

ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION
25th Legislative Day
Wednesday, June 4, 2025

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

Prayer by Reverend David Friedlander, Maranatha Ministerial Fellowship International, Gorham.

National Anthem by Sammie Angel, Dixfield.

Pledge of Allegiance.

Medical Provider of the Day, Candace Davis, MSN, FNP-BC, Ellsworth.

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:

SPECIAL SENTIMENT CALENDAR

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

Recognizing:

Irene P. Weld, of Dixfield, who is celebrating her 104th birthday on June 4, 2025. We extend our congratulations and best wishes;

(HLS 350)

Presented by Representative SCHMERSAL-BURGESS of Mexico.

Cosponsored by Senator MARTIN of Oxford.

On **OBJECTION** of Representative SCHMERSAL-BURGESS of Mexico, was **REMOVED** from the Special Sentiment Calendar.

READ.

The **SPEAKER**: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Mexico, Representative Schmursal-Burgess.

Representative **SCHMERSAL-BURGESS**: Thank you, everybody. This is my good friend, Irene. Her son is married to my cousin, and this is her granddaughter, Jen. And she's a lot of fun. Like, we went to Mount Washington, we hiked up Mount Washington last year; no, we took the train, just kidding. But on her 100th birthday, Jen took her flying and she, you know, parachuted out of the plane; no, just kidding. But she is willing to do just about anything. Last year, though, I did take her to Farmington, and we watched a movie and got in a recliner, and Irene had her popcorn, and her little feet were wiggling and I took a snooze. She didn't. So, she is just a wonderful, wonderful, optimistic person, and today's her birthday and she's 104. And guys, she's still single. Can we sing "Happy Birthday?"

Subsequently, this Expression of Legislative Sentiment was **PASSED** and sent for concurrence.

Recognizing:

Kathy Littlefield, of Waldo, longtime first selectperson in the Town of Waldo, on her retirement from the Select Board after having served for 53 years, serving most of those years as Chair. Ms. Littlefield is believed to be the longest serving elected municipal official in Maine. She was the founding member of the Waldo County Selectmen's Association in 2003 and a member of the State Board of Environmental Protection for 8 years, member of the Waldo County Budget Committee for 12 years, member of the Waldo County Jail Committee and member of the Maine Municipal Association Advisory Committee. She was an active voice on the association's 70-member Legislative Policy Committee from the 1990s onward. She was a founding member of the group that played a key role in pushing for local control to be incorporated into Maine's Constitution. In 2017, she was awarded the Ethel N. Kelley Memorial Award by the Maine Municipal Association, which recognizes distinguished community service and is considered the association's most prestigious annual award. We extend our congratulations and best wishes;

(HLS 351)

Presented by Representative HYMES of Waldo.

Cosponsored by Senator CURRY of Waldo.

On **OBJECTION** of Representative HYMES of Waldo, was **REMOVED** from the Special Sentiment Calendar.

READ.

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

Recognizing:

Shirley Caler, of Waldo, on her retirement from the Select Board of the Town of Waldo after 30 years of service. Ms. Caler was instrumental in the expansion of broadband in the town, with scholarship formation and administration and in regaining the land and the building where the current town office and community center are located. Ms. Caler was a member of the parent organization of the Rena Whitney Scholarship Fund, which was named for a longtime resident and land donor who enabled the town to place a sand shed in the back of the town office and have a high-quality ballfield. Ms. Caler was also a member of Here's Waldo Days, now the Waldo Boosters. We extend our congratulations and best wishes;

(HLS 352)

Presented by Representative HYMES of Waldo.

Cosponsored by Senator CURRY of Waldo.

On **OBJECTION** of Representative HYMES of Waldo, was **REMOVED** from the Special Sentiment Calendar.

READ.

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

Recognizing:

Scott K. Porter, of Marion Township, on his retirement as Superintendent of Schools for AOS 96 on June 30, 2025. Mr. Porter has served the schools in the greater Machias area since 2005, has been a frequent participant on the Maine school management executive committee during his tenure and has been a leading voice in the Maine small schools coalition. Prior to becoming superintendent of AOS 96, Mr. Porter served as superintendent of schools in Lubec. He began his career in school administration at Washington Academy in East Machias in the late 1990s. Mr. Porter also served as pastor of Head of the River Baptist Church in Cutler. We extend our congratulations and best wishes;

(HLS 353)

Presented by Representative TUELL of East Machias.

Cosponsored by Senator MOORE of Washington.

On **OBJECTION** of Representative TUELL of East Machias, was **REMOVED** from the Special Sentiment Calendar.

READ.

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

Representative **TUELL**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to honor a good friend and person I've known all my life, since I was in; well, since I was in high school back in the mid-'90s, and that is Scott Porter.

Many Members here who have served on Education over the years have seen him and would say he's a familiar face, and I will say he's responsible for several of the bills I've brought forward; many of the bills I've brought forward that land in Education. He's a wealth of knowledge, he's passionate about small, rural schools, has had a lifetime of service to those schools and the communities of Downeast Maine, is one who; many superintendents tend to go from district to district around the State, he didn't. He came home after college; he got into the local schools and has served them admirably now for upwards of 30 years and has been a part of the community. I've learned a lot from him over the years, wouldn't be where I am today without his guidance and suggestions and input. And I will say even 20; 15 to 20 years ago, when the Baldacci Administration was deep in the throes of school consolidation, that he was a central voice in that fight, clawing it back and preserving local control for many small schools, was one of the architects of the AOS law that many rural areas are enjoying today.

So, I just want to congratulate Scott on a lifetime of service and thank him for all he's done and look forward to presenting this Sentiment later this week when we go home. And thank you for the opportunity to do that on Friday, as it was not originally in the cards. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Subsequently, this Expression of Legislative Sentiment was **PASSED** and sent for concurrence.

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

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

The following matter, in the consideration of which the House was engaged at the time of adjournment yesterday, had preference in the Orders of the Day and continued with such preference until disposed of as provided by House Rule 502.

Expression of Legislative Sentiment Recognizing Maryalice Crofton, of Augusta

(SLS 267)

- In Senate, **READ** and **PASSED**.

- **CARRIED OVER** to the next special or regular session of the 132nd Legislature, pursuant to Joint Order S.P. 519 on March 21, 2025.

TABLED - March 18, 2025 (Till Later Today) by Representative RIELLY of Westbrook.

PENDING - **PASSAGE**.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Westbrook, Representative Rielly.

Representative **RIELLY**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honor today to rise to celebrate and honor Maryalice Crofton, our former Executive Director for Volunteer Maine, our State Service Commission.

I first met Maryalice while I was a candidate running for office for my first term in 2020. Since that first meeting, we have met in person, talked on the phone or Zoomed at least once a week. She welcomed me as a partner during the first meeting as a candidate, and since then, has encouraged my passion for national service programming. In over the past five years, we've worked together to pass the Maine Service Fellows and the Maine Climate Corps, accomplishments that I credit to her. There's no greater partner, Mr. Speaker, that I've had over the past half-decade. For that alone, thank you, Maryalice.

Leading a career dedicated to service and allowing those to serve and make a difference in their communities is noble, and it is what I admire the most about Maryalice. Through her decades of work expanding opportunities for Mainers of all ages to be able to give back to their neighbors, she has been able to make a difference in communities across the State and impacting thousands of Mainers. Thank you, Maryalice, for your service to the State of Maine. She is the epitome of a good public servant. She is a passionate source of knowledge and ideas on how to make service more accessible and inclusive and is always thinking about how to best serve the people of Maine.

I wish her the best in retirement and look forward to keeping in touch. And I also look forward to working with Brit, our new Executive Director. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Subsequently, this Expression of Legislative Sentiment was **PASSED** in concurrence.

SENATE PAPERS

Non-Concurrent Matter

Bill "An Act to Clarify the Prohibition on the Sale of Beverages in Plastic Containers"

(H.P. 1040) (L.D. 1582)

Majority (7) **OUGHT TO PASS** Report of the Committee on **ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES READ** and **ACCEPTED** and the Bill **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED** in the House on June 2, 2025.

Came from the Senate with the Minority (6) **OUGHT NOT TO PASS** Report of the Committee on **ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES READ** and **ACCEPTED** in **NON-CONCURRENCE**.

The House voted to **INSIST**.

Non-Concurrent Matter

Bill "An Act to Move the Natural Areas Program from the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry to the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife and to Amend the Law Governing Administration of the Bureau of Resource Management Within the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife"

(H.P. 256) (L.D. 402)

Majority (8) **OUGHT TO PASS AS AMENDED** Report of the Committee on **AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY READ and ACCEPTED** and the Bill **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED AS AMENDED BY COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" (H-380)** in the House on June 2, 2025.

Came from the Senate with the Minority (4) **OUGHT TO PASS AS AMENDED** Report of the Committee on **AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY READ and ACCEPTED** and the Bill **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED AS AMENDED BY COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "B" (H-381)** in **NON-CONCURRENCE**.

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

Representative HEPLER of Woolwich **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 Woolwich, Representative Hepler.

Representative **HEPLER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I oppose this motion, and I just want to provide a little history.

There was a plan made to move the Maine Natural Areas Program from ACF to IF&W. We moved the budget, I serve on the ACF Committee, accepted by IF&W. At some point, it was discovered that IF&W had more extensive rulemaking authority than ACF, which, without this Majority Amendment, would change the MNAP program. The Majority Amendment, which is supported by the majority vote of this Body and also of the Committee, simply clarifies that the program is moved exactly as proposed: taking it from here to there and limiting rulemaking to wildlife, which belongs to the public, and not plant communities, which is in private hands, other than rare and threatened or endangered wildlife. IF&W has worked hard to develop good relations with private landowners; really important, since most hunting and fishing is done in private hands. Strong landowner relations is a high priority with IF&W.

MNAP is a voluntary informational educational program that's nonregulatory. We want to keep it that way and honor the original intent of that move. So, I ask you to vote against this motion. Thanks.

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

Representative **PLUECKER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I very much respect the Representative from Woolwich; we've actually known each other for about 18 years. We used to sell retail together. A little-known fact. But on this one, we're in different places.

This bill does not require any regulations of any sort on any plants or plant communities. It does leave open the opportunity for regulation at some point in the future. This Administration has been very clear they have no intent to regulate these plant communities, and so, passing this now just gives that little bit of opening for the future that, if there's an opportunity and if there is the will, that we could step forward and help support some of our endangered plant communities in the State. Thank you so much.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Caratunk, Representative Caruso.

Representative **CARUSO**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also stand to oppose the current motion, because the Department; the Commissioner of IF&W does not want to expand the program as it is, from what it is. She stated that the purpose of this bill; it is a Department bill; is in favor of the Majority Report to maintain the program as it is; a voluntary, informational, educational program that is nonregulatory. She said that if this were to be expanded, that rulemaking on plants would give her the authority to regulate private property; which they do not currently do; and it would be a marked change from the Commission as authority and one that, quote, 'we absolutely did not intend when we started this process.' Thank you.

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

Representative **COOPER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In this bill, I agree with the Representative from Caratunk and the Representative from Woolwich. Amendment "A" was created to solve an issue in the transfer of this Department from the Department of ACF to Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, to make this transfer workable for the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife. Amendment "B" from the Department does not go with their rulemaking ability; it changes their authorities, which they do not currently have and do not exist in their Department. That's why I urge support of Amendment "A" in this issue. Thank you.

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. 304

YEA - Abdi, Archer, Beck, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Cluchey, Crockett, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dodge, Faircloth, Friedmann, Frost, Geiger, Gramlich, Hasenfus, Julia, Lee, Lookner, Malon, Mastraccio, McCabe, Milliken, Mitchell, Montell, Moonen, Pluecker, Pugh, Rana, Ray, Roeder, Sachs, Sato, Sayre, Sinclair, Skold, Warren, Webb.

NAY - Adams, Albert, Ankeles, Arata, Ardell, Arford, Bagshaw, Bell, Bishop, Blier, Boyer D, Bunker, Campbell, Carlow, Caruso, Chapman, Cimino, Cloutier, Collins, Cooper, Copeland, Crafts, Cray, Daigle, Dill, Doudera, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eder, Farrin, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foley, Foster, Fredericks, Fredette, Gere, Gifford, Golek, Graham, Greenwood, Haggan, Henderson, Hepler, Hymes, Jackson, Javner, Kessler, Kuhn, Lajoie, Lance, Lanigan, Lavigne, Lemelin, Libby, Lyman, Macias, Mason, Mathieson, Matlack, McIntyre, Meyer, Mingo, Morris, Murphy, Nutting, O'Halloran, Olsen, Osher, Parry, Paul, Perkins, Poirier, Pomerleau, Quint, Rielly, Roberts, Rollins, Rudnicki, Runte, Salisbury, Sargent, Schmursal-Burgess, Shagoury, Simmons, Smith, Soboleski, Stover, Strout, Supica, Swallow, Terry, Thorne, Tuell, Underwood, Wadsworth, Walker, White J, White R, Wood P, Wood S, Woodsome, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

ABSENT - Babin, Collamore, Eaton, Gattine, Griffin, Guerrette, Hall.

Yes, 39; No, 105; Absent, 7; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

39 having voted in the affirmative and 105 voted in the negative, with 7 being absent, and accordingly the motion to **RECEDE AND CONCUR FAILED**.

Subsequently, the House voted to **INSIST**.

Non-Concurrent Matter

Bill "An Act to Create Parity in the Taxation of Medicine by Exempting Sales of Cannabis for Medical Use"

(H.P. 363) (L.D. 544)

Minority (5) **OUGHT NOT TO PASS** Report of the Committee on **VETERANS AND LEGAL AFFAIRS READ** and **ACCEPTED** in the House on June 2, 2025.

Came from the Senate with the Majority (6) **OUGHT TO PASS AS AMENDED** Report of the Committee on **VETERANS AND LEGAL AFFAIRS READ** and **ACCEPTED** and the Bill **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED AS AMENDED BY COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" (H-387)** in **NON-CONCURRENCE**.

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

Representative BOYER of Poland **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**: 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. 305

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

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

ABSENT - Babin, Campbell, Collamore, Eaton, Gattine, Griffin, Guerrette, Hall, Wood S.

Yes, 81; No, 61; Absent, 9; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

81 having voted in the affirmative and 61 voted in the negative, with 9 being absent, and accordingly the House voted to **INSIST**.

Non-Concurrent Matter

Bill "An Act to Enact the Agricultural Employees Concerted Activity Protection Act"

(S.P. 272) (L.D. 588)

Minority (4) **OUGHT NOT TO PASS** Report of the Committee on **LABOR READ** and **ACCEPTED** in the House on June 3, 2025.

Came from the Senate with that Body having **INSISTED** on its former action whereby the Majority (8) **OUGHT TO PASS** Report of the Committee on **LABOR** was **READ** and **ACCEPTED** and the Bill **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED IN NON-CONCURRENCE**.

Speaker FECTAU of Biddeford moved that the House **RECEDE AND CONCUR**.

Representative MORRIS of Turner **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. 306

YEA - Abdi, Ankeles, Archer, Arford, Beck, Bell, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, Crockett, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dodge, Doudera, Faircloth, Friedmann, 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, Bagshaw, Bishop, Blier, Boyer D, Bunker, Carlow, Caruso, Chapman, Cimino, Collins, Cooper, Cray, Daigle, Dill, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eder, Farrin, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foley, Foster, Fredericks, Fredette, Frost, Gifford, Greenwood, Haggan, Henderson, Hymes, Jackson, Javner, Lance, Lanigan, 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, Underwood, Wadsworth, Walker, White J, White R, Wood P, Wood S, Woodsome.

ABSENT - Babin, Campbell, Collamore, Eaton, Gattine, Griffin, Guerrette, Hall.

Yes, 72; No, 71; Absent, 8; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

72 having voted in the affirmative and 71 voted in the negative, with 8 being absent, and accordingly the House voted to **RECEDE AND CONCUR**.

Non-Concurrent Matter

Resolve, Directing the Board of Pesticides Control to Evaluate the Impact of Neonicotinoids on Pollinators, Humans and the Environment (EMERGENCY)

(H.P. 858) (L.D. 1323)

(C. "A" H-347)

FINALLY PASSED in the House on June 3, 2025.

Came from the Senate **FAILING** of **FINAL PASSAGE** in **NON-CONCURRENCE**.

On motion of Representative **PLUECKER** of Warren, **TABLED** pending **FURTHER CONSIDERATION** and later today assigned.

COMMUNICATIONS

The Following Communication: (S.C. 510)

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

June 2, 2025

Honorable Ryan Fecteau
Speaker of the House
2 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0002

Dear Speaker Fecteau:

In accordance with 3 M.R.S.A. §158 and Joint Rule 506 of the 132nd Maine Legislature, please be advised that the Senate today confirmed the following nominations:

Upon the recommendation of the Committee on Judiciary:

- The Honorable Patricia G. Worth of Belfast for reappointment, as an Active Retired Judge of the District Court,
- The Honorable Michael P. Roberts of Bangor for appointment, as an Active Retired Judge of the District Court,
- Taylor Sawyer Kilgore, Esq. of Turner for appointment, to the Maine Commission on Public Defense Services,
- Randall J. Bates, Esq. of Yarmouth for reappointment, to the Maine Commission on Public Defense Services,
- Anne H. Jordan, Esq. of South Portland for appointment, to the Maine Commission on Public Defense Services.

Best Regards,

S/Darek M. Grant

Secretary of the Senate

READ and ORDERED PLACED ON FILE.

The Following Communication: (S.C. 511)

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

June 3, 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 Not to Pass Report from the Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology on Bill "An Act to Require Competitive Procurement of Electricity from Generators Fueled by Municipal Solid Waste in Conjunction with Recycling" (H.P. 692) (L.D. 1063) in non-concurrence.

Best Regards,

S/Darek M. Grant

Secretary of the Senate

READ and ORDERED PLACED ON FILE.

The Following Communication: (S.C. 512)

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

June 3, 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 Indefinitely Postponed Bill "An Act to Repeal the Law Prohibiting Places of Business from Being Open to the Public on Sunday" (H.P. 181) (L.D. 277) and all accompanying papers in non-concurrence.

Best Regards,

S/Darek M. Grant

Secretary of the Senate

READ and ORDERED PLACED ON FILE.

The Following Communication: (S.C. 513)

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

June 3, 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 Finally Passed "Resolve, to Direct the Maine Criminal Justice Academy to Study the Feasibility of Establishing a Nonresidential Law Enforcement Training Program" (H.P. 462) (L.D. 723) in non-concurrence.

Best Regards,

S/Darek M. Grant

Secretary of the Senate

READ and ORDERED PLACED ON FILE.

The Following Communication: (S.C. 514)

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

June 3, 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 Minority Ought to Pass Report and Passed to be Engrossed Bill "An Act to Ensure In-state Tuition for Postsecondary Students Who Are Registered to Vote in the State and to Amend Eligibility Requirements for the Free Community College Tuition Program" (H.P. 830) (L.D. 1255) 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**.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

Divided Reports

Majority Report of the Committee on **HEALTH COVERAGE, INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-241)** on Bill "An Act to Continue Funding for the Health Insurance Consumer Assistance Program"

(S.P. 376) (L.D. 843)

Signed:

Senators:

BAILEY of York
BALDACCI of Penobscot
HAGGAN of Penobscot

Representatives:

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

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "B" (S-242)** on same Bill.

Signed:

Representative:

MORRIS of Turner

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-241)**.

READ.

On motion of Representative GRAMLICH of Old Orchard Beach, the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended** Report was **ACCEPTED**.

The Bill was **READ ONCE**. **Committee Amendment "A" (S-241)** 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-241)** in concurrence.

Majority Report of the Committee on **HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT** reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on Bill "An Act to Improve the Process for Mobile Home Owners to Purchase Their Mobile Home Park"

(S.P. 451) (L.D. 1067)

Signed:

Senators:

CURRY of Waldo
BAILEY of York
BENNETT of Oxford

Representatives:

GERE of Kennebunkport
GOLEK of Harpswell
JULIA of Waterville
MALON of Biddeford
ROBERTS of South Berwick
YUSUF of Portland

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-209)** on same Bill.

Signed:

Representatives:

COLLAMORE of Pittsfield
MINGO of Calais
WALKER of Naples

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

READ.

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

Majority Report of the Committee on **HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-248)** on Bill "An Act to Update Language on Setback Variances for Single-family Dwellings and Variances from Dimensional Standards"

(S.P. 474) (L.D. 1143)

Signed:

Senators:

CURRY of Waldo
BAILEY of York
BENNETT of Oxford

Representatives:

GERE of Kennebunkport
EDER of Waterboro
GOLEK of Harpswell
JULIA of Waterville
MALON of Biddeford
MINGO of Calais
ROBERTS of South Berwick
YUSUF of Portland

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

Signed:

Representative:

COLLAMORE of Pittsfield

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-248)**.

READ.

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

The Bill was **READ ONCE. Committee Amendment "A" (S-248)** 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**.

Representative MINGO of Calais **REQUESTED** a roll call on **PASSAGE TO BE ENGROSSED as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-248)**.

Subsequently, the same Representative **WITHDREW** his **REQUEST** for a roll call.

Under further suspension of the rules the Bill was **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-248)** in concurrence.

Majority Report of the Committee on **HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-205)** on Bill "An Act to Repeal the Dirigo Business Incentives Program"

(S.P. 658) (L.D. 1664)

Signed:

Senators:

CURRY of Waldo
BENNETT of Oxford

Representatives:

COLLAMORE of Pittsfield
EDER of Waterboro
GOLEK of Harpswell
JULIA of Waterville
MINGO of Calais
WALKER of Naples

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

Signed:

Senator:

BAILEY of York

Representatives:

GERE of Kennebunkport
MALON of Biddeford
ROBERTS of South Berwick
YUSUF of Portland

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-205)**.

READ.

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

The Bill was **READ ONCE. Committee Amendment "A" (S-205)** 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-205)** in concurrence.

Majority Report of the Committee on **INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE** reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on Bill "An Act to Create an Outfitter License for Owners and Operators of Hunting, Fishing and Recreation Businesses Who Are Not Maine Guides"

(S.P. 204) (L.D. 552)

Signed:

Senators:

BALDACCI of Penobscot
GUERIN of Penobscot

Representatives:

ROBERTS of South Berwick
DILL of Old Town
MASON of Lisbon
TERRY of Gorham
THORNE of Carmel
WOOD of Greene
WOODSOME of Waterboro

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-237)** on same Bill.

Signed:

Representatives:

BRIDGEO of Augusta
CLUCHEY of Bowdoinham

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

READ.

