, Parry, Paul, Perkins, Pluecker, Poirier, Pomerleau, Quint, Rudnicki, Schmearsal-Burgess, Simmons, Smith, Soboleski, Swallow, Thorne, Tuell, Wadsworth, Walker, Warren, White J, White R, Wood P, Wood S, Woodsome.

NAY - Ankeles, Archer, Arford, Beck, Bell, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dill, Doudera, Eaton, Faircloth, Farrin, Friedmann, Gattine, Geiger, Gere, Golek, Graham, Gramlich, Hasenfus, Hepler, Julia, Kessler, Kuhn, Lajoie, Lee, Lookner, Macias, Malon, Mastraccio, Mathieson, Matlack, McCabe, Meyer, Milliken, Mitchell, Moonen, Murphy, O'Halloran, Osher, Pugh, Rana, Ray, Rielly, Roberts, Roeder, Rollins, Runte, Sachs, Salisbury, Sargent, Sato, Sayre, Shagoury, Sinclair, Skold, Stover, Supica, Terry, Webb, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

ABSENT - Abdi, Cray, Ducharme, Fredericks, Fredette, Frost, Hall, Hymes, Jackson, Lanigan, Lyman, Strout, Underwood.

Yes, 67; No, 71; Absent, 13; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

67 having voted in the affirmative and 71 voted in the negative, with 13 being absent, and accordingly the motion to **INSIST FAILED**.

Subsequently, the House voted to **RECEDE AND CONCUR**.

SENATE PAPERS

The following Joint Resolution: (S.P. 777)

JOINT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING MAY 2025 AS CELIAC DISEASE AWARENESS MONTH

WHEREAS, celiac disease is a serious autoimmune disease caused by a reaction to gluten, resulting in damage to the small intestine; and

WHEREAS, celiac disease affects approximately one percent of people worldwide, with symptoms ranging from mild to severe, and can lead to long-term health complications if not properly managed; and

WHEREAS, awareness about celiac disease can lead to earlier diagnosis, improved understanding and increased support for those living with the condition; and

WHEREAS, early diagnosis and adherence to a strict gluten-free diet are crucial for individuals with celiac disease to maintain their health and well-being; and

WHEREAS, organizations and individuals have worked tirelessly to raise awareness, provide education and support individuals affected by celiac disease; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That We, the Members of the One Hundred and Thirty-second Legislature now assembled in the First Special Session, on behalf of the people we represent, take this opportunity to recognize May 2025 as Celiac Disease Awareness Month and to express our gratitude to the organizations and individuals who have dedicated their time and efforts to raising awareness about celiac disease, supporting affected individuals and advancing research to improve the lives of those living with the condition.

Came from the Senate, **READ** and **ADOPTED**.

READ.

The **SPEAKER PRO TEM**: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Bangor, Representative Roeder.

Representative **ROEDER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker Pro Tem. I am someone who has celiac disease, so, I will preface my comments by saying I find us to be a people that have a pretty good sense of humor.

I rise in strong support of this Joint Resolution declaring May as Celiac Disease Awareness Month. A time to honor those of us who live life on hard mode every time we enter a Panera. Celiac disease is a serious autoimmune condition that affects roughly one in 100 Americans and 100 out of 100 potlucks. For those of us with celiac, food is less of a joy and more of a high-stakes scavenger hunt. We are a proud people,

brittle-boned, perpetually fatigued and always one bread crumb away from a three-day nap. We have the iron levels of a Victorian orphan and the emotional stability of someone who's been gaslit by a croissant, and yet, we persist. Because when your own digestive system treats eating sourdough like the storming of the Bastille, you learn to adapt.

This Resolution, though, is more than about food; it's about dignity. It's about ensuring that gluten-free doesn't just mean we rinse the knife. It's about protecting us from well-meaning relatives and reckless croutons. It's about acknowledging that celiacs don't just suffer physical cross-contamination; we suffer emotional cross-contamination when someone says, 'oh, gluten-free, you're so trendy.' Let's raise awareness; let's support the celiac community with compassion, understanding and absolutely no barley. Thank you.

Subsequently, the Joint Resolution was **ADOPTED** in concurrence.