On motion of Representative ROBERTS of South Berwick, the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report was **ACCEPTED** in concurrence.

Majority Report of the Committee on **JUDICIARY** reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on Bill "An Act to Add Political Affiliation as a Protected Class to the Maine Human Rights Act"

(S.P. 23) (L.D. 10)

Signed:

Senators:

CARNEY of Cumberland
HAGGAN of Penobscot
TALBOT ROSS of Cumberland

Representatives:

KUHN of Falmouth
BABIN of Fort Fairfield
CARUSO of Caratunk
HENDERSON of Rumford
LEE of Auburn
O'HALLORAN of Brewer
POIRIER of Skowhegan
SATO of Gorham

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-260)** on same Bill.

Signed:

Representatives:

PUGH of Portland
SINCLAIR of Bath

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

READ.

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

Majority Report of the Committee on **LABOR** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-255)** on Bill "An Act to Remove Certain Cost-of-living Adjustment Restrictions for Retired Members of the Law Enforcement Bargaining Unit Who Are 65 Years of Age or Older" (EMERGENCY)

(S.P. 439) (L.D. 1021)

Signed:

Senators:

TIPPING of Penobscot
RAFFERTY of York

Representatives:

ROEDER of Bangor
BECK of South Portland
GEIGER of Rockland
MACIAS of Topsham

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-255)**.

READ.

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

The Bill was **READ ONCE**. **Committee Amendment "A" (S-255)** 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-255)** in concurrence.

Majority Report of the Committee on **STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-215)** on Bill "An Act Regarding the Voting Requirement to Extend the Date for Adjournment of the Legislature"

(S.P. 663) (L.D. 1668)

Signed:

Senators:

BALDACCI of Penobscot
BEEBE-CENTER of Knox

Representatives:

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

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

Signed:

Senator:

MARTIN of Oxford

Representatives:

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

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-215)**.

READ.

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

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** 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 East Machias, Representative Tuell.

Representative **TUELL**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in opposition to this motion, and I do so being mindful of the time of year that we're in.

Frequently, the Legislature, if in a normal session; quote-unquote, 'normal Session;' we would have statutory adjournment on the third Wednesday. This can be extended by two-thirds, ensuring that an extension be done with bipartisan support. This bill, in fact, would change that to a simple majority. And in light of the climate that we are all responsible for us being in, I don't think this sends the right message to simply extend Session by a majority vote in a normal time. I think we should be striving to work as much as we can in a bipartisan way, and simply extending Session by a majority vote is not a good look. And I would say that if I were across the aisle or on this side of the aisle. It's not the way to do business. We should be working together more and we should be doing all we can to ensure that.

Hence, I will be voting against 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. 307

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

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

ABSENT - Babin, Collamore, Eaton, Gattine, Griffin, Guerrette, Hall, Lanigan.

Yes, 72; No, 71; Absent, 8; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

72 having voted in the affirmative and 71 voted in the negative, with 8 being absent, and accordingly the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended Report was ACCEPTED.**

The Bill was **READ ONCE. Committee Amendment "A" (S-215) was READ** by the Clerk and **ADOPTED.**

Representative GREENWOOD of Wales **OBJECTED** to suspending the rules in order to give the Bill its **SECOND READING WITHOUT REFERENCE** to the Committee on **Bills in the Second Reading.**

The Bill was assigned for **SECOND READING** later today.

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

Majority Report of the Committee on **TAXATION** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-231)** on Bill "An Act to Exempt Electronic Smoking Devices or Other Tobacco Products Containing Ingestible Hemp from the Tax Imposed on Tobacco Products"

(S.P. 767) (L.D. 1960)

Signed:

Senators:

GROHOSKI of Hancock
TIPPING of Penobscot

Representatives:

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

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

Signed:

Representatives:

QUINT of Hodgdon
RUDNICKI of Fairfield
WHITE of Ellsworth

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-231).**

READ.

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

Representative RUDNICKI of Fairfield **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 Lewiston, Representative Cloutier.

Representative **CLOUTIER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, LD 1960 exempts only those electronic smoking devices containing ingestible consumer products containing hemp or cannabis oil derived from hemp from the tobacco tax. Electronic smoking devices that do not contain hemp products remain subject to the tobacco tax.

Please bear with me as I try to explain a very complicated and confusing tax situation. Currently, hemp products are taxed at the 5.5% sales tax rate, while the electronic smoking devices used to smoke hemp are taxed at the tobacco tax rate of 43%, even though those devices may never contain a product containing tobacco or nicotine.

The rate at which we should tax electronic smoking devices pre-loaded with hemp products remains unclear and confusing. The bill was prompted by a small business who understandably had been remitting taxes to the State for sales of smoking devices containing hemp at the rate that hemp is taxed at, 5.5%. The State, however, assessed those sales at the rate of the electronic smoking devices, 43%. The business was then on the hook for 10s of thousands of dollars in taxes owed for the difference.

And so, the question remains, why would we classify an electronic smoking device containing hemp as a tobacco product when it does not contain neither tobacco nor nicotine? The classification of hemp products is an issue that the Legislature is currently trying to determine. Due to this uncertainty, and in support of these small businesses, the majority of the Committee felt that it was both reasonable and appropriate to revert to the lower tax rate until the Legislature makes such a determination on this classification. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Representative **RUDNICKI**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Although I agree mostly with my Good Colleague on the other side, the biggest issue we had with this is these are not single-use. So, they may contain hemp initially, but then they can be refilled with other tobacco products. So, you can just go buy this one hemp product and only pay the 5.5%, but then you can turn around and use it on others. It's about parity, you know, there's a lot of talk in this Chamber, a lot about fairness and parity. I don't like carveouts, that's what this is. 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. 308

YEA - Archer, Arford, Beck, Bell, Boyer D, Boyer M, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, Crockett, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Farrin, Friedmann, Geiger, Hepler, Kuhn, Lajoie, Lee, Libby, Lookner, Macias, Mathieson, Matlack, McCabe, Meyer, Milliken, Murphy, Osher, Pluecker, Poirier, Pugh, Rana, Ray, Rielly, Roeder, Rollins, Runte, Sachs, Salisbury, Sargent, Sato, Sayre, Sinclair, Stover, Swallow, Terry, Yusuf, Zager.

NAY - Abdi, Adams, Albert, Ankeles, Arata, Ardell, Bagshaw, Bishop, Blier, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Campbell, Carlow, Caruso, Chapman, Cimino, Collins, Cooper, Cray, Daigle, Doudera, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eder, Faircloth, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foley, Foster, Fredericks, Fredette, Frost, Gere, Gifford, Golek, Graham, Gramlich, Greenwood, Haggan, Hasenfus, Henderson, Hymes, Jackson, Javner, Julia, Kessler, Lance, Lavigne, Lemelin, Lyman, Malon, Mason, Mastraccio, McIntyre, Mingo, Mitchell, Montell, Moonen, Morris, Nutting, O'Halloran, Olsen, Parry, Paul, Perkins, Pomerleau, Quint, Roberts, Rudnicki, Schmersal-Burgess, Shagoury, Simmons, Skold, Smith, Soboleski, Strout, Supica, Thorne, Tuell, Underwood, Wadsworth, Walker, Warren, Webb, White J, White R, Wood P, Wood S, Woodsome, Mr. Speaker.

ABSENT - Babin, Collamore, Eaton, Gattine, Griffin, Guerrette, Hall, Lanigan.

Yes, 52; No, 91; Absent, 8; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

52 having voted in the affirmative and 91 voted in the negative, with 8 being absent, and accordingly the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended Report was NOT ACCEPTED.**

Subsequently, on motion of Representative CLOUTIER of Lewiston, the Minority **Ought Not to Pass Report was ACCEPTED in NON-CONCURRENCE** and sent for concurrence.

Majority Report of the Committee on **VETERANS AND LEGAL AFFAIRS** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-206)** on Bill "An Act to Fund the Operations of the University of Maine Cooperative Extension Tick Laboratory"

(S.P. 429) (L.D. 1012)

Signed:

Senators:

HICKMAN of Kennebec

DUSON of Cumberland

Representatives:

BOYER of Poland

CHAPMAN of Auburn

FAIRCLOTH of Bangor

FREDERICKS of Sanford

FROST of Belgrade

GRAHAM of North Yarmouth

HYMES of Waldo

TERRY of Gorham

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

Signed:

Senator:

TIMBERLAKE of Androscoggin

Representatives:

SUPICA of Bangor

MALON of Biddeford

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

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" (S-206) 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-206) in NON-CONCURRENCE** and sent for concurrence.

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

Majority Report of the Committee on **VETERANS AND LEGAL AFFAIRS** reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on Bill "An Act to Increase the Acceptable Level of Alcohol in a Low-alcohol Spirits Product and to Increase Availability of Those Products"

(S.P. 570) (L.D. 1376)

Signed:

Senator:

DUSON of Cumberland

Representatives:

SUPICA of Bangor

FAIRCLOTH of Bangor

FROST of Belgrade

GRAHAM of North Yarmouth

MALON of Biddeford

TERRY of Gorham

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-207)** on same Bill.

Signed:

Senators:

HICKMAN of Kennebec

TIMBERLAKE of Androscoggin

Representatives:

BOYER of Poland

CHAPMAN of Auburn

FREDERICKS of Sanford

HYMES of Waldo

Came from the Senate with the Minority **OUGHT TO PASS AS AMENDED Report READ and ACCEPTED** and the Bill **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED AS AMENDED BY COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" (S-207).**

READ.

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

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**: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Poland, Representative Poland.

Representative **BOYER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This bill would allow for, not liquor; rather, it would allow for low-ABV products to be available where we sell beer and wine. We know that there's beer and wine that go up to 15% or even go over 15%, so, segregating these by ABV doesn't necessarily make sense.

We heard from groups like Hospitality Maine that see this as a benefit for them, for small businesses, because they have to order those from one distributor and get everything else from another distributor, so, this would ease the burden of operations and logistics for restaurants and other small businesses. They also talked about the labor issue in our State and that this would allow restaurants to provide cocktails that are, you know, premade, without having to have a mixologist or a bartender put those things together. We know a lot of industries and restaurants and bars are short staffed right now, so, this would allow a diversity in products, but not necessarily increase the labor cost.

And finally, this would actually generate tax revenue for our State if we were to make the switch. Senator Timberlake, in Committee; the Good Senator from Androscoggin; in Committee talked about how this would make more money for the State. It wouldn't make more money for BABLO, but it would bring more money into the State.

So, for all those reasons, I hope people follow my light. Thank you.

The **SPEAKER**: The Chair will just remind Members, unless the Good Senator from Androscoggin had submitted testimony in this regard to the Committee, for Members to say what other Members said in Committee would be against House Rules. The Chair recognizes the Representative from Poland, Representative Boyer.

Representative **BOYER**: Thank you. The Record isn't sufficient?

The **SPEAKER**: The Chair would inform the Member that it's improper to use the name of a Member from the Other Body to influence the actions of the House.

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. 309

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, Faircloth, Farrin, Friedmann, Frost, Geiger, Gere, Golek, Graham, Gramlich, Hasenfus, Hepler, Javner, 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, Schmersal-Burgess, Shagoury, Sinclair, Skold, Stover, Supica, Terry, Warren, Webb, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

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

ABSENT - Babin, Collamore, Eaton, Gattine, Griffin, Guerrette, Hall, Lanigan.

Yes, 81; No, 62; Absent, 8; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

81 having voted in the affirmative and 62 voted in the negative, with 8 being absent, and accordingly the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report was **ACCEPTED** in **NON-CONCURRENCE** and sent for concurrence.

Eight Members of the Committee on **EDUCATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS** report in Report "A" **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-217)** on Bill "An Act to Provide for a Later Starting Time for High Schools" (S.P. 182) (L.D. 396)

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

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

Signed:

Representatives:

BAGSHAW of Windham
LYMAN of Livermore Falls

One Member of the same Committee reports in Report "C" **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "B" (S-218)** on same Bill.

Signed:

Representative:

HAGGAN of Hampden

Came from the Senate with Report "A" **OUGHT TO PASS AS AMENDED READ** and **ACCEPTED** and the Bill **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED AS AMENDED BY COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" (S-217) AS AMENDED BY SENATE AMENDMENT "A" (S-235)** thereto.

READ.

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

The Bill was **READ ONCE**. **Committee Amendment "A" (S-217)** was **READ** by the Clerk.

Senate Amendment "A" (S-235) to **Committee Amendment "A" (S-217)** was **READ** by the Clerk and **ADOPTED**.

Committee Amendment "A" (S-217) as Amended by Senate Amendment "A" (S-235) thereto was **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-217) as Amended by Senate Amendment "A" (S-235)** thereto in concurrence.

Eight Members of the Committee on **LABOR** report in Report "A" **Ought to Pass** on Bill "An Act to Amend the Laws Governing Paid Family and Medical Leave"

(S.P. 383) (L.D. 894)

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

Four Members of the same Committee report in Report "B" **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-200)** on same Bill.

Signed:

Senator:

BRADSTREET of Kennebec

Representatives:

COLLINS of Sidney
DRINKWATER of Milford
SOBOLESKI of Phillips

One Member of the same Committee reports in Report "C" **Ought Not to Pass** on same Bill.

Signed:

Representative:

LIBBY of Auburn

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

READ.

Representative ROEDER of Bangor moved that the House **ACCEPT** Report "A" **Ought to Pass**.

Representative DRINKWATER of Milford **REQUESTED** a roll call on the motion to **ACCEPT** Report "A" **Ought 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 Milford, Representative Drinkwater.

Representative **DRINKWATER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll speak briefly on this, because we've gone over a lot of these in the last couple of days. But our only issue with LD 894 is that it's giving taxing authority to unelected bureaucrats. The fines are arbitrary; we're already hearing about some letters being sent out for people that were late making their first payment, fines up to \$5,000. There's no refunds, which is a problem, and they should be limited to 30 days to accept or reject an application for a private plan. Thank you.

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

Representative **ROEDER**: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's news to me that that was the only objection,

because there is an Amendment on the Minority Report and it is an Amendment that was resisted by the Department, because the Department of Labor opposed any change that will repeal or delay the implementation of the program, create confusion amongst either workers or employees who participate in a program or negatively affect the solvency of the fund. They did testify in support of this, because it makes some technical changes that were requested by the Department of Labor to this program. Very minor, very technical changes. It's not an exciting bill, but it's a necessary bill. 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 opposition to LD 894 in its original form, legislation that threatens the very foundation of Maine's economic landscape. While its intentions may appear laudable, the practical effects of this bill are devastating for businesses, workers and entrepreneurs alike. While LD 894 does not offer a balanced approach to paid leave; instead, it imposes punitive financial and regulatory burdens that jeopardize small businesses, discourage investment and erode the economic vitality of our State.

First and foremost, LD 894 forces employers into a mandatory paid leave system without regard for financial feasibility. Businesses, particularly small and family-owned establishments, operate on a margin, a thin margin. They cannot afford to indefinitely shoulder mandated contributions while facing inflation, supply chain disruptions and workforce shortages. This bill is not a safety net, it's a straitjacket that restricts job creation, wage growth and business expansion.

Second, the legislation creates rigid, bureaucratic leave policies that fail to account for the operational realities for business. One example is that the \$100 private plan violation fine by adding an amount equal to the missing tax plus another one percent of the business's annual payroll. I looked, and I couldn't find any other fines that were equivalent to that. One percent of a payroll. We have companies that have multi-million-dollar payrolls. And it doesn't define what a violation specifically is. Is it a clerical error? Is it an addition error? They could be fined thousands and thousands, 10s of thousands of dollars just for a small error.

Employers must now adhere to government-prescribed schedules and contribution structures while forcing their ability to leave structured programs tailored to their own workforce needs. Maine businesses are struggling with labor shortages, cannot afford uncertainty and lost productivity caused by a one-system-fits-all. It's no more evident than what the Department has already done; this is a Department bill, so, I can speak to the Department; the Department changed the intent of the law itself in their rules. They have gone from saying; the actual legislation itself, the Statute clearly says the "use of such leave must be scheduled to prevent undue hardship on the employer as reasonably determined by the employer." The Department added the word 'if' in there. Added additional language. That's not in Statute. They've changed the parameters of being able to take the leave, hurting businesses so they don't get to do it in accordance with what's good for them.

Third, LD 894 expands the scope of government intervention, establishing an enforcement-first approach, rather than a collective one. Employers who unintentionally fall out of compliance due to administrative error or economic hardship are subject to penalties, legal action and aggressive enforcement measures. This does not foster economic security, it creates an environment of fear, instability and reduced hiring initiatives. Even more alarming, LD 894 imposes financial liability on

success of businesses, meaning that new owners inherit the unpaid premiums, penalties and enforcement actions from the previous owner. This provision is an outright deterrent to entrepreneurship and business acquisitions, making it harder for struggling businesses to find new ownership and survive. Maine's economy thrives on small businesses and local enterprise, yet this bill effectively punishes those who seek to invest, innovate and create jobs.

Mr. Speaker, Maine businesses are not adversaries. They are partners in economic stability. They need flexibility, predictability and reasonable policies that encourage growth, not government overreach that threatens their ability to operate. LD 894 in its original form undermines our State's economy, drives away investors and forces small businesses in unsustainable financial commitments.

I'd also like to say that, serving on the Labor Committee, I've been involved in this bill since the very beginning when it was brought forward at the beginning of last Session. We have tried over and over again to find some kind of compromises, some kind of ways to tamp this down a little bit, so that it's equitable and for everyone to be involved with, so that we can make it a joint enterprise for our State, but we've been shut down at every single turn. We had a stack of nine bills, Republican bills, this Session saying, let us be involved, change this, amend this, let's fix this. No. Nothing. No negotiations, no taking any suggestions, no equity, no equality; it's been from one side; compliance, we want you to comply, that's it. Mr. Speaker, that's not governing, that's dictating. Thank you.

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

Representative **ROEDER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I apologize for rising again, but I think there was a little confusion, perhaps.

This is not whether or not we pass Paid Family and Medical Leave, that's actually already a law. I also do want to point out the fact that the law as it stands was the result of compromise. In fact, it was the result of about a decade of negotiation and compromise.

I also neglected to read what LD 894 would do. It clarifies that intermittent leave of an employee of less than one work day may not be taken unless it is agreed to by the employee and the employer. It establishes in Statute the Bureau of Paid Family and Medical Leave within the Department of Labor to administer the Paid Family and Medical Leave benefits program. It establishes remedies for the Department of Labor to enforce the collection of delinquent premium contributions, penalties and assessments on employers that failed to make payments required by the program. It establishes liability for individuals or organizations with respect to premium contributions, penalties and assessments owed by employers acquired by those individuals or organizations. It establishes penalties for employers that allow private plan benefit coverage to lapse during a period of approved private plan substitution.

I also want to point out that just about every bill that the Department of Labor has been involved in in our Committee, we have asked, 'will you work with employers, are you going to just sweep in and impose fines and find them at fault,' and every time that that question has been asked, it has been answered with, 'we always work with employers. We know people make mistakes, we know people of good faith occasionally miss something on the paperwork and we go to the ends of the Earth to work with those folks.' They only wind up going after the egregious instances, the repeated violations. They're short-staffed, why would they bother with a clerical error? Thank you.

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

Representative **SOBOLESKI**: Thank you for allowing me to rise again, Mr. Speaker, ladies and gentlemen. Once again, I would like to—even though that is a lot that's covered in this bill—I would like to reiterate again, we've tried over and over again for a bipartisan solution for this and we've been shut down at every turn. This is owned by one side and this is a disaster for our economy and our small businesses.

We have 150,000 small businesses. They comprise 82% of our workforce out there in our great State; 82%, 151,000 businesses, \$29 billion worth of combined payroll statewide. And even though it sounds like one percent is a small amount, \$75,000 or \$74,000 has already been taken out of our economy and parked into a Paid Family Medical Leave account for the first quarter of this year. We're going to keep doing that over and over and over again. And this is just a strain on our business, and it's something that, as we heard on Monday when it was left to be a voluntary program in other states; one state, zero percent participated; another state, one percent participated; another one, two percent participated. This is a program that the people don't want and the people don't need. Collectively. For a few people? Sure. It's important that a mother stays home and bonds with their child, that's important. But collectively, in our State, it puts 690,000 workers paying one percent in, that's a lot of money and it's something that we just don't need.

We really wanted to find a bipartisan compromise and be able to work this together, but unfortunately, we haven't been allowed to participate. Thank you.

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

Representative **GEIGER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the Good Representative from Bangor said, the law was passed last year. This is simply the Department asking for some tweaks, as what is usual after a complex bill.

Every industrialized country in the world has a far more generous Paid Family Leave Act than we do. My goddaughter lives in England; she just went back to work after nine months of giving birth to her daughter. Every state that has passed this has not repealed it; have, in fact, expanded it.

We are not just a series of businesses; we are not just a series of workers. We are a community, we are a society that gets to decide how we thrive, and we thrive when there is a blend of work and life. And all of us age, all of us fall into illness, many of us have children, and when we do, it is part of our culture in a decent society to give us time to recover, to allow us to take care of our elderly, our frail, our beloved ones when they have a car accident, when they have a heart attack, when they give birth. No one sets out in the morning and gets into their car expecting to be hurt, as one of our dear Representatives experienced just the other day. No one sets out to go to work and suddenly clutches their chest at the water cooler and has a heart attack that then needs surgery. Every one of us are frail, human and subject to injury, illness and aging; and every one of us deserves the ability to take the time to recover and to take the time off to help our beloved ones recover. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from South Berwick, Representative Roberts.

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

I want to be clear, I support the Paid Family Medical Leave program; I support its passage, because I believe in the core values it represents: dignity, equity and economic security for the Maine workers and families. The bill before us takes a few

important steps administratively, but administration isn't implementation, and while LD 894 focuses on infrastructure, it leaves behind the operational reforms that matter most to the people on the ground.

I say that as someone who still works in a retail setting on weekends, managing shifts, filling in when short-staffed and troubleshooting when someone calls out unexpectedly while also running a consulting business that works directly with small employers across Maine, helping them advertise, staff and plan. These employers aren't trying to avoid compliance; they're trying to figure out what the rules even mean for them. And right now, we're giving them too little guidance.

LD 894 doesn't fix the biggest concern we've heard: the lack of any required notice before a worker takes leave. It doesn't provide any functional criteria for determining when undue hardship applies, especially for small and seasonal businesses. It doesn't fix the inconsistency in how public and private union contracts are treated under the program. And it continues to apply a flat, automatic penalty, with no room for discretion, even in cases where an employer made a good-faith mistake. That's not how we encourage engagement; it's how we create resentment.

Colleagues, LD 894 builds some of the scaffolding, but leaves the foundation shaky. If we want this program to endure, to work as intended for both workers and employers, we have to move beyond compliance and focus on function, and that means more than setting up a Bureau; it means setting up a system that works. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Representative **CARLOW**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I don't want to rise and air my grievances with the entire Paid Family Medical Leave program. This bill is here, so that we can have time to consider how we might be able to make the program better. Better for workers, better for businesses and better for public institutions all over the State.

This Majority Report, in my humble opinion, fails to include vital protections for small businesses, fails to ensure the program's continued success and solvency. So, I respectfully urge the House to reject this motion, so that we can have some more time to make a series of pragmatic changes to ensure the program's continued success. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Representative **CLOUTIER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, to start, I guess I want to respond to the claim that this is a program that Mainers neither need nor want. In a recent study by Pan-Atlantic Research that was conducted in February of 2025, in Maine, respondents were asked "to what extent do you support Maine's creation of --"

Representative **CIMINO**: Point of Order.

The SPEAKER: The Member will defer. The Chair would inquire as to the Point of Order from the Representative from Bridgton.

Representative **CIMINO**: My understanding is that this bill is already law, so, to be debating it, I think is unnecessary.

On **POINT OF ORDER**, Representative CIMINO of Bridgton asked the Chair if the remarks of Representative CLOUTIER of Lewiston were germane to the pending question.

The SPEAKER: The Chair has provided a large degree of latitude during the course of this debate on comments pretty expansive related to the full law. The Chair would continue to provide that latitude, since we've already kind of gone down that road.

The Chair **RULED** that the remarks of Representative CLOUTIER of Lewiston were germane to the pending question.

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

Representative **CLOUTIER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, again, in this survey, the question was asked, "to what extent do you support Maine's creation of an insurance plan to provide Paid Family and Medical Leave for employees to care for a sick family member, bond with a new baby or recover from a major injury?" Seventy percent of those respondents indicated support, with 41% indicating very strong support and only seven percent indicated that they do not support the program at all. In terms of how folks thought that the program should be funded; and the question was asked, "how would you prefer that this program be funded;" 61% of respondents indicated preferring that the program be mostly paid for by the employer, with 26% indicating entirely funded by the employer, seven percent indicated they prefer the program be entirely paid for by the employee and only six percent of respondents reported that they don't know. Additionally, there was strong bipartisan support for the program. Over 50% of Republicans support or very strongly support the program, and almost 85% of Democrats support or very strongly support the program.

And since we're talking about the program overall, based upon other people's comments on the floor today, I just want to say that in the nearly two years since Maine's Paid Family and Medical Leave program was passed into law, we have heard powerful stories about how PFML can help Maine families and workplaces stay strong. But we have also heard myths today, claims that simply don't match the facts or the research. Many of these myths were the basis for some of the bills that we heard throughout this session.

We've heard that the program did not have an actuarial study or undergo rigorous study. As Co-chair of the Bipartisan PFML Commission, I can confirm that we met regularly over 14 months, heard from national experts, businesses and working Mainers and produced a unanimous bipartisan report with over 100 pages of financial analysis, which was the basis of this law. Another actuarial study is due by February of 2026.

We have heard that contributions will skyrocket to five percent or more. Maine's --

Representative **CIMINO**: Point of Order.

The SPEAKER: The Member will defer. The Chair will inquire as to why the Representative from Bridgton rises.

Representative **CIMINO**: Mr. Speaker, this entire speech that's being presented is; it's entirely on whether or not we should be having Paid Family Medical Leave. The other speeches that were given, while they touched upon paid Family Medical Leave, they also addressed the issue at hand. I don't see where any of these comments from the Representative on the other side has discussed any of what we're supposed to be discussing. It's all about a bill that we already have in effect.

On **POINT OF ORDER**, Representative CIMINO of Bridgton asked the Chair if the remarks of Representative CLOUTIER of Lewiston were germane to the pending question.

The SPEAKER: The Chair heard comments earlier related to the merits or lack thereof of the program as a whole. The Member from Lewiston is also speaking to the merits or lack thereof of the program as a whole. The Chair did not call other Members out of order for speaking to the merits. The Chair would say he would prefer that this debate not be belabored longer, because we've heard; I think it's kind of like Groundhog Day in here, but we're having the debate, so, we'll debate it.

The Chair **RULED** that the remarks of Representative CLOUTIER of Lewiston were germane to the pending question.

The SPEAKER: The Member may proceed.

Representative **CLOUTIER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have heard that contributions will skyrocket to five percent or more. Maine's current premium is one percent, based on a conservative estimate following the actuarial study I just mentioned. Among the 13 states and D.C. with PFML programs, only two have rates above one percent: California at 1.2% and Rhode Island at 1.3%. Most are below, including New Jersey, which has been operating successfully since 2009 and has a contribution rate of just 0.33%.

We have very recently heard that Mainers will be using PFML for vacations or hunting excursions. Evidence shows that abuse of Paid Family and Medical Leave programs is nearly nonexistent. These benefits are only available through a detailed application process. Employees must submit personal information; documentation from a health care provider confirming a serious medical condition, their own or a family member's, and verify that leave scheduling doesn't create a hardship for the employer. That's straight from the Department of Labor's final rule.

We have heard that the program will go bankrupt because of the wage replacement. The wage replacement is both tiered and responsible. Workers are 90% on the first portion of their wages, up to half the average weekly wage, which amounts to about \$570, and 65% on the rest, with a cap of Maine's average weekly wage, around \$1,150 per week. The evidence is clear that working Mainers can't live on 100% of minimum wage, and in other states, wage replacement of under 80% ensures low-wage workers can't access the benefits they pay for. Our system helps low-wage workers most, without overextending the fund.

We've heard these concerns before, and we'll probably hear them again, but here are the facts: This program is built on research, it has been carefully designed and it's fiscally responsible. As written, the current PFML law ensures that no Mainer ever has to make this impossible decision again, and it provides a lifeline to workers when they need it the most. LD 894 makes technical changes to ensure the successful implementation of this program. Let's give Maine's Paid Family and Medical Leave program the chance to do what it was meant to do: support Maine families and strengthen our economy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Representative **SUPICA**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I apologize for the Groundhog's Day, but I will be as brief as I can.

As somebody who works on the week and the weekend in retail and service jobs and knows full well what small businesses have to deal with, I want to talk about how this; what I have seen since Paid Family Medical Leave has been implemented is; or tried to be implemented; is an undermining of the program through a lot of misinformation. So, here's what I know. I know that when somebody gets sick, you shouldn't not be able to pay your rent and lose your housing or pay your bills and be able to buy food just because you, as the daughter of a mom that I love, need to take time off of work to care for her. All right? It is not an overly complicated concept to understand. I think that we have muddied the waters with a lot of misinformation, and I just go back to this summer, when I was working, and I turned to the bartender that I worked with, and there was a lot of hysteria about this happening, and I explained to him, I said it would give money, you pay into the program with businesses, it would give money, so that, you know, if somebody is sick, you're able to care for them. And it was no argument, no doubt, that's the right thing to do. And workers want it. And I understand that

businesses are scared, but you know, having broke, living on the edge, about to get evicted, stressed-out employees is bad for business. So, thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Representative **DRINKWATER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, let's just establish the fact that Paid Family Medical Leave is not going anywhere. All this LD 894 does is propose some changes. Some of these changes, we absolutely agreed with. Mr. Speaker, we offered 10 suggestions that we would like to see done to the bill. Would I be out of line if I just read a couple of those?

The SPEAKER: The Member may proceed.

Representative **DRINKWATER**: Thank you. Establishing a 120-day eligibility threshold, clarifying employee contributions, clarifying undue hardship, modifying return to work requirements, capping costs of private plan applications.

We agree this is not going to go anywhere, this was just implemented. I've been there since the beginning, we were told that there would be plenty of times for amendments to it, it didn't happen, it happened this session and we just wanted to tweak it, it's not going anywhere, those were our suggestions. We'd ask that you defeat this and we'll move on. Thank you.

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

ROLL CALL NO. 310

YEA - Abdi, Ankeles, Archer, Arford, Beck, Bell, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Faircloth, Farrin, Friedmann, Frost, Geiger, Gere, Golek, Graham, Gramlich, Hasenfus, 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, 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, Bagshaw, Bishop, Blier, Boyer D, Campbell, Carlow, Caruso, Chapman, Cimino, Collins, Cooper, Cray, Crockett, Daigle, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eder, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foley, Foster, Fredericks, Fredette, Gifford, Greenwood, Haggan, Henderson, Hepler, Hymes, Jackson, Javner, Lance, Lavigne, Lemelin, Libby, Lyman, Mason, McIntyre, Mingo, Morris, Nutting, Olsen, Parry, Paul, Perkins, Poirier, Pomerleau, Quint, Roberts, Rudnicki, Schmersal-Burgess, Simmons, Smith, Soboleski, Strout, Swallow, Thorne, Tuell, Underwood, Wadsworth, Walker, White J, White R, Wood P, Wood S, Woodsome.

ABSENT - Babin, Collamore, DeBrito, Eaton, Gattine, Griffin, Guerrette, Hall, Lanigan.

Yes, 72; No, 70; Absent, 9; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

72 having voted in the affirmative and 70 voted in the negative, with 9 being absent, and accordingly Report "A" **Ought to Pass 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 CARLOW of Buxton **PRESENTED House Amendment "A" (H-489)**, which was **READ** by the Clerk.

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

Representative **CARLOW**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Paid Family Medical Leave program was instituted to serve Maine people in some of life's most challenging and opportune moments, from welcoming a child, caring for an aging parent or recovering from a serious illness. For the program to achieve its intended purpose, it must closely adhere to economic and workforce imperatives.

That's why I offer this Amendment for the Body's consideration. My proposal is simple, requiring just 120 days of employment before an employee qualifies for Paid Family Medical Leave. Some have already speculated that this provision is already the law of the land, but according to small businesses and advocates spanning the State, that just isn't the case. This Amendment reflects parity with other Maine programs like Maine's Earned Paid Leave Law and the Maine Retirement Investment Trust. These programs both have a 120-day threshold, because the Legislature at the time was mindful of the unique needs of Maine's small business and seasonal industries.

I urge the House to Adopt this safeguard in support of commerce and the program's continued solvency. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Representative **ROEDER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, again, I want to reiterate what the Department of Labor said in their testimony on all of the bills that were before us on the Paid Family Medical Leave: They "oppose any change that will repeal or delay the implementation of the program." The actuarial studies that were done throughout the development of this process showed that a delay would cause harm. Thank you.

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

Representative **SUPICA**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I appreciate how folks are still willing to work on this issue. Unfortunately, a couple years ago, when my mom fell and broke her arm, I couldn't ask her to schedule it around my work requirements and I still need to be able to take care of my family members when they fall. Thank you.

Representative **MOONEN** of Portland moved that **House Amendment "A" (H-489)** be **INDEFINITELY POSTPONED**.

Representative **CARLOW** of Buxton **REQUESTED** a roll call on the motion to **INDEFINITELY POSTPONE House Amendment "A" (H-489)**.

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 Turner, Representative Morris.

Representative **MORRIS**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in opposition to the pending motion and in favor of the Amendment.

I want to clarify this Amendment does not delay the implementation of the program; the program comes forward next year. All it does is it aligns it with other State programs and other benefits for 120 days, at least on this public program. If a business has a private program and they want to offer the leave sooner to their employees as an incentive for a recruitment tool, they're able to do that.

I think this is a very common-sense Amendment, and I would encourage this Body to reject this motion. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Portland, Representative Skold.

Representative **SKOLD**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I will be opposing this Amendment, or I will be voting with the pending motion.

I want to bring up the idea of portability, which is something that's very important to the Paid Family Medical Leave program; that when you're in one job, paying into this program, and you leave and you go to another job, another place of employment, that that qualification for taking Paid Family Medical Leave should you need to take it goes with you; it's portable, it stays with you. And I appreciate the ideas around trying to improve or amend this law, but unfortunately, the proposed Amendment does neither, or does not improve the law, because it would put in jeopardy individuals' ability to take Paid Family Medical Leave when they need it; should a medical issue arise, should a child appear in their lives at a certain moment where they may have just changed jobs.

So, for that reason, to improve and to preserve the ability of every Mainer to take this leave when they need it, I will be supporting the motion to Indefinitely Postpone. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: A roll call has been ordered. The pending question before the House is Indefinite Postponement of House Amendment "A" (H-489). All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

ROLL CALL NO. 311

YEA - Abdi, Ankeles, Archer, Arford, Beck, Bell, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Faircloth, Farrin, Friedmann, Frost, Geiger, Gere, Golek, Graham, Gramlich, Hasenfus, Hepler, Julia, Kessler, Kuhn, Lajoie, Lee, Lookner, Macias, Malon, Mathieson, Matlack, McCabe, Meyer, Milliken, 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, Warren, Webb, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

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

ABSENT - Babin, Collamore, DeBrito, Eaton, Gattine, Griffin, Guerrette, Hall, Lanigan.

Yes, 72; No, 70; Absent, 9; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

72 having voted in the affirmative and 70 voted in the negative, with 9 being absent, and accordingly **House Amendment "A" (H-489)** was **INDEFINITELY POSTPONED**.

Representative **CARLOW** of Buxton **PRESENTED House Amendment "B" (H-490)**, which was **READ** by the Clerk.

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

Representative **CARLOW**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak in strident support of an important improvement to Maine's Family Medical Leave program, one that addresses a basic matter of fairness for both workers and employers.

Under this proposal, workers and businesses who have contributed to the State fund but choose to adopt a qualifying private plan before the first of January next year would be eligible to request a refund from the Department of Labor. This change is both reasonable and necessary, because if an employer and their employees are covered under a private plan, they will not be drawing from the State system. They are managing their own coverage at their own cost and complying with the law through a separate but valid route. Failing to refund their contributions to a State fund from which they will receive no benefit is simply unfair. I've heard from many small businesses and employees across Maine; people who support the goals of this program, but who also value flexibility and choice. Some are already preparing to implement private plans that are tailored to their specific workforce needs, others are still evaluating their options. But they want to know if their contributions will be treated equitably. This refund provision ensures that the system respects their choices, it encourages compliance without punishing innovation and, most importantly, it gives businesses and workers confidence that the program is being administered in a transparent, consistent and fair fashion.

Mr. Speaker, the success of the program depends on earning the trust of those who are participants of it, and that trust requires us to keep our commitments and this includes returning funds when coverage is being responsibly provided elsewhere. I urge my colleagues to support this common-sense change, one that upholds both the integrity of the program and the interests of Maine's workers and employers alike. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Representative MOONEN of Portland moved that **House Amendment "B" (H-490)** be **INDEFINITELY POSTPONED**.

Representative CARLOW of Buxton **REQUESTED** a division on the motion to **INDEFINITELY POSTPONE House Amendment "B" (H-490)**.

Representative MOONEN of Portland **REQUESTED** a roll call on the motion to **INDEFINITELY POSTPONE House Amendment "B" (H-490)**.

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 Turner, Representative Morris.

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

The SPEAKER: The Member may proceed.

Representative **MORRIS**: So, as I understand it, this would simply; those businesses that already have had an approved private plan, to be able to get the money back that they paid the State when they have a private plan and they've been using a private plan; I guess I'd like to know, what is the objection to allowing a business that's already doing the right thing under the law, being able to get the money back that they've paid in? Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Representative from Turner, Representative Morris, has posed a question through the Chair to any Member who wishes to answer. The Chair recognizes the Representative from Bangor, Representative Roeder.

Representative **ROEDER**: Thank you. I do have an answer, and it's a bit of a list, so.

Every employer must contribute in Quarter One, 2025. The first quarter funding promotes balance for all; for all workers and businesses paying in for the first quarter; would create a more level playing field by more equitably distributing the responsibility of funding the program.

Number two: Level playing field and equity among the employers. Requiring Quarter One contributions ensures large and small employers alike share in building the fund. If large employers are refunded, the financial burden shifts to smaller ones still using the State fund.

Number three: No one was approved for a private plan before January 1, 2025. No private plans could legally be approved before January 2025, because the rules governing them were not finalized until December 2024. This means every employer was operating under the State plan by default. Contributions collected starting January 1, 2025, were based on a uniform statutory expectation.

Number four: No guarantee for employers to stay with their private plan forever. Employers may also choose to leave a private plan and begin providing benefits through the State fund at the end of the three-year period of the private plan approval.

Number five: Portability means everyone benefits from the State fund. Even employees who work for a private plan employers today may need to rely on the State fund tomorrow. For example, if they change jobs. Again, that portability piece that was referenced earlier. Or their employer drops or fails to renew their private plan or their private plan is revoked due to noncompliance. That worker's State benefit, that worker's State benefit, eligibility is based on past wages, even wages that weren't originally taxed for the fund.

And number six: Oversight of private plans still requires State resources. Workers in private plans retain appeal rights and job protections enforced by the Department of Labor, and that oversight is funded through contributions and benefits employers using private plans by maintaining system integrity. But again, it's that worker's benefits. Thank you.

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

Representative **DRINKWATER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I've been involved with this since the beginning, and right here in my hands I have questions and answers provided to us by the Department. And as of May 5th, 900 private plan applications have been approved.

Now, I understand the portability, but the employer has paid into that. Why can't the employer get his money back and leave it alone? Remember, we can't; nobody can collect; nobody can start this until May of 2026. So, the employers aren't going anywhere, they're not going to be requesting the time off, they should be refunded what they paid in. And just for the record, Bath Iron Works has paid in \$600,000, they finally had their plan approved and the State refuses to give them any money back. Remember, we can't collect until May of 2026, we're just simply asking that this one reasonable Amendment be adopted, so refunds can be given. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Portland, Representative Skold.

Representative **SKOLD**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I was on the Committee that was looking through this, LD 894 as well as accompanying measures, and I will say that at the very beginning, this idea of the refund was one of the few proposals that I did think, 'oh, let me learn more about that, that sounds reasonable.' So, I can empathize with anyone thinking that it could be reasonable.

Here's where I came down on it after; along with a majority of the Committee; after reviewing it. It goes back to the idea of portability and the idea that the employer, while choosing to be in a private plan right now, may change that choice in the future. As I understand it, there would be no fee for them to change that choice in the future; they would just roll into the program and start paying into it, but they would have not been paying into it

for years. Additionally, individuals who they employ may move on to other places of employment that are under the plan. Again, no fee, no need to, you know, to pay your way in, they can automatically be part of it.

This is good for all, and so, those initial funds, as I understand, act as some kind of buffer against those changes in the future and help the whole entire system be whole and be able to be preserved in the case that those changes happen. Thank you.

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

Representative **RUDNICKI**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question that I'm hoping someone can answer.

The SPEAKER: The Member may proceed.

Representative **RUDNICKI**: Okay, so, one of the things we've dealt with in Tax this year is the fact that the Supreme Court came down with a decision that if a municipality forecloses on a piece of property, they have to give the money back. After they take expenses, they have to give the money back to the people they foreclosed on, so they don't lose their equity. Well, wouldn't this be kind of similar, where we're taking peoples' money; it's almost like we're stealing their money from companies and not giving it back to them when they've been approved for their own plan. I'm just; I'm curious, and I'm really not trying to make a point other than to see, isn't that the same thing? Isn't that going against that same principle? Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Representative from Fairfield, Representative Rudnicki, has posed a question through the Chair to any Member who wishes to answer. The Chair recognizes the Representative from Bangor, Representative Supica.

Representative **SUPICA**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm happy to answer that question. We're not stealing peoples' money. The truth is that I'm not going to ask my grandfather to die when it's convenient for the business's plan that they provided for me or stay in a job because I have no other choice. We need freedom to change jobs and we need the freedom to take care of our loved ones when they are sick.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Presque Isle, Representative Underwood.

Representative **UNDERWOOD**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On this new tax that's being mandated, basically, on businesses, why don't we put out for referendum a question on the next ballot, and that would read, do you support this Family Medical Leave Act, or this concept, and see what the State of Maine has to say. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Bridgton, Representative Cimino.

Representative **CIMINO**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. After hearing all of this, I've concluded Paid Family Medical Leave isn't really about taking care of workers in their most difficult times. If it were, it would not matter whether it was the private business that was providing Paid Family Medical Leave or if it were the State that was mandating it. So, basically, what this bill comes out to is that it's just control. The State government wants to be in control, the Democrats want to be in control of who is actually providing family medical leave.

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

Representative **ROEDER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to provide an answer to the Good Representative from Presque Isle. There was a ballot referendum ready to go and it was much more expansive, it had all the signatures to get on the ballot. It was a much broader, much more liberal plan, and the reason that this particular law is in effect was because the State wanted

the chance to shape it, so that it wouldn't be as broad, so that it could have a little bit more consideration for businesses. Thank you.

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

Representative **SOBOLESKI**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen. The Fifth Amendment's Taking Clause protects private property rights by prohibiting the government from taking private property for public use without providing just compensation. Taking money from a business that already has a plan in place and not returning it, I believe is a violation of the United States Constitution, and I believe that's why there's a lawsuit for it. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Turner, Representative Morris.

Representative **MORRIS**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise again in opposition to this motion.

Let's be very clear: the money that has been taken is money that could be used by that business for other benefits as well. Not just for a private Paid Family Medical Leave program, but for other benefits and pay for their workers, and it's being held by the State rather than being used to go back into that business. And furthermore, this was something that, when this program was proposed a year ago, one of the promises that was made is that, if you have a private program that meets our standards, you will not have to pay additional taxes; you or your workers will not have to pay additional taxes to the State. And now, we have seen workers had money taken out of their paycheck, businesses have paid additional taxes to the State that they do not need. They should be refunded, it is the right thing to do, it is keeping the promise that was made when this program was passed. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: A roll call has been ordered. The pending question before the House is Indefinite Postponement of House Amendment "B" (H-490). All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

ROLL CALL NO. 312

YEA - Abdi, Ankeles, Archer, Arford, Beck, Bell, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Faircloth, Farrin, Friedmann, Frost, Geiger, Gere, Golek, Graham, Gramlich, Hasenfus, Hepler, Kessler, Kuhn, Lajoie, Lee, Lookner, Macias, Malon, Mathieson, Matlack, McCabe, Meyer, Milliken, 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, Warren, Webb, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

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

ABSENT - Babin, Collamore, DeBrito, Eaton, Gattine, Griffin, Guerrette, Hall, Lanigan, Mastraccio.