The following Joint Resolution: (S.P. 779)

JOINT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING MAY 2025 AS MAINE TREATMENT AND RECOVERY COURT MONTH

WHEREAS, treatment and recovery courts nationwide are the cornerstone of justice reform and are recognized as the most successful justice system intervention in our Nation's history; and

WHEREAS, Maine's treatment and recovery courts have been restoring lives and families and increasing public health and safety for almost 3 decades; and

WHEREAS, Maine now has 14 treatment and recovery courts, including 8 adult drug treatment and recovery courts, 2 veterans treatment courts, 3 family recovery courts and one co-occurring disorder court; and

WHEREAS, Maine's treatment and recovery courts have served more than 2,800 individuals, indirectly impacting thousands of Maine families, employers and communities; and

WHEREAS, the most recent statewide assessment has shown that Maine's treatment and recovery courts have substantially lowered the conviction recidivism rate of graduates to 6% compared to 41% of people with comparable characteristics and criminal histories who did not participate in a treatment and recovery court program; and

WHEREAS, according to All Rise, treatment and recovery courts significantly improve substance use disorder treatment outcomes and substantially reduce addiction and related crime and do so at less expense than any other criminal justice strategy in Maine's history; and

WHEREAS, according to the statewide assessment, Maine's treatment and recovery courts save an average of \$16,232 in incarceration and community corrections costs for every individual served, permitting Maine to boast savings significantly more than the national average of \$6,000 per individual; and

WHEREAS, Maine's treatment and recovery courts improve education, employment, housing and financial stability; promote family reunification; reduce foster care placements; and increase the rate of mothers delivering babies who are fully drug-free; and

WHEREAS, Maine's treatment and recovery courts facilitate community-wide partnerships, bridging public safety and public health; and

WHEREAS, the success of Maine's treatment and recovery courts is the result of dedicated, collaborative efforts and partnerships with many state departments and organizations, including the Maine Judicial Branch, the Office of

the Attorney General, the Governor's office of opioid response, Maine Prosecutors' Association, Maine Commission on Public Defense Services, the Department of Corrections, county sheriff's offices, the Department of Health and Human Services, Maine Health, Aroostook Mental Health Center, Wellspring, the Community Caring Collaborative, the Co-Occurring Collaborative Serving Maine, Maine Pretrial Services and the Maine Reentry Network, as well as a multitude of recovery centers and residences, independent treatment providers and physicians and recovery support organizations; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That We, the Members of the One Hundred and Thirty-second Legislature now assembled in the First Special Session, on behalf of the people we represent, take this opportunity to designate May 2025 as Maine Treatment and Recovery Court Month in recognition of the efforts of all professionals and participants who make our treatment and recovery courts work and of the significant contribution our treatment and recovery courts have made and continue to make in the fight against substance use disorder, by helping our citizens in their recovery and in restoring hope.

Came from the Senate, **READ** and **ADOPTED**.
READ and **ADOPTED** in concurrence.

The following Joint Resolution: (S.P. 781)

**JOINT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING MAY 2025 AS
AMYOTROPHIC LATERAL SCLEROSIS AWARENESS
MONTH**

WHEREAS, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or ALS, also commonly known as Lou Gehrig's disease, is a progressive fatal neurodegenerative disease in which a person's brain loses connection with the person's muscles, slowly reducing the person's ability to walk, talk, eat and eventually breathe; and

WHEREAS, thousands of new ALS cases are reported every year and estimates show that every 90 minutes someone is diagnosed with ALS and someone passes away from ALS; and

WHEREAS, on average, patients diagnosed with ALS survive only 2 to 5 years from the time of diagnosis; and

WHEREAS, the exact causes of ALS are unknown and there is no known cure for ALS; and

WHEREAS, people who have served in the military are more likely to develop ALS and die from the disease than those with no history of military service; and

WHEREAS, securing access to new therapies, durable medical equipment and communication technologies is of vital importance to people living with ALS; and

WHEREAS, clinical trials play a pivotal role in evaluating new treatments, enhancing quality of life and fostering assistive technologies for those living with ALS; and

WHEREAS, the ALS Association is the largest philanthropic funder of ALS research globally and has committed more than \$154 million to support more than 550 projects across the United States and 18 other countries; and

WHEREAS, the ALS Association is committed to accelerating the pace of discovery, fueled by the hope that one day ALS will be a livable disease for everyone, everywhere, until a cure can be found; and

WHEREAS, Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Awareness Month provides an opportunity to increase public awareness of the dire circumstances of people living with ALS, acknowledge the terrible impact this disease has on those individuals and their families and support research to eradicate this disease; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That We, the members of the One Hundred Thirty-second Legislature now assembled in the First Special Session, on behalf of the people we represent, declare May 2025 to be Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Awareness Month and call upon all citizens of the State to join in supporting ALS research, advocating for increased funding and standing in solidarity with those affected by this relentless disease.