Yes, 71; No, 70; Absent, 10; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

71 having voted in the affirmative and 70 voted in the negative, with 10 being absent, and accordingly **House Amendment "B" (H-490) was INDEFINITELY POSTPONED.**

Subsequently, Representative MOONEN of Portland **REQUESTED** a roll call on **PASSAGE TO BE ENGROSSED**.

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 Passage to be Engrossed. All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

ROLL CALL NO. 313

YEA - Abdi, Ankeles, Archer, Arford, Beck, Bell, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Faircloth, Farrin, Friedmann, Frost, 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, Roeder, Rollins, Runte, Sachs, Salisbury, Sargent, Sato, Sayre, Shagoury, Sinclair, Skold, Stover, Supica, Terry, Warren, Webb, Yusuf, Zager.

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

ABSENT - Babin, Collamore, Crockett, DeBrito, Eaton, Gattine, Griffin, Guerrette, Hall, Lanigan.

Yes, 72; No, 69; Absent, 10; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

72 having voted in the affirmative and 69 voted in the negative, with 10 being absent, and accordingly the Bill was **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED** in 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 to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-397)** on Bill "An Act to Integrate Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander History into the Statewide System of Learning Results"

(H.P. 616) (L.D. 957)

Signed:

Senators:

RAFFERTY of York
PIERCE of Cumberland

Representatives:

MURPHY of Scarborough
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
BRENNAN of Portland
CARLOW of Buxton
HAGGAN of Hampden
LYMAN of Livermore Falls

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" (H-397)** 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-397)** and sent for concurrence.

Majority Report of the Committee on **EDUCATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS** reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on Bill "An Act to Increase the State's Share of Major Capital School Construction Costs"

(H.P. 709) (L.D. 1087)

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
LYMAN of Livermore Falls
MITCHELL of Cumberland
SARGENT of York

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-434)** on same Bill.

Signed:

Representatives:

BAGSHAW of Windham
HAGGAN of Hampden

READ.

On motion of Representative MURPHY of Scarborough, 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-476)** on Bill "An Act Related to the Work of the Public Advocate"

(H.P. 547) (L.D. 861)

Signed:

Senators:

LAWRENCE of York
GROHOSKI of Hancock

Representatives:

SACHS of Freeport
FOSTER of Dexter
GEIGER of Rockland
KESSLER of South Portland
MCINTYRE of Lowell
RUNTE of York
WARREN of Scarborough
WEBB of Durham

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "B" (H-477)** on same Bill.

Signed:

Senator:

HARRINGTON of York

Representatives:

PAUL of Winterport
WADSWORTH of Hiram

READ.

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

The Bill was **READ ONCE. Committee Amendment "A" (H-476)** 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-476)** 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-445)** on Bill "An Act to Provide Peer Respite for Individuals with Mental Health Care Needs"

(H.P. 1227) (L.D. 1843)

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

READ.

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

The Bill was **READ ONCE. Committee Amendment "A" (H-445)** 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-445)** and sent for concurrence.

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

Majority Report of the Committee on **HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-456)** on Bill "An Act to Prohibit Mandatory Parking Space Minimums in State and Municipal Building Codes"

(H.P. 281) (L.D. 427)

Signed:

Senators:

CURRY of Waldo
BAILEY of York
BENNETT of Oxford

Representatives:

GERE of Kennebunkport
EDER of Waterboro
GOLEK of Harpswell
JULIA of Waterville
MALON of Biddeford
YUSUF of Portland

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

Signed:

Representatives:

COLLAMORE of Pittsfield
ROBERTS of South Berwick
WALKER of Naples

READ.

On motion of Representative GERE of Kennebunkport, **TABLED** pending **ACCEPTANCE** of either Report and later today assigned.

Majority Report of the Committee on **HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT** reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on Bill "An Act to Support Maine's Homeless Shelters by Imposing a Fee for Booking Hotels, Short-term Rentals and Recreational Vehicle Camping Reservations" (EMERGENCY)

(H.P. 968) (L.D. 1476)

Signed:

Senators:

CURRY of Waldo
BENNETT of Oxford

Representatives:

GERE of Kennebunkport
COLLAMORE of Pittsfield
EDER of Waterboro
MINGO of Calais
ROBERTS of South Berwick
WALKER of Naples
YUSUF of Portland

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-454)** on same Bill.

Signed:

Representatives:

GOLEK of Harpswell
JULIA of Waterville
MALON of Biddeford

READ.

Representative GERE of Kennebunkport moved that the House **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report.

Representative COPELAND of Saco **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 Saco, Representative Copeland.

Representative **COPELAND**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This bill, LD 1476, imposes a booking fee of two dollars per booking of hotels, short-term rentals and recreational vehicle camping reservations. It does not apply to camper bookings. The bill includes other special revenue and allocations for a program to fund initiatives that support the operation of homeless shelters. So, there would be zero impact to the General Fund. The existing system used by the State to provide available public funding to shelters that's already set up and in use would also be used for this bill. The Fiscal Note estimates revenues; not cost or expenses; but revenues of \$5,401,617 in the fiscal year '25-'26, and in '26-'27, it's \$23,480,618. So, that money would go into the account and come right back out of the account.

So, as you may have read in the news recently, the only nonprofit shelter for those who are experiencing homelessness in York County has closed its doors. After mobile park housing, shelters are the very last available housing for those people. The lack of adequate financial resources has created a strain on the 40 nonprofit emergency shelters who provide 1,194 beds nightly. Available public funding only provides an operational share per bed of \$7.50 per night when Maine Housing's 2024 shelter cost study found that the average bed cost per night in the State of Maine is \$99. There are approximately 630 hotels in Maine with 32,105 hotel guest rooms. Maine has nearly 10,000 active Airbnb listings, defined as those that have been either booked or available for at least one day in the month.

The two-dollar fee per booking would not significantly impact the cost to tourists, Mainers or other visitors to Maine. However, the funds would significantly support the operation of shelters. Both tourists and Maine citizens will be impacted by encampments. Do we want Maine to become a shanty town? Surely, that would be detrimental to our tourism industry.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I request that everybody support this motion.

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

Representative **QUINT**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I support the pending motion, and on behalf of my Good Friend, the Representative from Pittsfield, I would just like to say this bill requires individuals booking hotel rooms, short-term rentals and camping spots to pay an additional two dollars per stay. With revenues already down in our tourism dollars and the fees for hotel rooms already being high, this is not a good time to start charging more fees that could force individuals visiting Maine to book in New Hampshire, where they do not pay the extra fees.

If we think that this is not going to happen because it's just a one-time per-booking fee, then we need to look at what people are doing when looking to book lodging in Portland. Many people no longer book hotels in Portland like they used to, because additional fees are charged there. When I need to stay in the southern part of the State for a staycation, I now book outside of the city to avoid those additional fees. Mr. Speaker, let's ensure that we do not deter even more people from visiting our great State by charging more fees. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Portland, Representative Lookner.

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

Our State's jails and prisons are overflowing with people experiencing homelessness. Those are the institutions that have become oftentimes the line of first defense for people falling into homelessness, and we're digging deep out of the General Fund to the tune of a couple hundred million a year to support those facilities, when in reality, we should be doing a lot more to support folks in the community and keep them from falling into those systems.

I'm from a community, the City of Portland, where we are proud to dig deep and to help our neighbors who fall into homelessness. We operate a municipally run homeless shelter and there are several other communities in the State who also dig deep and do a lot to provide for the rest of the communities in Maine to; you know, out of our selflessness and desire to help everybody. And what I've noticed in this Legislature is that oftentimes, we're all too happy to look to the big communities who are happy to dig deep, but don't want to do more to, you know, ensure that every community is doing their fair share. We don't want to provide those resources.

So, what better way to ensure that we can provide those resources as shelters are closing down around the State than to put a small fee on short-term rentals, which are driving up the cost of housing, making it much more difficult for working Mainers to stay in their homes. This, to me, is just an equitable, fair way of doing it, and makes a lot of sense to me, so, I'll be in opposition to the motion. I hope you all support me in that.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Fort Kent, Representative Daigle.

Representative **DAIGLE**: Mr. Speaker and Ladies and Gentlemen of the House, let's be truthful and call this what it is. It's not a fee, it's a tax. Thank you.

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

Representative **SUPICA**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just wanted to rise in support of imposing a two-dollar fee, and I'll be voting against the Ought Not to Pass. And with all respect to the Good Representative from Hodgdon's remarks, I would gladly pay an extra two dollars and vacation in Maine, as opposed to spending time in New Hampshire.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Harpswell, Representative Golek.

Representative **GOLEK**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I didn't plan on standing up speaking today, so, I'll be very brief. I believe that this is a really good bill for a lot of reasons, but one of the best reasons is every single year, sometimes more than once, we find ourselves in a position helping fund our shelter system. It saves our State so much money, and it benefits all of us and this is just a good way to start; to start having those funds towards this goal. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Kennebunkport, Representative Gere.

Representative **GERE**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in support of the pending motion, somewhat reluctantly. Because as we all know, Maine's emergency shelters are an important part of how we help people who have lost their housing, and the shelters are struggling. State funding has been flat and the shelters do herculean work to raise private funds to sustain their operations.

The revenue that LD 1476 would produce would go to support the operations of these homeless shelters in the State and it's a promising idea worth considering. Unfortunately, it comes at a challenging time for the hospitality and lodging industry in the State. Lodging and hospitality providers are facing extreme uncertainty, as many Canadian customers have canceled their stays and events in response to the Trump Administration's tariff wars and harmful rhetoric. And most of those providers don't yet know what the coming season will bring.

And so, with that said, I reluctantly urge folks to follow my light and vote in opposition to the pending motion. Thank you.

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

Representative **ROLLINS**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise opposed to this legislation.

I think for those of us that travel a lot, you will see your bills filled with fees that have nothing to do with the taxes on the places that we're staying. And those fees help support the communities and other states to a level that is quite remarkable. My classic story when I talk to people about this is the complex out in Kansas City where the Chiefs and the Royals play in a common parking lot back-to-back, and it's been recently updated over the last decade all on a surcharge of rental cars at the airport. And that's taking advantage of people that travel through their state and their area, and this is what this would do, and we've been under pressure to service and help the homeless people for a long time, and I think it's a very creative way and not a big impact, and I support it. Thank you.

Representative CARLOW of Buxton **REQUESTED** that the Clerk **READ** the Committee Report.

The Clerk **READ** the Committee Report in its entirety.

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. 314

YEA - Adams, Albert, Arata, Ardell, Bagshaw, Bishop, Blier, Boyer D, Bunker, Campbell, Carlow, Caruso, Chapman, Cimino, Cloutier, Collins, Cooper, Crafts, Cray, Daigle, Dill, Doudera, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eder, Farrin, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foley, Foster, Fredericks, Fredette, Gattine, Gere, Gifford, Graham, Greenwood, Haggan, Hall, Hasenfus, Henderson, Hepler, Hymes, Jackson, Javner, Lajoie, Lance, Lavigne, Lee, Libby, Lyman, Mason, Mastraccio, McIntyre, Meyer, Mingo, Morris, Nutting, Olsen, Parry, Paul, Perkins, Poirier, Pomerleau, Quint, Rielly, Roberts, Rudnicki, Runte, Salisbury, Sargent, Sayre, Schmursal-Burgess, Shagoury, Simmons, Smith, Soboleski, Stover, Strout, Swallow, Terry, Thorne, Tuell, Underwood, Wadsworth, Walker, White J, White R, Wood P, Wood S, Woodsome, Mr. Speaker.

NAY - Abdi, Ankeles, Archer, Arford, Beck, Bell, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Cluchey, Copeland, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dodge, Faircloth, Friedmann, Frost, Geiger, Golek, Gramlich, Julia, Kessler, Kuhn, Lookner, Macias, Malon, Mathieson, Matlack, McCabe, Milliken, Mitchell, Montell, Moonen, Murphy, O'Halloran, Osher, Pluecker, Pugh, Rana, Ray, Roeder, Rollins, Sachs, Sato, Sinclair, Skold, Supica, Warren, Webb, Yusuf, Zager.

ABSENT - Babin, Collamore, Crockett, Eaton, Griffin, Guerrette, Lanigan, Lemelin.

Yes, 92; No, 51; Absent, 8; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

92 having voted in the affirmative and 51 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 **LABOR** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-465)** on Bill "An Act to Reinvest in the Pension Funds of the Maine Public Employees Retirement System"

(H.P. 1243) (L.D. 1872)

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

READ.

On motion of Representative ROEDER of Bangor, **TABLED** pending **ACCEPTANCE** of either Report and later today assigned.

Majority Report of the Committee on **LABOR** reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on Bill "An Act to Increase Penalties for Violations Related to Water Well Drilling"

(H.P. 1296) (L.D. 1935)

Signed:

Senators:

TIPPING of Penobscot
BRADSTREET of Kennebec
RAFFERTY of York

Representatives:

ROEDER of Bangor
ARCHER of Saco
BECK of South Portland
COLLINS of Sidney
GEIGER of Rockland
MACIAS of Topsham
SKOLD of Portland
SOBOLESKI of Phillips

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-464)** on same Bill.

Signed:

Representative:

DRINKWATER of Milford

READ.

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

Majority Report of the Committee on **MARINE RESOURCES** reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on Resolve, to Study Stakeholder Input Involving the Appointment of the Commissioner of Marine Resources

(H.P. 628) (L.D. 968)

Signed:

Senators:

TEPLER of Sagadahoc
MOORE of Washington
RENY of Lincoln

Representatives:

HEPLER of Woolwich
EATON of Deer Isle
FARRIN of Jefferson
GIFFORD of Lincoln
RIELLY of Westbrook
SIMMONS of Waldoboro
STROUT of Harrington
THORNE of Carmel
WOOD of Norway

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-462)** on same Resolve.

Signed:

Representative:

GOLEK of Harpswell

READ.

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

Majority Report of the Committee on **MARINE RESOURCES** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-463)** on Bill "An Act to Support Maine's Sea Farmers"

(H.P. 1054) (L.D. 1596)

Signed:

Senators:

TEPLER of Sagadahoc
MOORE of Washington

Representatives:

HEPLER of Woolwich
EATON of Deer Isle
FARRIN of Jefferson
GIFFORD of Lincoln
GOLEK of Harpswell
RIELLY of Westbrook
SIMMONS of Waldoboro
STROUT of Harrington
THORNE of Carmel
WOOD of Norway

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

Signed:

Senator:

RENY of Lincoln

READ.

On motion of Representative HEPLER of Woolwich, the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended** Report was **ACCEPTED**. The Bill was **READ ONCE**. **Committee Amendment "A" (H-463)** 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-463)** and sent for concurrence.

Majority Report of the Committee on **STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-435)** on Bill "An Act to Amend the Laws Governing Public Employee Market Pay Studies and Comprehensive Reviews of the Classification Plan for State Service Positions"

(H.P. 840) (L.D. 1265)

Signed:

Senators:

BALDACCI of Penobscot
BEEBE-CENTER of Knox

Representatives:

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

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

Signed:

Senator:

MARTIN of Oxford

Representatives:

ADAMS of Lebanon

GREENWOOD of Wales

POMERLEAU of Standish

TUELL of East Machias

UNDERWOOD of Presque Isle

READ.

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

The Bill was **READ ONCE**. **Committee Amendment "A" (H-435)** 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-435)** and sent for concurrence.

Majority Report of the Committee on **TAXATION** reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on Bill "An Act to Promote Equitable Property Taxation by Reducing Valuation Based on Nearby Clean Energy Projects"

(H.P. 1236) (L.D. 1852)

Signed:

Senators:

GROHOSKI of Hancock

BICKFORD of Androscoggin

TIPPING of Penobscot

Representatives:

CLOUTIER of Lewiston

CROCKETT of Portland

FRIEDMANN of Bar Harbor

MATLACK of St. George

SAYRE of Kennebunk

SWALLOW of Houlton

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

Signed:

Representatives:

LAVIGNE of Berwick

QUINT of Hodgdon

RUDNICKI of Fairfield

WHITE of Ellsworth

READ.

On motion of Representative CLOUTIER of Lewiston, 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-393)** on Bill "An Act to Create Economic Opportunity for the Wabanaki Nations Through Internet Gaming"

(H.P. 769) (L.D. 1164)

Signed:

Senators:

HICKMAN of Kennebec

DUSON of Cumberland

Representatives:

SUPICA of Bangor

FAIRCLOTH of Bangor

FROST of Belgrade

GRAHAM of North Yarmouth

MALON of Biddeford

TERRY of Gorham

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

Signed:

Senator:

TIMBERLAKE of Androscoggin

Representatives:

BOYER of Poland

CHAPMAN of Auburn

FREDERICKS of Sanford

HYMES of Waldo

READ.

On motion of Representative SUPICA of Bangor, **TABLED** pending **ACCEPTANCE** of either Report and later today assigned.

Majority Report of the Committee on **VETERANS AND LEGAL AFFAIRS** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-413)** on Bill "An Act to Include Harness Racing with Other Sports for Purposes of Sports Wagering" (EMERGENCY)

(H.P. 793) (L.D. 1188)

Signed:

Senators:

HICKMAN of Kennebec

TIMBERLAKE of Androscoggin

Representatives:

BOYER of Poland

CHAPMAN of Auburn

FREDERICKS of Sanford

FROST of Belgrade

GRAHAM of North Yarmouth

HYMES of Waldo

MALON of Biddeford

TERRY of Gorham

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

Signed:

Senator:

DUSON of Cumberland

Representatives:

SUPICA of Bangor

FAIRCLOTH of Bangor

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-413)** 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-413)** 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-414)** on Bill "An Act to Strengthen the Maine Clean Election Act"

(H.P. 1198) (L.D. 1787)

Signed:

Senators:

HICKMAN of Kennebec

DUSON of Cumberland

Representatives:

SUPICA of Bangor

FAIRCLOTH of Bangor

FROST of Belgrade

GRAHAM of North Yarmouth

HYMES of Waldo

MALON of Biddeford

TERRY of Gorham

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

Signed:

Senator:

TIMBERLAKE of Androscoggin

Representatives:

BOYER of Poland

FREDERICKS of Sanford

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-414)** 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-414)** and sent for concurrence.

Eight Members of the Committee on **EDUCATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS** report in Report "A" **Ought Not to Pass** on Bill "An Act to Prohibit School Boards from Implementing or Enforcing Mask Mandates"

(H.P. 953) (L.D. 1461)

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

Three Members of the same Committee report in Report "B" **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-404)** on same Bill.

Signed:

Senator:

LIBBY of Cumberland

Representatives:

HAGGAN of Hampden

LYMAN of Livermore Falls

One Member of the same Committee reports in Report "C" **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "B" (H-405)** on same Bill.

Signed:

Representative:

BAGSHAW of Windham

READ.

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

On further motion of the same Representative, **TABLED** pending the motion of Representative MURPHY of Scarborough to **ACCEPT** Report "A" **Ought Not to Pass** and later today assigned.

CONSENT CALENDAR

First Day

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

(S.P. 327) (L.D. 769) Bill "An Act Regarding Access to Behavioral Health Supports for Adults with Certain Disabilities" Committee on **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-234)**

(S.P. 497) (L.D. 1208) Bill "An Act to Amend the Statutory Balance Limit on the Finance Authority of Maine's Loan Insurance Reserves for General Fund Transfers" Committee on **HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-244)**

(S.P. 515) (L.D. 1286) Resolve, to Establish the Commission to Study Fostering a Positive Economic Environment for Blockchain Technology and Cryptocurrency Committee on **HEALTH COVERAGE, INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-240)**

(S.P. 526) (L.D. 1296) Bill "An Act to Amend the Law Governing Watercraft Franchisor Warranty Reimbursements" Committee on **HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-245)**

(S.P. 592) (L.D. 1451) Bill "An Act to Strengthen Coordination of Community Transportation" Committee on **TRANSPORTATION** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-262)**

(S.P. 594) (L.D. 1453) Resolve, to Establish the Innovative Factory-made Housing Working Group Committee on **HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-243)**

(S.P. 646) (L.D. 1638) Bill "An Act Regarding Disability Retirement Benefits Under the Maine Public Employees Retirement System" Committee on **LABOR** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-261)**

(S.P. 700) (L.D. 1801) Bill "An Act to Make Technical Changes to the Laws Governing the Maine Commission on Public Defense Services" Committee on **JUDICIARY** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-250)**

(S.P. 701) (L.D. 1802) Bill "An Act to Implement the Recommendations of the Maine Commission on Public Defense Services to Clarify When an Indigent Criminal Defendant Is Entitled to Counsel at State Expense" Committee on **JUDICIARY** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-249)**

(S.P. 716) (L.D. 1834) Bill "An Act to Allow Dental Care Providers to Opt In to Receive Claim Reimbursement Payments Made by Virtual Credit Cards" Committee on **HEALTH COVERAGE, INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-239)**

(S.P. 734) (L.D. 1864) Bill "An Act to Facilitate the Reconstruction of Storm-damaged Commercial Fisheries Facilities and Infrastructure" (EMERGENCY) Committee on **HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-246)**

(S.P. 746) (L.D. 1905) Bill "An Act Regarding the Authority of the Office of Professional and Occupational Regulation and the Licensing Boards and Commissions Within That Office to Pursue Complaints" Committee on **HEALTH COVERAGE, INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-238)**

(S.P. 768) (L.D. 1961) Bill "An Act to Clarify the Laws Relating to the Licensure of Certain Facilities by the Department of Health and Human Services" Committee on **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-236)**

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

There being no objection, the Senate Papers were **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED as Amended** in concurrence.

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

ENACTORS

Acts

An Act to Expand the 1998 Special Retirement Plan to Include Employees Who Work for the Office of Chief Medical Examiner

(S.P. 73) (L.D. 137)
(C. "A" S-194)

An Act to Protect Residents of Mobile Home Parks by Amending the Real Estate Transfer Tax

(S.P. 686) (L.D. 1768)
(C. "A" S-216)

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.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

Divided Reports

Majority Report of the Committee on **JUDICIARY** reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on Bill "An Act to Establish Mandatory Minimum Sentences for Gross Sexual Assaults Against Children and Aggravated Sex Trafficking of Children"

(H.P. 232) (L.D. 332)

Signed:

Senators:

CARNEY of Cumberland
TALBOT ROSS of Cumberland

Representatives:

KUHN of Falmouth
BABIN of Fort Fairfield
CARUSO of Caratunk
HENDERSON of Rumford
LEE of Auburn
O'HALLORAN of Brewer
PUGH of Portland
SATO of Gorham
SINCLAIR of Bath

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-461)** on same Bill.

Signed:

Senator:

HAGGAN of Penobscot

Representative:

POIRIER of Skowhegan

READ.

On motion of Representative GRAMLICH of Old Orchard Beach, the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report was **ACCEPTED** and sent for concurrence.

Majority Report of the Committee on **JUDICIARY** reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on Bill "An Act to Remand Individuals with Pending State Probation Violations to the Department of Corrections Following Initial Proceedings"

(H.P. 272) (L.D. 418)

Signed:

Senators:

CARNEY of Cumberland
TALBOT ROSS of Cumberland

Representatives:

KUHN of Falmouth
LEE of Auburn
PUGH of Portland
SATO of Gorham
SINCLAIR of Bath

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-468)** on same Bill.

Signed:

Senator:

HAGGAN of Penobscot

Representatives:

BABIN of Fort Fairfield
CARUSO of Caratunk
HENDERSON of Rumford
O'HALLORAN of Brewer
POIRIER of Skowhegan

READ.

On motion of Representative GRAMLICH of Old Orchard Beach, the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report was **ACCEPTED** and sent for concurrence.

Majority Report of the Committee on **JUDICIARY** reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on Bill "An Act to Expand Use of Electronic Proceedings in the Judicial Branch"

(H.P. 586) (L.D. 921)

Signed:

Senators:

CARNEY of Cumberland
TALBOT ROSS of Cumberland

Representatives:

KUHN of Falmouth
BABIN of Fort Fairfield
CARUSO of Caratunk
HENDERSON of Rumford
LEE of Auburn
O'HALLORAN of Brewer
PUGH of Portland
SATO of Gorham
SINCLAIR of Bath

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-460)** on same Bill.

Signed:

Senator:

HAGGAN of Penobscot

Representative:

POIRIER of Skowhegan

Representative DANA of the Passamaquoddy Tribe - of the House - supports the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report.

READ.

On motion of Representative GRAMLICH of Old Orchard Beach, the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report was **ACCEPTED** and sent for concurrence.

Majority Report of the Committee on **JUDICIARY** reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on Resolve, Directing the Judicial Branch to Authorize the Lease of a Courthouse That Meets Accessibility and Functional Needs in the Town of Newport

(H.P. 589) (L.D. 924)

Signed:

Senators:

CARNEY of Cumberland
TALBOT ROSS of Cumberland

Representatives:

KUHN of Falmouth
BABIN of Fort Fairfield
CARUSO of Caratunk
HENDERSON of Rumford
LEE of Auburn
O'HALLORAN of Brewer
PUGH of Portland
SATO of Gorham
SINCLAIR of Bath

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-459)** on same Resolve.

Signed:

Senator:

HAGGAN of Penobscot

Representative:

POIRIER of Skowhegan

Representative DANA of the Passamaquoddy Tribe - of the House - supports the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report.

READ.

Representative GRAMLICH of Old Orchard Beach moved that the House **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report.

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 am not asking for a Roll Call; however, I would like to report to the Body that I have spoken to both the landlord of the Newport courthouse, I spoke with a member of the Judiciary today; it seems like they are having very positive conversations and I'm looking forward to a deal being announced in the very near future for opening up the Newport Courthouse.

So, I am not asking for a Roll Call on this, and thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Subsequently, the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report was **ACCEPTED** and sent for concurrence.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

The following matters, in the consideration of which the House was engaged at the time of adjournment yesterday, had preference in the Orders of the Day and continued with such preference until disposed of as provided by House Rule 502.

SENATE REPORT - **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-202)** - Committee on **EDUCATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS** on Resolve, to Honor Margaret Chase Smith and Joshua Chamberlain in the National Statuary Hall

(S.P. 656) (L.D. 1648)

- In Senate, Unanimous **OUGHT TO PASS AS AMENDED** Report **READ** and **ACCEPTED** and the Resolve **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED AS AMENDED BY COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" (S-202)**.

TABLED - June 2, 2025 (Till Later Today) by Representative MOONEN of Portland.

PENDING - **ACCEPTANCE OF COMMITTEE REPORT.**

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

The Resolve was **READ ONCE**. **Committee Amendment "A" (S-202)** was **READ** by the Clerk.

The same Representative **PRESENTED House Amendment "A" (H-429)** to **Committee Amendment "A" (S-202)**, which was **READ** by the Clerk and **ADOPTED**.

Committee Amendment "A" (S-202) as Amended by House Amendment "A" (H-429) thereto was **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" (S-202) as Amended by House Amendment "A" (H-429)** thereto in **NON-CONCURRENCE** and sent for concurrence.

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

HOUSE REPORT - **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-295)** - Committee on **AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY** on Bill "An Act Regarding the Authority of Municipalities to Regulate Timber Harvesting"

(H.P. 164) (L.D. 261)

TABLED - May 28, 2025 (Till Later Today) by Representative PLUECKER of Warren.

PENDING - **ACCEPTANCE OF COMMITTEE REPORT.**

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

The Bill was **READ ONCE**. **Committee Amendment "A" (H-295)** was **READ** by the Clerk.

The same Representative **PRESENTED House Amendment "A" (H-500)** to **Committee Amendment "A" (H-295)**, which was **READ** by the Clerk.

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

Representative **PLUECKER**: This Amendment is pretty straightforward. It just makes it a little clearer that; sorry, I have too many Floor Amendments in front of me; but it makes it clearer that the process requirements for a municipal harvest or

municipal timber ordinance need to follow a certain process, and the Maine Forest Service will certify them and ensure that that process is being followed. This is not retroactive in any way affecting any previous ordinances that were put into place before 2026, January 1st.

Subsequently, **House Amendment "A" (H-500)** to **Committee Amendment "A" (H-295)** was **ADOPTED**.

Committee Amendment "A" (H-295) as Amended by House Amendment "A" (H-500) thereto was **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-295) as Amended by House Amendment "A" (H-500)** thereto 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:

Resolve, Directing the Board of Pesticides Control to Evaluate the Impact of Neonicotinoids on Pollinators, Humans and the Environment (EMERGENCY)

(H.P. 858) (L.D. 1323)

(C. "A" H-347)

Which was **TABLED** by Representative PLUECKER of Warren pending **FURTHER CONSIDERATION**.

On motion of Representative PLUECKER of Warren, the House voted to **RECEDE**.

The same Representative **PRESENTED House Amendment "A" (H-507)** to **Committee Amendment "A" (H-347)**, which was **READ** by the Clerk.

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

Representative **PLUECKER**: This is just stripping the emergency from that bill.

Subsequently, **House Amendment "A" (H-507)** to **Committee Amendment "A" (H-347)** was **ADOPTED**.

Committee Amendment "A" (H-347) as Amended by House Amendment "A" (H-507) thereto was **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-347) as Amended by House Amendment "A" (H-507)** thereto in **NON-CONCURRENCE** and sent for concurrence.

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

ENACTORS

Emergency Measure

An Act to Establish a Grant Program to Increase Postsecondary Educational Opportunities for Students with Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities or Autism Spectrum Disorder

(H.P. 10) (L.D. 46)
(C. "A" H-430)

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. 101 voted in favor of the same and 19 against, and accordingly the Bill was **PASSED TO BE ENACTED**, signed by the Speaker and sent to the Senate.

Acts

An Act to Require Reporting on the Uses of Prisoner Segregation

(H.P. 259) (L.D. 405)
(C. "A" H-389)

An Act Requiring That Certain Fees Charged by the Courts for Court-ordered Payments Be Capped and Paid by the Defendant

(H.P. 408) (L.D. 640)
(C. "A" H-452)

An Act to Increase the Maximum Small Claim Limit

(H.P. 422) (L.D. 654)
(C. "A" H-451)

An Act to Report Gender Wage Gaps

(H.P. 506) (L.D. 799)
(C. "A" H-353)

An Act to Support Affordable Housing Development

(H.P. 630) (L.D. 970)
(C. "A" H-449)

An Act Establishing the Retirement Benefit Improvement Fund

(H.P. 650) (L.D. 1003)
(C. "A" H-362)

An Act Concerning Displaced Civilian Federal Firefighters in Maine

(H.P. 724) (L.D. 1105)
(C. "A" H-363)

An Act to Ensure Equitable Access for All Caregivers to Diaper Changing Stations in State Buildings Open to the Public

(H.P. 740) (L.D. 1121)
(C. "A" H-431)

An Act to Make the Maine Redevelopment Land Bank Authority Responsible for the Transfer and Development of State-owned Surplus Land

(H.P. 775) (L.D. 1170)
(C. "A" H-447)

An Act to Require Municipal Reporting on Residential Building Permits, Dwelling Units Permitted and Demolished and Certificates of Occupancy Issued

(H.P. 789) (L.D. 1184)
(C. "A" H-383)

An Act to Establish a Fund and Council to Support Working Waterfronts

(H.P. 820) (L.D. 1245)
(C. "A" H-453)

An Act to Establish the Maine Community Development Financial Institution Fund to Support Small Businesses, Rural Economic Development and Affordable Housing

(H.P. 984) (L.D. 1500)
(C. "A" H-446)

An Act to Decrease the Retirement Contributions Required for Teachers and State Employees

(H.P. 1065) (L.D. 1611)
(C. "A" H-364)

An Act to Amend Certain Fish and Wildlife Laws Related to Landowner Representation Regarding Abandoned Property

(H.P. 1077) (L.D. 1623)
(C. "A" H-440)

An Act to Improve Professional Development for Educational Technicians and School Support Staff

(H.P. 1080) (L.D. 1626)
(C. "A" H-312)

An Act to Streamline Municipal Referenda Recount Initiation

(H.P. 1089) (L.D. 1635)
(C. "A" H-432)

An Act Regarding Notification of Appointment of Legal Representation for Indigent Clients in Custody

(H.P. 1141) (L.D. 1706)
(C. "A" H-458)

An Act to Establish the Loans for Trade Tools Program

(H.P. 1213) (L.D. 1812)
(C. "A" H-448)

An Act to Correct Outdated References Regarding the Maine Human Rights Act

(H.P. 1269) (L.D. 1898)

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, Directing the State Court Administrator to Perform an Inspection and Study of the Rumford Courthouse Building

(H.P. 707) (L.D. 1085)
(C. "A" H-450)

Resolve, to Develop MaineCare Coverage for Doula Services

(H.P. 1008) (L.D. 1523)
(C. "A" H-443)

Resolve, Directing the Department of Labor to Report on Sexual Harassment

(H.P. 1012) (L.D. 1554)
(C. "A" H-352)

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

An Act to Decriminalize Personal Possession of Therapeutic Amounts of Psilocybin for Adults

(H.P. 663) (L.D. 1034)

Was reported by the Committee on **Engrossed Bills** as truly and strictly engrossed.

On motion of Representative JAVNER of Chester, was **SET ASIDE**.

The same Representative **REQUESTED** a roll call on **PASSAGE TO BE ENACTED**.

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

On motion of Representative MOONEN of Portland, **TABLED** pending **PASSAGE TO BE ENACTED** and later today assigned.

An Act to Strengthen Maine's Workforce Through Certified Preapprenticeship Training Programs

(H.P. 736) (L.D. 1117)
(C. "A" H-388)

Was reported by the Committee on **Engrossed Bills** as truly and strictly engrossed.

On motion of Representative MOONEN of Portland, was **SET ASIDE**.

The same Representative **REQUESTED** a roll call on **PASSAGE TO BE ENACTED**.

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

An Act to Provide for the Direct Shipment of Spirits to Consumers

(H.P. 1172) (L.D. 1754)
(C. "A" H-385)

Was reported by the Committee on **Engrossed Bills** as truly and strictly engrossed.

On motion of Representative JAVNER of Chester, was **SET ASIDE**.

The same Representative **REQUESTED** a roll call on **PASSAGE TO BE ENACTED**.

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

On motion of Representative MOONEN of Portland, **TABLED** pending **PASSAGE TO BE ENACTED** and later today assigned.

CONSENT CALENDAR

First Day

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

(H.P. 295) (L.D. 441) Bill "An Act to Amend the Laws Regarding Fish and Wildlife" Committee on **INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-478)**

(H.P. 636) (L.D. 976) Resolve, to Restore Accessible Public Transportation to Swan Island in Perkins Township Committee on **INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-479)**

(H.P. 646) (L.D. 999) Bill "An Act to Include Employees of the Maine Indian Tribal-State Commission in the State's Group Health Plan" Committee on **HEALTH COVERAGE, INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-482)**

(H.P. 816) (L.D. 1241) Bill "An Act to Establish the Make Change for Wildlife Program to Support the Maine Endangered and Nongame Wildlife Fund" Committee on **INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-480)**

(H.P. 939) (L.D. 1430) Bill "An Act to Promote the Welfare of Disabled Veterans Through the Transfer of Moose Permits" Committee on **INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-481)**

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

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

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

ENACTORS

Emergency Measure

An Act to Remove Certain Cost-of-living Adjustment Restrictions for Retired Members of the Law Enforcement Bargaining Unit Who Are 65 Years of Age or Older

(S.P. 439) (L.D. 1021)
(C. "A" S-255)

Was reported by the Committee on **Engrossed Bills** as truly and strictly engrossed.

Representative LIBBY of Auburn **REQUESTED** a roll call on **PASSAGE TO BE ENACTED**.

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 Passage to be Enacted. All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

This being an emergency measure, a two-thirds vote of all the members elected to the House being necessary, a total was taken.

ROLL CALL NO. 315

YEA - Abdi, Ankeles, Archer, Arford, Beck, Bell, Bishop, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Eder, Faircloth, Farrin, Faulkingham, Friedmann, Frost, Gattine, Geiger, Gere, Golek, Graham, Gramlich, Hasenfus, Henderson, Hepler, Jackson, Julia, Kessler, Kuhn, 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, Walker, Warren, Webb, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

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

ABSENT - Babin, Collamore, Crockett, Eaton, Griffin, Lanigan.

Yes, 82; No, 63; Absent, 6; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

82 having voted in the affirmative and 63 voted in the negative, with 6 being absent, and accordingly the Bill **FAILED PASSAGE TO BE ENACTED** and was sent to the Senate.

Acts

An Act to Continue Funding for the Health Insurance Consumer Assistance Program

(S.P. 376) (L.D. 843)
(C. "A" S-241)

An Act to Update Language on Setback Variances for Single-family Dwellings

(S.P. 474) (L.D. 1143)
(C. "A" S-248)

An Act to Amend the Dirigo Business Incentives Program

(S.P. 658) (L.D. 1664)
(C. "A" S-205)

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.

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

An Act to Enact the Agricultural Employees Concerted Activity Protection Act

(S.P. 272) (L.D. 588)

Was reported by the Committee on **Engrossed Bills** as truly and strictly engrossed.

On motion of Representative MORRIS of Turner, was **SET ASIDE**.

The same Representative **REQUESTED** a roll call on **PASSAGE TO BE ENACTED**.

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 Passage to be Enacted. All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

ROLL CALL NO. 316

YEA - Abdi, Ankeles, Archer, Arford, Beck, Bell, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Faircloth, Farrin, Friedmann, Frost, Gattine, Geiger, Gere, Golek, Graham, Gramlich, Hasenfus, Hepler, Julia, Kessler, Kuhn, 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, Bagshaw, Bishop, Blier, Boyer D, Bunker, Campbell, Carlow, Caruso, Chapman, Cimino, Collins, Cooper, Cray, Daigle, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eder, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foley, Foster, Fredericks, Fredette, Gifford, Greenwood, Guerrette, Haggan, Hall, Henderson, Hymes, Jackson, Javner, Lajoie, 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, Underwood, Wadsworth, Walker, White J, White R, Wood P, Wood S, Woodsome.

ABSENT - Babin, Collamore, Crockett, Eaton, Griffin, Lanigan.

Yes, 74; No, 71; Absent, 6; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

74 having voted in the affirmative and 71 voted in the negative, with 6 being absent, and accordingly the Bill was **PASSED TO BE ENACTED**, signed by the Speaker and sent to the Senate.

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-439)** on Bill "An Act to Establish Net Neutrality"

(H.P. 355) (L.D. 536)

Signed:

Senator:

LAWRENCE of York

Representatives:

SACHS of Freeport

FOSTER of Dexter

GEIGER of Rockland

KESSLER of South Portland

MCINTYRE of Lowell

RUNTE of York

WARREN of Scarborough

WEBB of Durham

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

Signed:

Senator:

HARRINGTON of York

Representatives:

PAUL of Winterport

WADSWORTH of Hiram

READ.

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

Representative FOSTER of Dexter **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**: 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. 317

YEA - Abdi, Ankeles, Archer, Arford, Beck, Bell, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Eder, Faircloth, Farrin, Foster, 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, 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, Swallow, Terry, Warren, Webb, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

NAY - Adams, Albert, Arata, Ardell, Bagshaw, Bishop, Blier, Boyer D, Campbell, Carlow, Caruso, Chapman, Cimino, Collins, Cooper, Cray, Daigle, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foley, Fredericks, Fredette, Gifford, Greenwood, Guerrette, Haggan, Hall, 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, Thorne, Tuell, Underwood, Wadsworth, Walker, White J, White R, Wood P, Wood S, Woodsome.

ABSENT - Babin, Collamore, Crockett, Eaton, Griffin, Lanigan.

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-439)** was **READ** by the Clerk.

Representative KESSLER of South Portland **PRESENTED House Amendment "A" (H-506)** to **Committee Amendment "A" (H-439)**, which was **READ** by the Clerk and **ADOPTED**.

Committee Amendment "A" (H-439) as Amended by House Amendment "A" (H-506) thereto was **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-439) as Amended by House Amendment "A" (H-506)** thereto 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-438)** on Bill "An Act to Enhance the Coordination and Effectiveness of Integrated Distribution Grid Planning"

(H.P. 1153) (L.D. 1726)

Signed:

Senator:

LAWRENCE of York

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 Bill.

Signed:

Senator:

HARRINGTON of York

Representatives:

FOSTER of Dexter

MCINTYRE of Lowell

PAUL of Winterport

WADSWORTH of Hiram

READ.

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

Representative FOSTER of Dexter **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: 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. 318

YEA - Abdi, Ankeles, Archer, Arford, Beck, Bell, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Faircloth, Farrin, Friedmann, Frost, Gattine, Geiger, Gere, Golek, Graham, Gramlich, Hasenbus, 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, Supica, Terry, Warren, Webb, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

NAY - Adams, Albert, Arata, Ardell, Bagshaw, Bishop, Blier, Boyer D, Campbell, Carlow, Caruso, Chapman, Cimino, Collins, Cooper, Cray, Daigle, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eder, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foley, Foster, Fredericks, Fredette, Gifford, Greenwood, Guerrette, Haggan, Hall, 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, Underwood, Wadsworth, Walker, White J, White R, Wood P, Wood S, Woodsome.

ABSENT - Babin, Collamore, Crockett, Eaton, Griffin, Lanigan, Stover.

Yes, 75; No, 69; Absent, 7; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

75 having voted in the affirmative and 69 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-438)** 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-438)** and sent for concurrence.

Majority Report of the Committee on **ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-422)** on Bill "An Act to Prohibit Lodging Establishments from Providing Single-use Plastic Containers"

(H.P. 1289) (L.D. 1928)

Signed:

Senators:

TEPLER of Sagadahoc
BRENNER of Cumberland

Representatives:

GRAMLICH of Old Orchard Beach
ANKELES of Brunswick
BELL of Yarmouth
BRIDGEO of Augusta
OSHER of Orono
RIELLY of Westbrook

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

Signed:

Senator:

MARTIN of Oxford

Representatives:

CAMPBELL of Orrington
SCHMERSAL-BURGESS of Mexico
SOBOLESKI of Phillips
WOODSOME of Waterboro

READ.

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

Representative CAMPBELL of Orrington **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 Phillips, Representative Soboleski.

Representative **SOBOLESKI**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen. I rise in strong opposition of LD 1928, a bill that, while well-intended, imposes unnecessary restrictions on Maine hospitality industry and fails to account for practical business operations and consumer needs. This legislation seeks to prohibit lodging establishments from providing single-use plastic containers, a measure that disregards the realities of our tourism and hospitality sector. While environmental protection is a priority we all share, this bill fails to offer viable alternatives and places undue burdens on businesses that rely on cost-effective, sanitary and convenient packaging solutions.

Why is LD 1928 problematic? First, it overlooks the importance of sanitation and public health. Single-use plastic containers serve a critical role in preventing contamination, particularly in food service and personal care products provided by hotels. Reusable alternatives require extensive cleaning protocols, which include water and energy consumption, potentially offsetting the intended environmental benefits of this legislation.

Second, it places Maine's hospitality industry at a competitive disadvantage. Tourists expect convenience and accessibility when staying at a lodging establishment. If Maine businesses are forced to eliminate single-use options, visitors may choose accommodations in neighboring states that do not impose such restrictions. This bill risks harming Maine's tourism industry, which is a cornerstone of the State's financial stability.

Finally, LD 1928 lacks a clear implementation strategy. The bill does not provide funding or support for businesses transitioning away from single-use plastics, nor does it outline feasible alternatives that meet both environmental and operational needs without a structured plan. This legislation creates confusion and financial strain for businesses that are already navigating economic challenges.

Mr. Speaker, the Department came in and testified they're not even going to bother patrolling this in any way. They will be a reactive, not a proactive, and quite frankly, there's really nothing that they're going to do about it. And being reactionary only, it will have to be people that are reporting them for using a little bottle of shampoo. I, for sanitary and disease reasons, and many others, am not comfortable using a big bottle that's a share-type bottle, regardless of what the intent of it is. I prefer my little, clean, easy and efficient ones, and I think that most people do as well. Thank you.

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

Representative **CAMPBELL**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is really a major public policy interference with the option for businesses to provide a service to their customers. We just heard about the sanitary issue. Good businesses who are supplying this product to their customers is already finding that the large refillable bottles are saving them money, but to take away the choice of the small individual is just Augusta interfering with an option to provide the best service. We must leave this option up to the businesses. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Camden, Representative Doudera.

Representative **DOUDERA**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this bill arises from the ongoing serious threat that plastics pose to our health and to the health of our oceans. While we're doing our best to recycle plastics that can be recycled, we know that plastics break down into microplastics and nanoplastics, and they never go away.

A recent study paints a chilling picture. Researchers have found that the amount of microplastics in the brains of diseased people has doubled; doubled; from 2016 to 2024. The average amount of microplastics now present is enough to fill a plastic teaspoon. The same is true for the ocean fisheries that our Maine economy depends on; lobsters, oysters, alewives and more; all have disturbing amounts of microplastics in their bodies.