Came from the Senate, **READ** and **ADOPTED**.
READ and **ADOPTED** in concurrence.

The following Joint Resolution: (S.P. 784)

**JOINT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING MAY 2025 AS
NATIONAL ARTHRITIS AWARENESS MONTH**

WHEREAS, arthritis is the number one cause of disability in the United States, affecting nearly 60 million men, women and children, and nearly 26 million of those with arthritis are unable to perform everyday activities; and

WHEREAS, there are more than 100 types of arthritis and related rheumatic diseases and one in 4 adults and hundreds of thousands of children in the United States have been diagnosed with a form of arthritis or a related illness; and

WHEREAS, contrary to the common misconception, arthritis is not just an "old person's disease," as about 2/3 of those living with arthritis are aged 65 and under; and

WHEREAS, one in three adults with arthritis are not physically active, have fair to poor health and have severe joint pain and most people with arthritis have comorbidities, such as heart disease, diabetes and obesity, that further jeopardize their health; and

WHEREAS, as our nation's top cause of disability, arthritis costs the United States economy over \$300 billion annually in medical bills, lost wages and associated expenses; and

WHEREAS, in 1972, President Richard Nixon and the United States Congress designated May as National Arthritis Month, a special time to emphasize research, service and education around arthritis and to raise funds to support the cause and every May since then has been marked by efforts to elevate the public's awareness of arthritis; now; therefore; be it

RESOLVED: That We, the members of the One Hundred and Thirty-second Legislature now assembled in the First Special Session, take this occasion to recognize May 2025 as National Arthritis Awareness Month and urge citizens of the State to learn more about arthritis, raise awareness of the serious public health and economic issues associated with arthritis and find ways to contribute to a cure for arthritis.

Came from the Senate, **READ** and **ADOPTED**.
READ and **ADOPTED** in concurrence.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

The following matters, in the consideration of which the House was engaged at the time of adjournment yesterday, have preference in the Orders of the Day and continue with such preference until disposed of as provided by House Rule 502.

JOINT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING MAY 2025 AS
ASIAN AMERICAN, NATIVE HAWAIIAN AND PACIFIC
ISLANDER MONTH

(H.P. 1323)

TABLED - May 20, 2025 (Till Later Today) by Representative SATO of Gorham.

PENDING - **ADOPTION**.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Gorham, Representative Sato.

Representative **SATO**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker Pro Tem. I rise today to speak in favor of the pending motion to recognize this month as Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Heritage Month.

I grew up in a household with two distinct cultures. I grew up saying *itadakimasu* before every meal and *kanpai* at every toast. In our refrigerator, one door was filled with ketchup and mustard and Worcestershire sauce, and the other door was filled with soy sauce, wasabi and ponzu sauce. And while in public I have a first and a middle name, in my home, I have two first names. My mother calls me Ellie, and my father calls me Yoko. I share this because I'm someone who comes from two worlds, and one of those worlds is encompassed in this Joint Resolution that stands before us today.

When I was five years old, my parents founded a restaurant in Portland. And in those first years, I would play silently underneath the sushi bar, at my father's feet, and as I got older, I would spend my Friday and Saturday nights at the bar doing my homework, because my mother was downstairs doing the bookkeeping and the taxes, and my father was upstairs at the sushi bar, greeting guests and making sushi and ensuring that everything was running smoothly in the front of the house. That business has turned into one of the most successful restaurants in Portland. It's a place where those from the Asian diaspora throughout New England travel to Maine just to eat at that restaurant.

Now, my parents' story represents only one drop in the ocean of contributions that Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders have contributed not just to our State, but to our country as a whole. It's the story of resilience, hope and relentless hard work, but it's also the story of facing endless adversity. Because through all of those times, and through all of those successes is the patchwork of othering, hatred and violence that follows them. I cannot tell you how many times someone has asked me where I'm from or the number of times that I have been objectified on the basis of my identity. But these paper cuts pale in comparison to the violence that has been experienced by those in the Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander diaspora. Such as Vincent Chin, who was murdered out of hatred and fear because of his identity. Like the hundreds of thousands of Japanese Americans who were stripped of their property and deported and locked up in concentration camps because of their identity. Like the Asian women who were shot dead in a mass shooting in Atlanta because of their identity. Like those in our community who must endure islamophobia on a daily basis. And like those of indigenous people of Hawaii, who endure the violence that accompanies occupation and colonization.

Yet, in spite of this violence, we are still here, and we continue to rise above and to give back to our communities. And I stand here today before this Body as the first East Asian to be elected to the Maine State Legislature; and one of two Members who are from the Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander diaspora to serve in the 132nd Legislature and as one of three total who have ever served in this Body out of former and current Members. However, I am not representative of the entire Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander community, for I am just one member of that large population that resides here in Maine. We are not a monolith. We are a diverse population that comes from many walks of life, including business owners, veterans, students, farmers, lawyers, doctors, nurses, teachers and more. And we descend from a multitude of nationalities, whether it be Japanese; like myself; or Chinese, Taiwanese,

Korean, Hmong, Viet, Laotian, Malaysian, Indonesian, Timorese, Niuean, Thai, Myanmari, Singaporean, Filipino, Indian, Pakistani, Afghani, Bangladeshi, Yapanese, Nepalese, Sri Lankan, Mongolian, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Tajik, Turkmen, Uzbek, Samoan, Hawaiian, Palauan, Tongan, Marshallese and Fijian and anyone else who self-identifies as Asian, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander who are here, who contribute to our economy, are members of our workforce, are our friends and family and love this State.

So, Mr. Speaker Pro Tem, I thank you for allowing me the time to speak, and I hope you will all join me in supporting this motion. Thank you.

Subsequently, the Joint Resolution was **ADOPTED** and sent for concurrence.

By unanimous consent, all matters having been acted upon were **ORDERED SENT FORTHWITH** with the exception of matters being held.

HOUSE DIVIDED REPORT - Majority (8) **Ought to Pass** - Minority (5) **Ought Not to Pass** - Committee on **VETERANS AND LEGAL AFFAIRS** on Bill "An Act to Allow Expenditure of Maine Clean Election Act Funding for the Care of Candidates' Dependents"

(H.P. 525) (L.D. 818)

TABLED - March 25, 2025 (Till Later Today) by Representative SUPICA of Bangor.

PENDING - **ACCEPTANCE OF EITHER REPORT.**

Representative SUPICA of Bangor moved that the House **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought to Pass** Report.

Representative SMITH of Palermo **REQUESTED** a roll call on the motion to **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought to Pass** Report.

More than one-fifth of the members present expressed a desire for a roll call which was ordered.

The SPEAKER PRO TEM: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Blue Hill, Representative Milliken.

Representative **MILLIKEN**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker Pro Tem. Today, I rise in heartfelt support of this bill and this motion, because it is responsible for all of us to support parents of young children to campaign for the opportunity that each of us has sitting on this floor.

In November of 2021, I gave birth to my last baby. We named him Porter, but everybody calls him Po. Just three months after he was born, I decided that I was going to run for the Maine House. Po and I knocked doors across the Blue Hill Peninsula, often during nap time. He napped in the car, and I charmed future constituents. Folks told me that most politicians went around kissing other peoples' babies, but I went around and got other people to kiss my baby. Just kidding, it was the middle of a pandemic.

I should mention that in addition to Po, I have two older children. When I ran for office in the summer of 2022, I had Po in my car, backpack or arms as I campaigned, and I had my daughter, Tilly; who was four and a half at the time; and my son, Minot, just two, in day care most days to allow me some flexibility to campaign. I'm so grateful for having that day care, and I am extremely grateful for my family's access to day care services. But there comes with this care an enormous cost. Last year as I campaigned again in the summer of 2024, I had all three of my children in day care. It cost me nearly \$7,000 out of my own pocket just for that summer. That is not too much less than the amount of money that I made serving in the House in 2024. Remember, that was just the summer; we pay for child care

year-round in my house. Fortunately, now, we only have Po in day care, as my older two children are in school.