The plastic problem is not someplace else; it's here, and the best thing that we can do is reduce our use of plastics, period. This bill aims to chip away at this growing problem by prohibiting hotels and motels from providing single-use plastic bottles of shampoo and the like. And you might say, well, it's just a few plastic bottles, what difference does that make? A conservative estimate is that this bill could eliminate as many as 73 million single-use plastic bottles per year from Maine's waste stream. As we struggle to recycle our way out of the catastrophe of microplastics, that is meaningful action.

Mr. Speaker, you might now know that my husband and I moved to Camden in the '80s and opened a bed and breakfast inn, and we ran that for many years before selling it. When I wasn't making beds or baking blueberry muffins, I spent way too much time dealing with the little plastic bottles of shampoo, conditioner and body lotion that we provided in the guest bathrooms. We tried to reuse them by refilling them, but when I do the math, I figured that during our high season, I disposed of 33 bottles a day, or close to 5,000 plastic bottles a year. We owned that inn for 12 years, so, not only are the environmental effects troubling; that was 60,000 pieces of plastic; but what

about the expense? I wish I had thought of bulk containers back then.

Many lodging owners have already discovered that moving away from single-use plastic makes good environmental and economic sense. One innkeeper testified in our Committee that after switching to reusable toiletry containers in 2019, his business has reduced expenditures on toiletry containers by more than 50%, while reducing plastic container waste by more than 90%. Businesses will save money with this bill, and the provisions in LD 1928 give them more than enough time to make the transition. Lodgings with 50 or more units will have until 2030. Those with 13 to 49 units will have until 2032, and small establishments, such as my good friend from Orrington brought up, establishments with 12 or fewer units are exempted from this bill. Mr. Speaker, this bill is a win for the environment, a win for business and a win for human health, because it will reduce microplastics.

What about sanitary concerns, as we've heard? I am reminded of the arguments around our plastic bag ban, the notion that there is a danger with reusable bags. Just like that argument, the fear of infection from anything except for individual plastic bottles is a real red herring. Big chains like Marriott, Hilton and Hyatt have already moved away from single-use plastic containers. Surely, they're concerned with their customers' health. Hotel rooms are full of amenities that consecutive guests use, things like mini fridges, coffee machines, irons, ironing boards, to name just a few. No one suggests that these items should be single-use. Mr. Speaker, I would argue that suggesting that this is somehow dangerous to consumers is way off the mark.

We are Vacationland, Mr. Speaker, and people choose to live here and visit here because of our quiet lakes, clean rivers, majestic mountains and curving coastline. This seemingly small step in LD 1928 sends a big message, that we take our environment seriously. That we take the health of our oceans seriously. Being free from single-use plastic in our lodging places reinforces our very special, environmentally conscious brand. Mr. Speaker and Colleagues of the House, I hope you will join with me to pass LD 1928. 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. 319

YEA - Abdi, Ankeles, Archer, Arford, Beck, Bell, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, 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, Montell, Moonen, Murphy, O'Halloran, Osher, Pluecker, Pugh, Rana, Ray, Rielly, Roeder, Rollins, Sachs, Salisbury, Sargent, Sato, Sayre, Shagoury, Sinclair, Skold, Supica, Terry, Warren, Webb, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

NAY - Adams, Albert, Arata, Ardell, Bagshaw, Bishop, Blier, Boyer D, Bunker, Campbell, Carlow, Caruso, Chapman, Cimino, Collins, Cooper, Cray, Daigle, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eder, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foley, Foster, Fredericks, Fredette, Gifford, Greenwood, Guerrette, Haggan, Hall, Henderson, Hymes, Jackson, Javner, Lance, Lavigne, Lemelin, Lyman, Mason, McIntyre, Mingo, Morris, Nutting, Olsen, Parry, Paul, Perkins, Poirier, Pomerleau, Quint, Roberts, Rudnicki, Schmursal-Burgess, Simmons, Smith, Soboleski, Strout,

Swallow, Thorne, Tuell, Underwood, Wadsworth, Walker, White J, White R, Wood P, Wood S, Woodsome.

ABSENT - Babin, Collamore, Crockett, Eaton, Griffin, Lanigan, Libby, Runte, Stover.

Yes, 72; No, 70; Absent, 9; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

72 having voted in the affirmative and 70 voted in the negative, with 9 being absent, and accordingly the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended** Report was **ACCEPTED**.

The Bill was **READ ONCE**. **Committee Amendment "A" (H-422)** 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-422)** and sent for concurrence.

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

Majority Report of the Committee on **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-433)** on Bill "An Act to Amend the Maine Death with Dignity Act to Ensure Access by Qualified Patients"

(H.P. 381) (L.D. 613)

Signed:

Senators:

INGWERSEN of York
MOORE of Washington
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:

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. I rise today in opposition to LD 613, a bill that would remove the waiting period for physician-assisted suicide.

This is not an abstract issue for me. I have been diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer, a terminal illness. I am living this reality. But I stand before you today not in despair,

but in hope. Hope that we can preserve the dignity and meaning of life, even in the shadow of death; hope that this Body will reject a policy that trades patience and compassion for expedience.

LD 613 removes the very pause that gives patients, families and physicians the opportunity to reflect, to seek counsel, to consider alternative palliative options and, yes, to hold on to hope. That waiting period is not just a bureaucratic formality. It is a safeguard. For some, it is a space where life regains its meaning.

We are whitewashing the terminology around physician-assisted suicide, calling it medical aid in dying or end-of-life choice in an attempt to ease our consciences. But changing the language doesn't change the truth. We are still asking doctors, whose oath is to heal, to participate in ending life. According to Johns Hopkins Medical Center, physician-assisted death raises profound ethical questions for health professionals. It challenges the fundamental role of the physician as healer and the trust between patient and provider. This trust is the cornerstone of care. When we blur the lines between healing and harming, we do more than alter policy; we alter the very soul of medicine.

I want it to be known, when I take my last natural breath, that I lived my life to the fullest. That my value didn't diminish with my diagnosis. That my suffering, while real, never eclipsed my purpose. Every morning I wake up, I get to look into the eyes of those I love and I am reminded that life is still beautiful, still worth fighting for. Let us not respond to suffering with surrender. Let us respond with compassion, with presence, with resources for pain management, with palliative care, with love. Let us give patients more than a path to death, let us give them a reason to keep living, even on the hardest of days.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, this is personal, but it also profoundly moral. Please vote no on LD 613.

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

Representative **FOSTER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. I stand once again in opposition to this motion on this bill, as I did when the original bill came before us.

Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that most of us in this room have experienced the loss of someone who suffered through a long illness. One that doctors and even the patient may have known had a certain ending, but may not have known when that end would come. I lost a sister in this way before she was 50, and I can't imagine not having those last days with her, but most especially, not having her mother have the opportunity to spend those days with her, knowing what the end was.

Mr. Speaker, when I spoke against this bill originally, and it was a dark day for me and many of the constituents that I represent in the State of Maine when this bill passed, I mentioned one other issue. I had a very close relative that spent nine years in the nursing home, and I spoke about families who may be looking at such a situation, where that the estate, if you will, is paying for what is now well over \$100,000 a year for that stay. And when they look at whoever the guardian happens to be, it looks at this and says, here's an option, I shudder to think what families may come to in that situation. And now, this bill would remove one of the very few safeguards, you might call it, that gives people, may give a family member from further away a chance to arrive and say, no, wait a minute, they wouldn't want that.

Mr. Speaker, I'll leave it to others to think of the possibilities in their own lives or that of their relatives where; that this might not be the answer that they would want in spite of some of those

around them that might want this. And I would ask that everyone follow my light and vote down the pending motion.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Madawaska, Representative Albert.

Representative **ALBERT**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to keep this relatively short. We all proclaim we are Christians. Let's act like some. 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. I proudly co-sponsored the Maine Death with Dignity Act in 2019 during the 129th Maine Legislature. The act provides qualified terminally ill patients with the option to receive life-ending medication in order to have control over their dying circumstances. The medication shortens the dying process from several days to several hours.

Now approaching five years of successful implementation, Maine's Death with Dignity Act has provided 218 dying Mainers with the control they wanted at the end. Since implementation, nine Mainers have died during the administrative waiting period that follows initial qualification, because their bodies declined too rapidly. These people met all of the qualifications to receive the medication, and their physicians were prepared to prescribe it for them, but because the act requires a waiting period of 17 days once a patient is determined to meet the requirements, they could not help their patients.

It's very important to understand that before the waiting period even begins, patients, their physician and a second physician in consultation have had many discussions about qualifying while the patient's disease progresses. Patients come to the decision after weeks, months and even years of illness and decline. But the official qualification clock doesn't start ticking until the patient has met all of the following criteria: They are an adult resident of Maine; that they have a terminal disease with a six-month prognosis, clinically confirmed by two physicians, that's the same criteria as hospice; that they have the capacity to make informed decisions, they are decisionally capable and that they are still physically capable of self-administration. It's only when these criteria are met that the waiting period begins.

Imagine you are a qualified terminally ill patient who wants to receive the medication, but you have to wait a minimum of 17 more days to receive it. Your condition is declining. You are suffering. And your physician says, 'I'm sorry, I can't write the prescription for another week.' Now imagine you are that patient's physician. Your patient is qualified for the medication, but you have to wait for the mandated period to end before prescribing. Your patient is declining, and in your experience, you know they have entered that phase where death is imminent. You hear yourself saying, 'I'm sorry, I can't write the prescription until we have met the waiting period.' Your clinical experience tells you this patient will suffer terribly and her wish for a peaceful, dignified death on her own terms will simply not come to pass.

It is precisely for this scenario that LD 613 comes before this Body. In every other health care scenario, physicians have a full range of tools and clinical experience to guide the decisions they make for the best possible care they can give. It's only in this instance that the law has unwittingly tied the physician's hands. That was not anticipated in 2019, nor was it ever intended that qualified patients be unable to access the Maine's Death with Dignity Act simply because they'd run out of time.

The nine patients we know of, and the unknown handful of others who never start the formal process because they already know they don't have enough time, all die without the support they seek. And their physicians, whose hands we have tied, cannot exercise their best clinical judgment to prescribe when it is very clear their patient will not be able to negotiate the 17-day administrative waiting period. LD 613 corrects this problem. If a qualified patient's deteriorating condition is such that their physician medically determines it is in the best interest of that patient not to endure the waiting period, they may waive any portion or all of the administrative waiting period to ensure their dying patient has access they seek for the aid in dying. In this instance, this Amendment will require that the waiver of the waiting period be documented in their qualified patient's medical record, along with all of the other required documentation. That's it. It's that simple. Because this is simple. This is straightforward and it corrects a rare situation that should never have existed in the first place.

Mr. Speaker, some of us will not know the gift of a long, healthy life. Some will face the grim knowledge of precisely how we will die. Some will face the reality of untreatable disease and know the agony of progressive terminal illness. Medical aid in dying offers decisionally capable adults an option to avoid prolonged suffering, a choice to reject the notion they must be passive victims to a frequently brutal disease process that strips them of their dignity and autonomy. Two hundred and eighteen Mainers over the last five years have found the peace that accompanies the ability to make this end-of-life decision, and your support for this motion will enable those, like the nine whose wishes went unfulfilled, to find that peace. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Fort Kent, Representative Daigle.

Representative **DAIGLE**: Mr. Speaker, and Ladies and Gentlemen of the House, we just heard some statistics, but since its inception, 314 prescriptions were written. Sixty-nine percent of the time, they carried through with the law that allows them to end their life, but 31% elected to not do that. I believe that if we take away the time to wait, some people are going to make a choice that they would not have otherwise. And I stand in opposition to this. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Kittery, Representative Mathieson.

Representative **MATHIESON**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My apologies. This bill is deeply personal to me and my family.

My father died on August 1st, 2022. His death was extremely difficult. My dad was my hero. He was a very strong, independent man, New Englander. He retired at the early age of 82. He took care of everyone around him. He loved life. He loved and planted his seven acres of land. He snow-blown his driveway all winter long and, much to his family's chagrin, he shoveled off his rooftop every year in the wintertime, up until 81 years of age.

My dad, when he got sick, decided he wanted to go home and have home hospice. We honored his choice, and unfortunately, there was a precipitous change in his care and we were unable to manage his pain. The last 48 hours of his life were extremely excruciating, sad, painful and much more prolonged than they needed to be, and they were not his wishes. It was a very inhumane death for my father. If this law were enacted, he could have worked with his provider to move forward with what his wishes were.

I appreciate you listening to my story. This waiting period for qualified patients really would've made an immense difference for my family and my father. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Representative **ROEDER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my father was diagnosed with mesothelioma in 2016, passed away in 2017. My mother, with pancreatic cancer. They were very different individuals. My dad wanted to fight till his dying breath. He passed away in the hospital with in-hospital hospice respite care. My mother was not the kind of person who wanted to stick around if things got bad. She died in her sleep, though. My best friend died at 37, and the last email I got from her was, 'I'm going to take the summer off from chemo, but in the meantime, I'm saving my pain pills because I want to go out the way that feels best for me.'

I would never make that choice, and I would never want any of my loved ones to have to make that choice, but I want them to have the choice. It's not my decision. I shouldn't get to decide. So, I will be supporting this.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Bar Harbor, Representative Friedmann.

Representative **FRIEDMANN**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The teachings of my Jewish tradition are very clear that suicide is never condoned for any reason. And I would hope that I would never have to be in that position, or that anyone in my family would have to be in that position, confronting a decision like that. But I believe that my role as a Representative is to allow the options for my constituents to decide their own end-of-life and the quality of those final moments with their family, and that's why I'm going to vote in favor of this. 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. 320

YEA - Ankeles, Archer, Arford, Beck, Bell, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, Cray, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Faircloth, Farrin, Fredericks, 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, Pugh, Rana, Ray, Rielly, Roberts, Roeder, Rollins, Sachs, Salisbury, Sargent, Sato, Sayre, Shagoury, Sinclair, Skold, Supica, Terry, Warren, Webb, White R, Woodsome, Zager.

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

ABSENT - Abdi, Babin, Collamore, Crockett, DeBrito, Eaton, Golek, Griffin, Lanigan, Libby, Runte, Stover, Yusuf.

Yes, 74; No, 64; Absent, 13; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

74 having voted in the affirmative and 64 voted in the negative, with 13 being absent, and accordingly the Majority Ought to Pass as Amended Report was **ACCEPTED**.

The Bill was **READ ONCE**. **Committee Amendment "A" (H-433)** 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-433)** and sent for concurrence.

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

Majority Report of the Committee on **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES** reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on Bill "An Act to Require a Person to Be a United States Citizen to Receive State or Local Financial Assistance and to Ensure Municipal Compliance with Federal Immigration Laws"

(H.P. 1142) (L.D. 1707)

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 to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-444)** 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 Not to Pass** Report.

Representative JAVNER of Chester **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 Wales, Representative Greenwood.

Representative **GREENWOOD**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wore my winter tie today to try to lower the temperature in here, because it is still warm on this side of the aisle.

The bill before us is an act to require a person to be a United States citizen to receive State or local financial assistance and ensure municipal compliance with federal immigration laws. This was an effort to put Maine people first. This legislation was grounded in two fundamental principles: the responsible stewardship of public resources and the importance of upholding the rule of law. It aims to ensure that the State and local financial assistance funded by taxpayers is reserved for individuals who are citizens of the United States.

The first provision of this bill would require that individuals be U.S. citizens before qualifying for State or local financial

assistance programs. These programs, whether related to housing or general welfare, are designed to serve those who contribute and who participate lawfully in our civil society. Prioritizing citizens helps preserve limited resources for those they were intended to serve and ensure that assistance reaches those who are most aligned with our legal and economic framework.

The second provision of this bill seeks to ensure that municipalities across the State comply with existing federal immigration laws. The federal immigration system establishes the legal parameters under which individuals may enter and remain in this country. This bill in no way seeks to vilify immigrants. On the contrary, Mr. Speaker, it supports a lawful and orderly immigration process by reinforcing distinction between legal and unlawful presence. It respects those who have followed the proper legal channels and underscores the importance of fairness and accountability in the administration of public programs.

Unfortunately, the Committee didn't pass my bill favorably. However, I was pleased to see that there was an option available. And if we could vote down this motion, the Amendment that was proposed would be to change the requirement that individual be a citizen of the United States to be a person who is lawfully present. That is a distinct difference, and I would encourage my colleagues to vote no on the pending motion, so we can vote on the Ought to Pass as Amended. 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. This bill would restrict both State and local funds from being issued as financial assistance to any person who is not a citizen of the United States. The bill redefines 'eligible person' for the General Assistance program as a person who is a, quote, "citizen of the United States," and removes eligibility for any noncitizen who would otherwise be eligible by completing an affidavit attesting to the pursuit of a lawful process. LD 1707 would also remove eligibility for persons who are lawfully present but not U.S. citizens. This bill implements a penalty in the form of withholding reimbursement for any General Assistance reimbursement request and State revenue sharing to any municipality which has a policy or ordinance that restricts or prohibits the exchange of information with ICE regarding the citizenship or immigration status of any individual.

Mr. Speaker, General Assistance is a safety net that exists to prevent human suffering and to stabilize vulnerable individuals and families. The human beings receiving this assistance are legally present in the United States, including asylum seekers and others in the process of obtaining legal status. These individuals are not undocumented; they are following a legal process established under federal law. Penalizing municipalities for offering them shelter, food, medicine or basic care is not only unjust, it is fundamentally un-American.

It is also worth noting the irony present in this legislation. While its proponents claim to champion fiscal responsibility, the bill would jeopardize the very resources our municipalities use to maintain essential public services, from emergency response to public health. I will never vote in favor of that. I couldn't. Mr. Speaker, denying access to basic needs; vulnerable people, children; targeting people and punishing municipalities means causing hardship for the people I represent, the people we all represent and would negatively impact the economic health and stability of this State. I ask you to follow my light.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Belfast, Representative Dodge.

Representative **DODGE**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Men and Women of the House. There are several revered books that exist in this world that encourage every human to demonstrate compassion and kindness to all and to treat others as they would like to be treated. Always. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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. 321

YEA - Abdi, Ankeles, Archer, Arford, Beck, Bell, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Faircloth, Farrin, Friedmann, Frost, Gattine, Geiger, Gere, Golek, Graham, Gramlich, Hasenus, 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, Sachs, Salisbury, Sargent, Sato, Sayre, Shagoury, Sinclair, Skold, Supica, Terry, Warren, Webb, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

NAY - Adams, Albert, Arata, Ardell, Babin, Bagshaw, Bishop, Blier, Boyer D, Campbell, Carlow, Caruso, Chapman, Cimino, Collins, Cooper, Cray, Daigle, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eder, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foley, Foster, Fredericks, Fredette, Gifford, Greenwood, Guerrette, Haggan, Hall, 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, Underwood, Wadsworth, Walker, White J, White R, Wood P, Wood S, Woodsome.

ABSENT - Collamore, Crockett, Eaton, Griffin, Lanigan, Libby, Runte, Stover.

Yes, 74; No, 69; Absent, 8; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

74 having voted in the affirmative and 69 voted in the negative, with 8 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 **HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT** reporting **Ought to Pass** on Bill "An Act to Protect Recipients of Public Assistance from Housing Discrimination"

(H.P. 665) (L.D. 1036)

Signed:

Senator:

CURRY of Waldo

Representatives:

GERE of Kennebunkport

GOLEK of Harpswell

JULIA of Waterville

MALON of Biddeford

YUSUF of Portland

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

Signed:

Senator:

BENNETT of Oxford

Representatives:

COLLAMORE of Pittsfield

EDER of Waterboro

MINGO of Calais

READ.

Representative GERE of Kennebunkport moved that the House **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought to Pass** Report.

Representative ARATA of New Gloucester **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: The Chair recognizes the Representative from New Gloucester, Representative Arata.

Representative **ARATA**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, you know that I'm an advocate for affordable housing. I even Co-sponsored LD 2003 with you in the 130th Legislature. But this bill will discourage the creation of affordable housing.

Discrimination against recipients of assistance is already illegal, but this bill will force landlords to sign a contract and lease, whether they want to or not. Every rejected tenant applicant with a voucher will complain to the Maine Human Rights Commission, costing housing providers 10s of thousands of dollars in legal fees to merely defend themselves against complaints, even if those complaints are later dismissed. This bill will cause landlords to remove their properties from the rental market.

I've owned and managed rental housing since 2007, and I've accepted Section 8 vouchers for tenants with extremely good references, and I hope that my experience will assist you in your deliberations. Now, there are legitimate business reasons why a housing provider may not want to participate in government programs. The biggest reason is that the Section 8 program requires a landlord to sign a lease that includes a 13-page Federal Housing Assistance Payments contract. The Housing Authority can get out of the lease and stop paying rent with no notice, but it's very difficult for the landlord to get out of this long-term lease, even with extremely disruptive tenants.

Try to put yourself in the shoes of the vast majority of good tenants who just want quiet enjoyment of their living space. Imagine living on the other side of the wall from someone who's threatening and disruptive. You can't send your kids outside to play, you can't get any sleep at night because of their noise, and even though smoking's against the rules, the neighbor still smokes and your kids get asthma. So, you tell your landlord that you really don't want to move, because you can't afford to and your kids want to stay in their school, but you cannot continue to live this way. You're exhausted, living in fear and your family deserves a safe apartment. Your landlord sympathizes with you and wants to evict the disruptive neighbor. And under a month-to-month lease, the landlord can give the disruptive and threatening tenant a 30-day notice to move. The landlord doesn't have to tell the threatening neighbor that it's because of a complaint, because that would put the good tenant in danger. Now, remember the landlord can go home every night, but the good tenant shares a wall with a dangerous and disruptive person. In order to get out of the Section 8 lease, the landlord can't testify on behalf of the tenant, because that would be hearsay. The good tenant will have to take a day off from work,

get child care and go to court. She'll have to face the scary neighbor and testify about what he's done, and then they both have to go back to the building that they share. She'll have to live on the other side of the wall from him and share a driveway and yard with him for weeks while the eviction process continues. Even after the eviction is complete, he'll know exactly where she lives, and she and her family won't be safe. But what's more likely to happen is that the good tenant will be too intimidated to testify in court and she'll have to move, and the same thing will happen to the next family that moves into the building, and the next.

Now, remember, if a landlord tries to go to court without the tenant and testify without actually seeing or hearing the bad behavior, the eviction would be dismissed. The good tenant would be in danger, because the threatening tenant would know that she complained. Now, landlords make more money when tenants stay long term. We don't want to evict them. We don't want them to move. And I rarely evict tenants, but when I do, I'd rather that the threatening and disruptive tenant be mad at me instead of at their neighbors, because I care about my tenants and I don't want to put them at risk.