There are so many enormous barriers to parents with young children to run for the Legislature, and more specifically, for mothers of young children to run for the Legislature. How do we expect these parents to run and what do we expect to happen to our child care infrastructure when we don't have parents of young children serving in this Body? Well, we are seeing it now. Our child care system is suffering, and with that industry so challenged, parents of young children have suffered a lot of hardship entering and staying in the workforce. We have weighed keeping our jobs and staying home with our children. We have left jobs, we have cut back hours, we have tightened our family budgets to accommodate the loss of income. Because of this, Maine loses tax revenue and Mainers have less children, making our population in the nation. Hundreds of child care workers showed up and filled the halls of this building a few months ago in protest of the neglect that we the Legislature have inflicted on them. We owe it to our child care providers to represent them better, and we owe it to our constituents to make sure that these essential services are consistently there for their youth, and for all of our youth.

Why should we pass this bill? We are a citizens' Legislature. We are supposed to look like the people we represent. In the 131st Legislature, we had one single mom, my dear friend from Deer Isle. Now, I believe that we have three. That's an improvement, but a citizens' Legislature would have many. A citizens' Legislature would have people with young children who are too young to go to school, but I believe in this Chamber I am one of only four Members who have children who are toddlers.

Even if we pass this important bill, those of us with small children will still face enormous challenges to stay here and to do this most important work. Passing this is responsible for the future of early child care in Maine; it is responsible for the future of education; it is responsible for many industries and essential services that support the working families across their great State, our great State. Please follow my light in supporting people like myself and Po. Thank you, Mr. Speaker Pro Tem.

The SPEAKER PRO TEM: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Poland, Representative Boyer.

Representative **BOYER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we have a budget shortfall. We have Clean Elections; or 'welfare for politicians,' as I talked about yesterday; that is running out of money. It will be bankrupted by the gubernatorial primary coming up. We're raising taxes; we're going to raise taxes; we're going to raise fees. We haven't done anything to make electricity go down; we haven't done anything to make rent go down. Did something today to make rent go up. This is the economic status of life in Maine right now. It's not good. It sucks, Mr. Speaker. Living here economically is not very good, unless you're poor or rich; it's not great for the in-between, the working-class folks. Okay, Mr. Speaker? And so, now, you're going to ask, this Body is going to ask, to pay for politicians' babysitters with tax dollars? I don't think that's such a good look.

There's not enough guardrails with this, no limits on how much you can spend for babysitting or mother-in-law sitting. You could pay a family member or a friend and neighbor; there's no oversight. So, who's going to make sure that everything is by the books? And it wasn't mentioned, but you can spend traditional funds on caregiving services, but these are funds that we raise from our friends, our family, supporters that believe in our ideals. They're not tax dollars. That's the difference here; that's what we're talking about.

And I think we would all agree that the barrier to getting normal folks elected to this Chamber and the Other Chamber is the barrier to serve. It's not that you need a good pair of New Balances to run for office; you need to have a job where you can leave for six months to serve. So, nothing in this bill solves that problem, and in my view, that's the biggest problem affecting who and what types of folks represent us is; we addressed it with the pay, it's still pretty low and who the heck can take off for six months and come back to a job, unless you're independently wealthy or self-employed, and even then, it's a big financial hit.

So, I think we should focus on that, not focus on how to spend our tax dollars on lawn signs, on consultants and on babysitters. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER PRO TEM: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Monticello, Representative Ardell.

Representative **ARDELL**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker Pro Tem. We're adults in this Chamber; we all have responsibilities. Campaigning is an option. Running for office is an option. And scheduling campaign time is also an option that someone who runs for office makes. Should we as a Body ask Maine taxpayers to pay for the care of our children while we engage in partisan election activity? In election season, I typically need to mow my lawn. Do I ask taxpayers to pay for my landscaping? We ask for more than enough, even too much of our hardworking Maine taxpayers, and this, Sir, is a bridge much too far. Thank you.

The SPEAKER PRO TEM: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Bridgton, Representative Cimino.

Representative **CIMINO**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker Pro Tem. I have to concur with my fellow Republicans that have expressed their sentiment.

To run for political office is a choice. It's something that we make the decision to do, and we have to take a lot of factors into consideration. When I ran this last time, I knew that there was going to be a point where I was going to have to take a leave of absence from work and forego that income and use savings to be able to be here as much as I'm here. But I did that, knowing that that was my decision, and I ran knowing that that was my decision.

I think to ask taxpayers to pay for child care or anything else, that'd be like my asking taxpayers to pay for me, because I have foregone income. I don't think it's right. I think we're expecting too much from taxpayers, and I really don't believe that child care is a right or an essential service.