Now, this bill is well-intentioned, but not every housing provider has the ability to deal with Section 8 contract requirements or the complex requirements of the multitude of different federal, State and local programs they'd be required to comply with. This bill will harm more people than it helps. So, please, put the vast majority of good tenants first, encourage people to put their properties on the rental market and oppose this bill. Thank you.

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

Representative **QUINT**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And once again, I'm speaking on behalf of the Good Representative from Pittsfield.

Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House, I stand in opposition of the pending motion. The bill prohibits a landlord from denying an individual, a potential tenant, from renting when that individual receives any form of public assistance. For the purposes of this section, status as a federal, State or local public assistance means an individual's status as having federal, State or local public assistance as a source of income, including medical assistance and housing subsidies. It includes the individuals having to meet any requirements for the individual to use the income.

While well-intentioned, this bill neglects to exempt property owners whose homes do not conform to the requirements of many assistance programs. For example, Section 8 housing has some strict accessibility requirements. This is understandable, as public funds are used to run the programs and all individuals should be eligible for the assistance within the required income requirements. Unfortunately, many homes in Maine do not and cannot meet the accessibility requirements required in order to accept the Section 8 funds. Maine's housing stock is old, and construction costs prevent many property owners from updating their properties to be accessible. I don't know if you've been in an old farmhouse, but if you have, Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that you are aware that these homes were not built with accessibility in mind. The unintended consequences will likely result in more property owners removing rentals from their properties, prevent someone who might be looking to help solve part of the housing crisis by renting out the efficiency above their garage. It may prevent property owners from putting the investment into an accessory dwelling unit, because they are concerned that more State control will make it harder for them to make choices about their own properties in the future.

Mr. Speaker, this really boils down to property owner rights and to ensuring that we have more housing selections, not less. Please vote against the pending motion. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Kennebunkport, Representative Gere.

Representative **GERE**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I hope that we can all agree that someone who has fallen on hard times shouldn't have their path made harder. For any number of reasons, people all over Maine may face financial challenges, from a change in their employment or life circumstances, health issues or loss of previous housing. These folks' situations are compounded when landlords refuse to accept forms of financial support that are intended to help people in just these situations. When these forms of support are refused, it limits people's options, makes it harder for them to find permanent housing and reduces the effectiveness of the public dollars we spend to help people get back on their feet and afford rent in line with their income.

LD 1036 makes it unlawful to discriminate in housing or public accommodation against an individual because of their receipt of public assistance, in the same manner as it is unlawful to discriminate against other protected classes. The bill defines in the Maine Human Rights Act, quote, "status as a recipient of federal, State or local public assistance," unquote, as an individual's status as having federal; including medical assistance and housing subsidies, sorry; and the individuals having to meet any requirements for the individual to use the income. Importantly, it does not require that a landlord rent to any tenant. Rather, it requires that a landlord cannot discriminate against someone based on their status as a recipient of public assistance. And with all due respect to the Good Representative from New Gloucester, this bill does not deal with the issues raised by tenants violating the law or harassing their neighbors. That is a separate body of law, and I am somewhat uncomfortable with the assumption that those tenants are receiving any type of public assistance and there are many people in the world who do not receive public assistance and engage in those types of behaviors.

By adding status as a recipient of federal, State, or local public assistance to the Maine Human Rights Act, we simply ensure that renters across Maine are treated fairly and that the programs we have to keep people housed are actually accepted in the rental market. I urge Members to follow my light and support the pending motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Harpswell, Representative Golek.

Representative **GOLEK**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, I just want to talk a little bit about why this bill is important.

Let's first start with the basics of what source-of-income discrimination is. To put it plainly, it is a type of discrimination in which landlords, owners or real estate brokers refuse to rent to tenants based on their lawful income. Now, having said that, that does not mean that a landlord cannot choose who they rent to, cannot set their own rents of what they expect to be paid. It does not force a landlord to rent to somebody that they don't want to rent to. So, it's a stark difference that many Mainers with housing choice vouchers, Social Security Insurance, SSI, veterans' benefits, often face discrimination when trying to find housing solely based on their sources of income. This is an urgent injustice that demands immediate attention. We need stronger laws to protect our citizens from this type of discrimination.

To give a little history, in 1975, the Maine Human Rights Act was amended to include a provision prohibiting the refusal to rent or imposition or different tenancy terms to individuals

receiving public assistance. The law was further amended in 1985, making the provision applicable to any person furnishing public accommodations and making discrimination unlawful where refusal to rent or imposition of different tenancy terms is done because an individual is receiving public assistance. Then this is what happened: In 2014, Maine's source-of-income law was weakened by court interpretation. The Maine Human Rights Act protects recipients of both State and federal housing assistance from discrimination based on the status of recipients. However, in the legal case of *Dussault v RRE Coach Lantern Holdings*, the Maine Supreme Court in a 4-3 decision held that discrimination against a voucher tenant because of the voucher's program lease form did not constitute discrimination based on the voucher tenant's status as a recipient of housing assistance. This decision opened the door to discrimination against families based on their source of income and other source of incomes they pay rent with.

To highlight; I'm going to skip that section and try to make this a little brief for everybody. A recent community survey asked individuals who utilize or have tried to find housing with a voucher experience was; forgive me, I moved on to a different page.

I'm going to share a little bit of my own story with you all on how source of income does affect people. As a single parent, I was on Section 8, General Assistance were life-saving resources for my children and I. However, despite these supports, finding housing continued to be very difficult, even though I was working at the time and had full security deposits along with excellent references. At the time, the Section 8 program paid above the rents, I looked at, and I was blatantly told, 'sorry, we don't rent to you people, give me a call when you stop being lazy, and I don't want to rent using my tax dollars paying for your rent.' Twenty years later, I dealt with that same blatant discrimination with my disabled brother; who was born disabled, who relied on SSI to pay rent; then my aging mother and finally, my son, who suffered a horrific accident in his youth and needed housing assistance as an adult for a short period.

I share a snapshot of this personal story to show just some examples of source-of-income discrimination in housing. Being able to pay rent is life-saving. It should not matter where a person's source of income comes from that they use to pay their rent, and we should not have policies with loopholes that allow for source-of-income discrimination in housing. Maine must protect people from this type of rent discrimination. We as a State can only create fair housing once we take the steps to remove the discrimination within the housing opportunity's protection from source-of-income discrimination; protection is one significant way we can apply and protect this to people.

There is considerable research showing that housing instability often unjustly affects renters from low-income and disadvantaged communities. Source-of-income discrimination disproportionately hurts people of color, families with disabilities; and this is not just a statistic, but a harsh reality that these groups face. According to a study conducted by Maine State Housing Authority back in 2022, 34% of homeless population were Black or African-American, even though they made up at that time less than two percent of Maine's population. Regardless of a landlord's intent, refusing to rent to people based on their source of income disproportionately impacts nonwhite tenants, people with disabilities, single women, heads of household and families with children. Over half of the people receiving federal rental assistance are families with children and a third have a disability. Nationally, at least 48% of Section 8 housing voucher holders are Black and at least 18% are Hispanic. Lack of strong source-of-income policies can shift

low-income tenants into substandard housing in poor neighborhoods and perpetrate segregation, which works against our national fair housing laws that envision communities with truly integrated and balanced living patterns.

We know that source-of-income protection laws work. They have successfully prevented the concentration of poverty, increased rental assistance acceptance and created greater freedom for families to choose where they live. Dozens of states and municipalities have already filled in the gaps and established their own protections for voucher holders over the past several years. California, Colorado, Illinois, Maryland, New York, Rhode Island and Virginia enacted statewide protections for voucher holders between 2019 and 2022. Now, more than 57% of households that use housing choice vouchers live in communities that have banned source-of-income discrimination, compared to just a third of the voucher holders in 2018. These laws have successfully prevented the concentration of poverty, increased rental assistance acceptance and created greater freedom for families.

I'm going to stop there and just add another thing that source-of-income discrimination has caused since the 2014 case. A landlord can simply refuse to sign the form. And what that means is, it's not just about Section income. Say I get injured and I'm not going to be able to pay my rent this month, and I go to General Assistance and I say, I need help with my rent this month; maybe next month, depending on what the injury was; and I get that, they're going to ask the landlord to sign a form, so that they can send them that check. We're putting millions of dollars into eviction prevention programs in our State, and right now, if a landlord is asked to sign a form, so that somebody can pay their rent with their legal source of income, they don't have to. These policies mask all sorts of things. And so, we had these protections before 2014, this is just asking to add some of those protections back, so that the people who need to be housed but need some assistance with their legal source of income, whether it's General Assistance, whether it's earned prevention programs. I just want to be very clear: the stigma around people who need Section 8 housing vouchers clearly scares people. This will not; this bill does not in any way, again, dictate who somebody can rent to. It does say you cannot discriminate against them from a legal source of income. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from New Gloucester, Representative Arata.

Representative **ARATA**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to be very clear, in case I wasn't earlier, that I rent to some very wonderful people who have Section 8 vouchers, and I've also rented to some people with Section 8 vouchers who were very, very dangerous and disruptive. And it's already illegal to discriminate against people because, you know, because they have vouchers. Everybody gets an equal opportunity to apply. You can't tell them that they cannot apply, you have to let them apply and evaluate them as individuals.

The problem with this bill is that it will require landlords to sign a government contract; it's a long-term lease, it's very lopsided in favor of the tenant and very difficult to get out of if you need to get out of it in order to protect your good, peaceful tenants who you have a responsibility to as well. Thank you.

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

Representative **BLIER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. Most of us have different experiences in life, and, you know, being a landlord for the number of years that I've been, I've dealt with a lot of people. I've rented to people on Section 8, I've rented to people on GA.

And I'll tell you that sometimes, you know, even though you're trying to help people, you're probably hurting them in the process.

I had a young lady that came to me, she was moving from Colorado from an abusive marriage, moved to Saco; no income, no job, GA assistance, needed help. I provided housing for her. She got a job as a teacher in Saco at Thornton Academy and a few months later, General Assistance stopped and she was not able to afford the unit any longer. And a few months later, you know, she was able to find housing with her daughter, and I was out several months' worth of rent. Now, I'm not disappointed I helped this lady for a short period of time, there was no eviction that happened, she was willing to work with me, but I lost several months of rent while she moved on.

The point is this: this is requiring landlords to accept local assistance, but if people don't have a job and/or if they get a job and they don't make enough income to continue the rent, then the landlords will then have to help eat that cost. And maybe a lot of you think, 'well, that's okay.' Well, if that's okay, I know a lot of Members on your side have resources. They can go out and buy a bunch of apartments and supply housing to people if it's that easy. It is not. It is difficult to be a landlord in this environment, and the more and more we put restrictions on a landlord, the less and less people will want to be landlords and the more and more you'll find big corporations from other cities and other towns coming here and buying up our inventory.

So, as landlords, we want to provide housing. Help us, don't cripple us. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: 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. 322

YEA - Abdi, Ankeles, Archer, Arford, Beck, Bell, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, 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, Montell, Moonen, Murphy, Osher, Pluecker, Pugh, Rana, Ray, Rielly, Roberts, Roeder, Rollins, Sachs, Salisbury, Sato, Sayre, Shagoury, Sinclair, Skold, Supica, Terry, Warren, Webb, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

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

ABSENT - Collamore, Crockett, Eaton, Griffin, Lanigan, Libby, Runte, Sargent, Stover.

Yes, 72; No, 70; Absent, 9; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

72 having voted in the affirmative and 70 voted in the negative, with 9 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**.

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

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

Majority Report of the Committee on **HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-455)** on Bill "An Act Regarding the Designation of Short-term Rental Units as Commercial or Residential in Use"

(H.P. 786) (L.D. 1181)

Signed:

Senators:

CURRY of Waldo
BAILEY of York

Representatives:

GERE of Kennebunkport
COLLAMORE of Pittsfield
GOLEK of Harpswell
JULIA of Waterville
MALON of Biddeford
YUSUF of Portland

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

Signed:

Senator:

BENNETT of Oxford

Representatives:

EDER of Waterboro
MINGO of Calais

READ.

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

Representative MORRIS of Turner **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 Turner, Representative Morris.

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

This bill proposes to allow municipalities to be able to charge a higher rate, allow them to designate so-called Airbnbs as a commercial property. This is problematic for many reasons. Seventy-five percent of second homes in Maine are owned by Mainers. This bill would put family camps; generational, in many cases; in jeopardy. Sometimes, families that own camps that have owned them for generations may rent them out occasionally for the weekend to help pay for the taxes, as well as other things that they may need for their personal lives. Allowing a municipality to charge them more for that property, I think, is inappropriate.

This would also make the transfer of property more complex. If a new owner wants to change the use and no longer wishes to use it as an Airbnb, they would have to go and do that. This could hold up and slow down many transactions. And it should also be noted that short-term rentals are also used for short-term employment contracts. So, entities like hospitals may hire *per diem* nurses or out-of-state nurses to come up here

and help out when there's a shortage. This bill would make it harder for them to be able to find housing; they would have to pay more for that housing to cover the additional costs that are proposed in this bill, as well as construction workers that are helping out this time of year.

So, I would urge this Body to reject this motion. This is not something that is needed, this is a backdoor way of getting local option sales taxes and other types of things. I would encourage this Body reject this pending motion. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Kennebunkport, Representative Gere.

Representative **GERE**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in many Maine communities, short-term rentals are having an outsized impact on the ratio studies that our assessors do. Maine law gives municipalities express authority to regulate short-term rentals, and LD 1181 puts another tool in their toolkit and strengthens their ability to regulate short-term rentals if a municipality chooses.

If it chooses, it may allow their assessor to do one of two things: assign a residential land use code to residential short-term rentals which are owned by someone who resides on the property and designates it as their permanent residence, or assign a commercial land use code to short-term rentals operated as businesses on properties that are not the owner's permanent residence. Beyond that, it really does let that express authority to regulate short-term rentals for defining how those apply in their community to the municipality.

By including the commercial sales in the municipality's commercial ratio study, it puts the sale where it belongs. Assessors and their ratio models already do this on a routine basis. Bed and breakfasts in residential zones are treated as commercial properties. Multi-use buildings with combinations of commercial and residential spaces often have units move back and forth between commercial and residential uses. Think about the building in a town center that has a retail space on the first floor and an apartment upstairs that might be converted into a commercial office space as the market changes. This is a routine practice that assessors do every day. Today, when commercial short-term rentals sell at high prices based on the revenue streams they generate by being operated as lodging businesses, they raise property valuations in the ratio studies for people who live here in Maine.

LD 1181 is a crucial step in helping to address one of the key causes of rising property valuations on all of us who live here and love Maine. Mr. Speaker, I urge Members to support the pending motion and follow my light. Thank you.

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

Representative **BOYER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Short-term rentals, Airbnbs, are another way that Mainers are able to stay in their house and pay these really high property taxes. So, this might, you know, dissuade someone from doing that, and that would make it harder for folks that have that spare ADU or room or rental, rather, from renewing it, saying it's not worth the trouble.

So, I think, again, this doesn't do anything to make housing more available. Like the Good Representative from Turner said, you know, short-term housing is still housing, and so, this is going to be more pressure on that. So, thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Wells, Representative Foley.

Representative **FOLEY**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House, I think we have to be cautious with this. If we start changing residential use properties into commercial, it's going to impact the insurances

that they have to purchase. Purchasing a commercial policy on a residence that's rented out maybe two or three weeks a year is going to be very detrimental to the property owner. And again, I think that we need to be careful how we start creating a commercial property if somebody's just renting it out as an Airbnb for one or two weeks during across the year to help pay their taxes. So, it's a cautionary note, but it will impact the insurances that the person has to buy.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Kennebunkport, Representative Gere.

Representative **GERE**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for allowing me to rise again. I wanted to respond to some of the comments that we just heard from my colleagues from Wells and Poland.

I want to make sure that it's clear that in this bill, there is a distinction made between a residential short-term rental and a commercial short-term rental. A residential short-term rental is a rental like you might have, where you would rent out an ADU in your backyard, but where you live at least part of the year and claim that property as your permanent residence. So, in the situations that I just heard, I'm not sure that there is anything that would apply there. Rather, the distinction is when a commercial purpose is put onto that rental. So, if there is no one living there and it is solely used for short-term rental, then that property is, by definition, a business just like a bed and breakfast or other lodging entity would be, and it helps Maine communities a great deal to be able to make this distinction moving forward, so that we can put those commercial properties when they are sold into the commercial ratio studies and have them go into that valuation. It's a really important step, and I hope that we can take it. Thank you.

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

Representative **GEIGER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in opposition to this motion.

This is just, from my perspective, doubling down on the problem with short-term rentals. The mistake was very much in the beginning, when we allowed short-term rentals in what were defined as residential neighborhoods. When you look at the rules around residential neighborhoods, it doesn't permit commercial activity, but we look the other way. This just makes that worse. It now is actually going into residential neighborhoods and acknowledging that they're now commercial. And I think it just begins to unravel the whole idea of residential.

If this Legislature truly wants to deal with the scourge that short-term rentals are, we should do just that. We should not allow short-term rentals, which are commercial businesses, in residential areas. Towns and cities aren't able to do this, they're overwhelmed. I have found in my six years of serving on the Rockland City Council that councilors tend to serve the people who are there and the *status quo*. Once this got in the door, they're unable to turn it back. But we all recognize that our cities and towns are going dark most of the year, that they are denying housing to our year-round population. If we want to fix this, this is not the way. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Representative **QUINT**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This bill would affect the people I represent in a much different way than it would everyone else. Because in my district, which has 47 towns and many lakes, we have family camps that are generational and have been there within the families forever. The families will share these camps, in which they will stay in them for a week at a time, and then the next family members will

come in for another week, and then to help pay the taxes, which are steadily increasing, they rent that out for several weeks out of the year or a couple months out of the year. When they do this, it helps them pay the taxes, so that they can actually keep camps that have been in the family generationally.

If something like this is done; mind you, they are not residents of these camps, it's not the town that they live in; they can re-zone this, put it down as commercial and jack the prices up considerably on the tax rate, so that my families who have generational camps lose that. They lose the family togetherness, they lose the historical value of being able to go in these camps. There is no carveout for this situation. I am absolutely opposed to this bill. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Bar Harbor, Representative Friedmann.

Representative **FRIEDMANN**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Bar Harbor probably has one of the --

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

The Chair reminded Representative FRIEDMANN of Bar Harbor to address his comments toward the Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Member may proceed.

Representative **FRIEDMANN**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Bar Harbor probably has one of the worst short-term rental situations in the State. And we went many years where more and more residential homes were being bought up by investors, because of the lucrative market there. And so, we did pass an ordinance that defines a hosted rental, which would be what's been described, where a family lives in the home and maybe rents out part of it or for just a part of the year, and then we have non-hosted rentals, where they're just bought for the purpose of short-term rents. And what we're finding; what we found was that there were individuals or companies that were buying multiple homes and turning whole neighborhoods into commercial districts, essentially, so that residences were no longer being used for year-round residents, but as businesses; as commercial properties. And while we've been able to limit the number of non-hosted rentals, we have a cap on the number of those and those licenses are not transferrable. We still have something like 20% of our residences are for short-term rentals. And what one of the problems of this is that not only do those homes no longer host families that contribute to the well-being of the community, but they don't really cover the cost of having a commercial business in a residential neighborhood. We have to provide police, fire protection and all kinds of services to those homes, and they're not really, we don't believe, paying their fair share of maintaining the infrastructure of our community.

So, the reason that I support this bill, I feel like it's not just to discourage commercial transformation of our homes into businesses, but to get those properties to pay their fair share of what it takes to keep a community going, and I stand in support of this bill. 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. Words mean something. I didn't have the benefit of sitting through this Committee and the hearing, and just hearing from the Good Representative that just spoke previously, his town, apparently, has done this, they've recognized the difference, they possibly have re-zoned. So, I have a question I'd like to ask through the Chair, if I might.

The SPEAKER: The Representative from Orrington, Representative Campbell would like to pose a question through the Chair. The Member may proceed.

Representative **CAMPBELL**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In these bills, sometimes it's a 'may,' sometimes it's a 'shall' and sometimes it's a 'must.' What is in this legislation? Thank you, sir.

The SPEAKER: The Representative from Orrington, Representative Campbell, has posed a question through the Chair to any Member who wishes to answer. The Chair recognizes the Representative from Kennebunkport, Representative Gere.

Representative **GERE**: It's a 'may;' it is not a mandate, it is completely up to the municipality whether or not they choose to allow this practice.

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

Representative **TUELL**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just quickly looking over the legislation, I've got to say that one question I would have is, it seems to be quite vague how a municipality may do what is proposed here. Should there be a referendum? Should there be a vote of the select board? It's all quite vague, and it doesn't seem like a good idea, coming from a rural area where there are, as the Representative from Hodgdon said, quite a few camps and folks that use those camps over the summertime. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Portland, Representative Lookner.

Representative **LOOKNER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Briefly, I just wanted to relay a story of what happened in the City of Portland when we did our reevaluation in 2022.

Many homeowners were shocked to see that the cost of their homes, their values, had increased 50%; 100%; 200%, even. And I got an earful about it, I'm sure many other Representatives from Portland got an earful about it. The City was a bit late, because we hadn't done a reevaluation in 10 years, or in 15 years. So, it had been since 2006. In 2006, online short-term rentals didn't exist. It wasn't invented, it didn't come about until 2007. So, we had no tools at our disposal with which to evaluate how the advent of this new product was affecting the prices of homes in our city and the valuation of our properties.

So, I'm supporting because we desperately need a way to characterize how these properties are affecting us, and that's one way to look at them is they're income properties. In Portland, income properties can be apartments with three or more; five or more units or parking lots or businesses or any other properties that are primarily there for earning an income rather than living in. So, I think it's a pretty common-sense move to allow municipalities to have this ability. So, thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Camden, Representative Doudera.

Representative **DOUDERA**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wanted to very briefly say that in our town, we did take the town to define what short-term rentals are and to address the issue that we've heard lots of people talking about with seasonal camps. In our town, at least, seasonal camps, because they are not heated all winter, they are not considered commercial short-term rentals. So, the situations that we're hearing talked about would not apply.

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. 323

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

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

ABSENT - Collamore, Crockett, Eaton, Griffin, Lanigan, Libby, Runte, Stover.

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

67 having voted in the affirmative and 76 voted in the negative, with 8 being absent, and accordingly the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended** Report was **NOT ACCEPTED**.