As I said, it's all about choice, and everybody here loves choice, so, I think that's something that should be respected. But do the; if you decide you want to run for office, know what you're getting into when you're running. Thank you.

The SPEAKER PRO TEM: A roll call has been ordered. The pending question before the House is Acceptance of the Majority Ought to Pass Report. All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

ROLL CALL NO. 224

YEA - Ankeles, Archer, Arford, Beck, Bell, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Cloutier, Copeland, Crafts, Crockett, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dodge, Doudera, Eaton, Faircloth, Friedmann, Gattine, Geiger, Gere, Golek, Graham, Gramlich, Hasenfus, Hepler, Kessler, Kuhn, Lajoie, Lee, Lookner, Macias, Malon, Mastraccio, Mathieson, Matlack, Meyer, Milliken, Mitchell, Moonen, Murphy, Osher, Pluecker, Pugh, Rana, Ray, Rielly, Roberts, Roeder, Rollins, Runte, Sachs, Salisbury, Sargent, Sato, Sayre, Shagoury, Sinclair, Skold, Stover, Supica, Terry, Warren, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

NAY - Adams, Albert, Arata, Ardell, Babin, Bagshaw, Boyer D, Bunker, Campbell, Carlow, Caruso, Chapman, Cimino, Cluchey, Collamore, Collins, Cooper, Daigle, Dill, Drinkwater, Eder, Farrin, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foley, Foster, Gifford, Greenwood, Griffin, Guerrette, Haggan, Henderson, Javner, Lance, Lavigne, Lemelin, Libby, Mason, McIntyre, Mingo, Montell, Morris, Nutting, O'Halloran, Olsen, Parry, Paul, Perkins, Poirier, Pomerleau, Quint, Rudnicki, Schmersal-Burgess, Simmons, Smith, Soboleski, Swallow, Thorne, Tuell, Wadsworth, Walker, White J, White R, Wood P, Wood S, Woodsome.

ABSENT - Abdi, Bishop, Blier, Cray, Ducharme, Fredericks, Fredette, Frost, Hall, Hymes, Jackson, Julia, Lanigan, Lyman, McCabe, Strout, Underwood, Webb.

Yes, 67; No, 66; Absent, 18; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

67 having voted in the affirmative and 66 voted in the negative, with 18 being absent, and accordingly the Majority **Ought to Pass Report was ACCEPTED.**

The Bill was **READ ONCE.**

Under suspension of the rules the Bill was given its **SECOND READING WITHOUT REFERENCE** to the Committee on **Bills in the Second Reading.**

Representative CLOUTER of Lewiston **PRESENTED House Amendment "A" (H-62)**, which was **READ** by the Clerk.

The **SPEAKER PRO TEM**: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Lewiston, Representative Cloutier.

Representative **CLOUTIER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this is a simple Amendment offered as the result of Committee concerns. It clarifies that Maine Clean Elections may not be used for payment of caregiving services provided by a candidate or the candidate's spouse or domestic partner if the caregiving services are for the dependent of that candidate or candidate's spouse or domestic partner.

Subsequently, **House Amendment "A" (H-62)** was **ADOPTED.**

Under further suspension of the rules the Bill was **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED as Amended by House Amendment "A" (H-62)** and sent for concurrence.

The **SPEAKER PRO TEM**: The Chair recognizes the Representative from North Yarmouth, Representative Graham.

Representative **GRAHAM**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker Pro Tem. Permission to speak on the record?

The **SPEAKER PRO TEM**: The Representative from North Yarmouth, Representative Graham, has requested unanimous consent to address the House on the record. Hearing no objection, the Representative may proceed.

Representative **GRAHAM**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker Pro Tem. If I had been present on 5/27/2025, on LD 525, I would've voted yea. On LD 1405, I would've voted yea. On LD 331, I would've voted yea. On LD 60, I would voted yea. On LD 112, I would've voted yea. And on LD 61, I would've voted yea. And on; and that's the last one. Thank you. And I apologize for missing those votes.

By unanimous consent, all matters having been acted upon were **ORDERED SENT FORTHWITH** with the exception of matters being held.

On motion of Representative FECTEAU of Biddeford, the House adjourned at 4:13 p.m., until 10:00 a.m., Thursday, May 29, 2025.