Subsequently, on motion of Representative GERE of Kennebunkport, the Minority **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 **HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT** reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on Bill "An Act to Amend the Laws Regarding Zoning and Land Use Restrictions to Limit Certain Requirements to Municipalities with Populations of More than 10,000"

(H.P. 1103) (L.D. 1662)

Signed:

Senators:

CURRY of Waldo
BENNETT of Oxford

Representatives:

GERE of Kennebunkport
GOLEK of Harpswell
JULIA of Waterville
MALON of Biddeford
ROBERTS of South Berwick
YUSUF of Portland

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-423)** on same Bill.

Signed:

Representatives:

COLLAMORE of Pittsfield
EDER of Waterboro
MINGO of Calais
WALKER of Naples

READ.

Representative GERE of Kennebunkport moved that the House **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report.

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 1662 as Amended. This legislation represents a significant evolution in our approach to zoning and land use restrictions, a reformed design to meet the realities of modern growth and development while safeguarding the character of our communities.

Under this amended bill, the population threshold for certain flexible zoning requirements has been lowered from 10,000 to 4,000 population. This change is grounded in the MUBEC Municipal Building Code, which recognizes that communities with as few as 4,000 residents encounter growth pressure similar to larger populations. By aligning our law with established municipal standards, we ensure that a broader range of Maine cities and towns have the tools they need to responsibly manage development, foster housing affordability and encourage efficient land use.

The bill continues to allow the construction of up to two dwelling units per lot in areas where residential use are permitted, with additional allowances up to four dwelling units in designated growth areas are under specific conditions involving centrally managed utilities when no existing dwelling is present on the lot. It also permits the addition of accessory dwelling units on lots with a single-family dwelling, further supporting incremental and adaptable housing solutions for today's communities.

In addition, the removal of Section 3 from the bill streamlines the legislative language, eliminating unnecessary provisions, so that our focus remains squarely on efficient, adaptable zoning practices. The subsequent re-lettering and renumbering of remaining sections enhances clarity and ensures the law remains accessible to local governments dedicated to fostering smart and sustainable growth.

LD 1662 as Amended is a thoughtful, balanced Statute. One that acknowledges the unique needs of communities with populations as low as 4,000, while encouraging development that is both flexible and mindful of our neighborhood's historic and cultural fabric. I urge my esteemed colleagues to join me in supporting this Amendment, ensuring that our State's zoning laws continue to evolve in ways that truly serve the Maine people.

I always used as an example the town of Rangeley. Rangeley has gone through decades developing that community into a beautiful recreational community. By lowering; actually, side-stepping the zoning regulations as has been in the past under LD 2003, it's allowed developers and contractors to move into that town and make additional development that really isn't in tune with what's going on with that community. It takes away their own personal character of that community by trying to force additional development there.

Development and growth is important in communities, there's no question about that, we need housing. But we must do it within the guidelines of Home Rule and what the town fathers and developers believe is right for their own communities. I urge everyone to support this legislation. Thank you.

Representative QUINT of Hodgdon **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 Hodgdon, Representative Quint.

Representative **QUINT**: Thank you. And I once again am speaking on behalf of my dear friend, the Good Representative from Pittsfield.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. The amended version of this bill ensures the provisions of LD 2003 passed in the 130th Legislature apply to municipalities with a population of over 4,000, to align the requirements with the Maine Uniform Building and Energy Code population requirements. This doesn't prevent towns of under 4,000 to adopt the provisions of LD 2003, but it removes the mandate from them.

Our small towns are asking us to help them, and this is a step in the right direction. To give you an example, some of our towns, especially those with a population of less than 2,000, only have access to a code enforcement officer for four hours a week. Some towns, especially those with a population of under 1,000, only have an on-call code enforcement officer, because they can't afford a full-time position.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for supporting our small towns by helping to vote down this motion. Thank you.

The **SPEAKER**: Just from the Chair real quick. The Chair has been allowing Members to speak on behalf of other Members. The Chair's a little nervous about setting this precedent, because if another Member claims to speak on behalf of another Member and that Member never gave permission for that Member to speak, someone could claim they're speaking on behalf of a Member, but the Member never gave them permission to do so. So, I have just conferred with the Clerk and he is going to look into *Mason's* and see what the established precedent is here. I will continue to allow it for now, but we might want to, depending on what the Clerk determines, we may want to establish a process by which someone who is designating another Member to speak on their behalf, do so by telling the Clerk first, so that we know that that Member has actually given the permission for another Member to speak on their behalf when they can't be here in the building. I fully have confidence that the Representative from Pittsfield did that in this case, but I just want to make this note, because I don't want to get into a situation where someone's claiming to be presenting comments on behalf of another Member and that Member never asked that Member to speak on their behalf. I just want to make that note.

The Chair recognizes the Representative from Kennebunkport, Representative Gere.

Representative **GERE**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the 130th Legislature, we did make great progress in empowering Maine people to help address our housing shortage on their own properties by allowing duplexes on single-family lots and allowing accessory dwelling units everywhere in Maine. This change was a win-win. It took down barriers in a consistent way across the State, and municipalities working

closely with our Housing Opportunities Program implemented ordinance changes to make it happen.

I know that in my district and in conversations I have with people all around the State, I hear from folks who have already been able to build ADUs for family members and for rental income and really realize the potential of this law change that we made. This bill proposes to undo that progress in smaller communities, making communities with fewer than 4,000 residents, per the bill as Amended, exempt from the provisions I just described.

Mr. Speaker, that would be a mistake. Everywhere in Maine, no matter what size community you live in, you should be able to use your property however you choose to help build housing that we sorely need and to meet the needs of your own family and what you would like to do with your own property. I urge Members to follow my light and vote to support the pending motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The **SPEAKER**: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Harpswell, Representative Golek.

Representative **GOLEK**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll be brief. I just, I stand in full support of the motion.

This bill, if it was passed, would significantly reduce the ability to reach our housing goals and needs. And right now, in the State of Maine, we need over 88,000 units of housing. We have a severe housing shortage. So, I also want to note that the number over 10,000, it sounds like a small number, let's talk about that for a second. We have 488 cities or towns in Maine, only 22 of them are over 10,000. So, if this bill was to pass, it would significantly reduce our ability to get to where we need to get for housing across our State.

So, I just ask people to support the Majority Report. Thank you.

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

Representative **SOBOLESKI**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen. This bill was amended to exclude the 10,000 number, and that 10,000 number was lowered to 4,000, so, it aligned with the MUBEC municipal building codes. Thank you.

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

Representative **GEIGER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to rise in strong support of this motion.

To change LD 2003 at this point for small towns would be a real tragedy. We have families all over Maine, there's a housing shortage all over Maine, and more and more children, adult children, are looking to their parents and trying to figure out how to find living arrangements that will work as they grow older. An ADU is an incredible opportunity for people with homes to build a small house that they can move into as they age and give the other one to their children, to build for their children, for a disabled child who reaches adulthood, for additional rental income. I've heard incredible stories of the way in which a single small house changes over time according to the needs of the family over the decades that they own it.

While interest rates right now are high, making this less of an opportunity than it had been when LD 2003 was first passed, that too will change, and we need to continue to offer the opportunity to families to figure out what they need to support their family members, their ability to stay in their homes as rent; I'm sorry; as rents become out of reach and as property taxes grow. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Representative **MALON**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just wanted to briefly rise and support the pending motion, in support of the right of thousands of Mainers who live in small communities across rural Maine to be able to use their own properties to help address the housing shortage that we face. If this bill were to pass, even under the amended version that the Representative from Phillips accurately described, it would still deny these residents the ability to use their own properties in that way.

And I will just note as well that for municipalities that perhaps are less resourced than some of our larger municipalities, there is technical assistance available offered through the Housing Opportunity Program that helps these municipalities do whatever they need to do to work their ordinances in a way that comply with LD 2003. LD 2003 and the work that's been done on it since is working, and we need to allow it to continue to work. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from New Gloucester, Representative Arata.

Representative **ARATA**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I support this motion, because I have always believed in property rights; that's always been a Republican value that I was raised with. If you pay property taxes, it's your property, you own it, you should be able to build an accessory dwelling unit if you want, or a chicken coop or whatever makes you happy. Thank you.

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

Representative **BLIER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. I also support this motion. But if we want affordable housing, we should start by removing all the regulation that has been placed on building housing for the last six years. That's how we're going to get affordable housing. 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. 324

YEA - Abdi, Albert, Ankeles, Arata, Archer, Arford, Beck, Bell, Bishop, Blier, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, Cray, Daigle, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Faircloth, Farrin, Faulkingham, Friedmann, Frost, Gattine, Geiger, Gere, Golek, Graham, Gramlich, Guerrette, Hasenfus, Jackson, 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, Sachs, Salisbury, Sargent, Sato, Sayre, Shagoury, Simmons, Sinclair, Skold, Supica, Swallow, Terry, Thorne, Warren, Webb, White J, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

NAY - Adams, Ardell, Babin, Bagshaw, Boyer D, Campbell, Carlow, Caruso, Chapman, Cimino, Collins, Cooper, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eder, Flynn, Foley, Foster, Fredericks, Fredette, Gifford, Greenwood, Haggan, Hall, Henderson, Hepler, Hymes, Javner, Lance, Lavigne, Lemelin, Lyman, Mason, McIntyre, Mingo, Morris, Nutting, Olsen, Paul, Perkins, Poirier, Pomerleau, Quint, Rudnicki, Schmearsal-Burgess, Smith, Soboleski, Strout, Tuell, Underwood, Wadsworth, Walker, White R, Wood P, Wood S, Woodsome.

ABSENT - Collamore, Crockett, Eaton, Griffin, Lanigan, Libby, Runte, Stover.

Yes, 87; No, 56; Absent, 8; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

87 having voted in the affirmative and 56 voted in the negative, with 8 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 **HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-457)** on Bill "An Act to Address Consumer Grocery Pricing Fairness" (H.P. 1265) (L.D. 1894)

Signed:

Senators:

CURRY of Waldo
BAILEY of York
BENNETT of Oxford

Representatives:

GERE of Kennebunkport
GOLEK of Harpswell
MALON of Biddeford
MINGO of Calais
YUSUF of Portland

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

Signed:

Representatives:

COLLAMORE of Pittsfield
WALKER of Naples

READ.

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

The Bill was **READ ONCE**. **Committee Amendment "A" (H-457)** 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-457)** and sent for concurrence.

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

Majority Report of the Committee on **INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-402)** on Bill "An Act to Exempt Certain Watercraft from Registration Requirements" (H.P. 106) (L.D. 173)

Signed:

Senator:

GUERIN of Penobscot

Representatives:

LANCE of Paris
MASON of Lisbon
THORNE of Carmel
WOOD of Greene
WOODSOME of Waterboro

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

Signed:

Representatives:

ROBERTS of South Berwick
BRIDGEO of Augusta
CLUCHEY of Bowdoinham
DILL of Old Town
TERRY of Gorham

READ.

Representative ROBERTS of South Berwick moved that the House **ACCEPT** the Minority **Ought Not to Pass** Report.

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

Representative **RUDNICKI**: Here we go again. I just have to stand and say it. What good is the Committee work if we're running the Minority Reports? Thank you.

Representative HYMES of Waldo **REQUESTED** a roll call on the motion to **ACCEPT** the Minority **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 Carmel, Representative Thorne.

Representative **THORNE**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I remember this bill well. We discussed it in Committee at length. We approached and talked with the Department about it, the Department accepted it and was in agreement with it, that the smaller motors would be a lesser fee, and that wouldn't break anybody's bank and it would give a break to some of the smaller motors that are registered on the ponds that don't create such a nuisance or disturbance on the water.

I don't want to go too far beyond what Representative Rudnicki talked about, but it's very disappointing when we come out with a Majority Report, and we expect to be honored with that Report and then we're surprised on the floor. I'm on the Committee. Nobody told me that anybody was going to run the Minority Report. That's the first time I've heard of it. I'm on this Committee. Treated like a mushroom, Mr. Speaker; kept in the dark and fed a bunch of mushroom food.

I won't take the House's time with any more. I'm just disappointed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from South Berwick, Representative Roberts.

Representative **ROBERTS**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just to clarify for the record, I actually just had a little while ago a conversation with another Member of the Committee in the hall on what Report was being moved. So, I apologize if there was not full communication.

And just to clear up the record here, the Department was not in support of this bill. It may look like a small bill, but make no mistake, it does do real harm. It's going to harm our efforts to protect our lakes. It exempts an entire category of motorized watercraft from registration. That's more than a policy tweak; it's a direct hit to the Lake and River Protection Fund, with an estimated revenue loss exceeding over \$320,000. Over \$230,000 of that is specifically allocated for invasive aquatic species prevention.

Exempting boats under five horsepower doesn't exempt them from risk. These boats are often used in shallow, vegetated shoreline areas, precisely where invasive species tend to take root. Giving them a free pass sends the wrong message and undermines a user pay model that has worked. We heard this story before in other Committees and other policy

areas; a small exemption, a well-meaning tweak and then, years later, we're scrambling to fix the unintended consequences.

The cost of invasive species infestations is not theoretical; it's a real and significant concern. It's measurable, it's devastating and it's escalating. Every single voice at the public hearing except the Sponsors said, don't do this. This isn't about punishing voters or gatekeepers, our lakes; it's about shared responsibility. Maine's lakes are for everyone, and everyone needs to do their part to keep them healthy. This bill weakens a system that's working, sets a dangerous precedent and it walks us backwards at a time when lakefront communities are working overtime to move forward. So, I ask my colleagues to support the pending motion.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Greene, Representative Wood.

Representative **WOOD**: Mr. Speaker, I have to wave the major flag on that one. If you look at the; what do you call it, the seat; what it's actually going to cost: \$67,000 to IF&W, \$77,000 to the milfoil, lakes and streams milfoil. That was the predicted revenue loss. We just got it last week. It was on the Report last week, we got it.

What this does is reduces; it actually, right now, the law states from zero to 10 horsepower, it's going to cost you \$41 to register your boat if you put a motor on it. If it's a canoe, a rowboat, whatever, zero to 10 horsepower. Right now, if we pass this one, it goes from zero to five horsepower, then six horsepower to 10 horsepower; from six to 10, it's \$41. From zero to five, is \$10 for the boat registration, \$10 goes towards the river milfoil sticker.

So, there is a reduction in the cost; well, reduction in the amount of money that goes to the milfoil, so, there is a reduction in the amount of money that does go to milfoil, and there is a reduction that goes to IF&W. IF&W's budget went up \$16 million this year. On an average year, they dump \$300,000 to their fund; for their contingency fund for repair of airplanes and stuff like that. They can eat \$67,000. I ask you to follow my light. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Presque Isle, Representative Underwood.

Representative **UNDERWOOD**: Okay. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This is a Department bill. We in this Legislature shouldn't give a wit's behind about what a Department thinks. We're supposed to have authority over the Departments.

The second point was, and I'd like to repeat the Good Representative from Oakland, what she mentioned, that what good is it to run a Minority Report when the Committee has voted to pass this bill?

And the final thing is, this is pure politics in its raw sense of the word. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Bowdoinham, Representative Cluchey.

Representative **CLUCHEY**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just wanted to clarify a few things that we've heard.

One, this is not a Department bill. There is a significant Fiscal Note that you all can look at, it reflects pretty much exactly what Representative Roberts had mentioned. And actually, I just want to sort of remind people; so, last session, or in the 131st, we actually put this; our Committee; sorry, the IF&W Committee unanimously passed a bill to increase the sticker fee specifically to create a fund of money to support lake protection, because the alternative; there was also another bill at the time to pull money from the General Fund. And the discussion among colleagues on the Committee was that it's better to have

a user fee than to have, you know, general taxes. So, it was a unanimous Report from IF&W's Committee last year to --

Representative **THORNE**: Point of Order.

The SPEAKER: The Member will defer. The Chair inquires as to why the Representative from Carmel rises.

Representative **THORNE**: The Member is not talking about the bill in front of us; she's talking about another bill.

On **POINT OF ORDER**, Representative **THORNE** of Carmel asked the Chair if the remarks of Representative **CLUCHEY** of Bowdoinham were germane to the pending question.

The SPEAKER: The Chair has, in the course of debates during this session, has allowed Members to talk about other legislation that is related to the subject that is informing the Body about the merits of this bill. If the Member were talking about another bill that were completely unrelated to the topic at hand, then the Chair would certainly call the Member out of order. It sounds like, so far, from what I'm hearing, that the Member is speaking to previous legislation that impacts this same subject area. If the Chair understands that the Member is going off subject, the Chair will call her out of order.

The Chair **RULED** that the remarks of Representative **CLUCHEY** of Bowdoinham were germane to the pending question.

The SPEAKER: The Member may proceed.

Representative **CLUCHEY**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The point was to just to emphasize the fact that this Body recognized the importance of creating funds to support lake protection. Protecting our lakes from invasive species is a huge benefit to the State's economy and it's a protection for homeowners that own lakefront property. This bill before you is an intentional rollback to take money away from the very limited resources we do have to protect those lakes. And I do hope that people will follow and support the Ought Not to Pass Report.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Paris, Representative Lance.

Representative **LANCE**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and Members of the House. I guess I'm guilty of thinking about my constituents when we thought about this bill.

I thought it was a great idea. There's a group of people I fish with and kayak with who are now tired of paddling their canoes and their kayaks and things, and thought this will be great if you could decrease the amount of money we spend on our little putt-putts to get to our fishing places, because we're tired of rowing to them. So, I thought that was a good idea, and I thought, yeah, there would be some loss of some income somewhere, but I thought based upon the increase of the budget that we saw in the Committee, that that money could be found somewhere else. So, thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Carmel, Representative Thorne.

Representative **THORNE**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, let me read you the Summary of this bill as it came to us, and how everybody replied on it and provided testimony. "The bill exempts canoes, kayaks and rowboats that are equipped with a motor having a manufacturer's horsepower rating less than 100 horsepower;" anybody that knows anything about motorboats, can you imagine putting a 90-horsepower motor on a canoe or a kayak or a rowboat; "from the registration requirements."

Mr. Speaker, this came out of the Revisor's Office wrong, was printed wrong. Instead of 100 horsepower, it was supposed to be 100 foot-pounds of torque, which is like a small electric motor that just goes 'hmmmmmm.' So, this one was doomed from the beginning. But basically, what it's saying is, those

small, small engines shouldn't be charged the same as twin 200 Mercs that are out there tearing up the lake. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Greene, Representative Wood.

Representative **WOOD**: From the analyst, as of last Monday, I got this email, the Fiscal Note. To IF&W: \$62,117. To the lakes and rivers: \$71,477. That's the Fiscal Note.

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

Representative **ROLLINS**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. I rise in support of the bill.

Augusta is very dependent upon the lakes in the regions around us. We're one of the economic engines in the State of Maine that our sales tax generated goes out to many communities in the State of Maine, and we would not support a small amount of money being taken away from the registration fees to help us combat the milfoil problem that we have here in central Maine. The concerted effort of the Cobbossee watershed, the people in the Belgrade Lakes region, Togus Pond residents, is beyond casual. It's a very hard annual quest and raising more using fees and raising more money won't get to the level of what the people themselves are raising to police this and to make sure that these invasive species don't pollute the waters of central Maine, so that we have a robust economy and we're able to do our part in generating sales and sales tax for all of us. I appreciate you supporting this bill. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from South Berwick, Representative Roberts.

Representative **ROBERTS**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just to clarify, could the Clerk please read the Fiscal Note?

The SPEAKER: The Chair would highly discourage setting a precedent in which we ask the Clerk to read Fiscal Notes. Fiscal Notes in some cases can be very lengthy, and I would ask if the Member would like to reconsider that request.

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

ROLL CALL NO. 325

YEA - Abdi, Ankeles, Archer, Arford, Beck, Bell, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Faircloth, Farrin, Friedmann, Frost, Gattine, Geiger, Gere, Golek, Graham, Gramlich, Hasenfus, 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, Sachs, Salisbury, Sargent, Sato, Sayre, Shagoury, Sinclair, Skold, Supica, Terry, Warren, Webb, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

NAY - Adams, Albert, Arata, Ardell, Babin, Bagshaw, Bishop, Blier, Boyer D, Campbell, Carlow, Caruso, Chapman, Cimino, Collins, Cooper, Cray, Daigle, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eder, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foley, Foster, Fredericks, Fredette, Gifford, Greenwood, Guerrette, Haggan, Hall, Henderson, Hepler, 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, Underwood, Wadsworth, Walker, White J, White R, Wood P, Wood S, Woodsome.

ABSENT - Collamore, Crockett, Eaton, Griffin, Lanigan, Libby, Runte, Stover.

Yes, 73; No, 70; Absent, 8; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

73 having voted in the affirmative and 70 voted in the negative, with 8 being absent, and accordingly the Minority **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 **INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE** reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on Bill "An Act to Allow a Municipality or Locally Recognized Lake Association to Post Certain Information on the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife's Information Kiosks Located at State Boat Launch Facilities"

(H.P. 944) (L.D. 1435)

Signed:

Senators:

BALDACCI of Penobscot
GUERIN of Penobscot

Representatives:

ROBERTS of South Berwick
DILL of Old Town
LANCE of Paris
MASON of Lisbon
TERRY of Gorham
THORNE of Carmel
WOOD of Greene
WOODSOME of Waterboro

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought to Pass** as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-441) on same Bill.

Signed:

Senator:

CARNEY of Cumberland

Representatives:

BRIDGEO of Augusta
CLUCHEY of Bowdoinham

READ.

Representative ROBERTS of South Berwick moved that the House **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report.

Representative BRIDGEO of Augusta **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 Augusta, Representative Bridgeo.

Representative **BRIDGEO**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm tempted to start by saying that 'the first 20 minutes of my remarks I will devote to,' but I won't say that. I'll speak briefly.

The title of this bill says a lot. It's "An Act to Allow a Municipality or Locally Recognized Lake Association to Post Certain Information on the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife's Information Kiosks Located at State Boat Launch Facilities."

This is my bill. In the course of our Committee work on this bill, we learned that where there exists kiosks in State boat launches, the Department is undergoing a process of removing them and going with individually placed signage. I was approached by the really dynamic lake association in my district for Togus Pond, asking if I couldn't help them in some fashion get a sign up, a small sign, at the new boat launch on the lake,

the IF&W boat launch, that would allow the association; which represents virtually all the properties around that lake; to be able to inform users of the boat launch of their existence and how, if anybody was interested, they could support the efforts of the lake association in raising funds to fight algae and milfoil and similar issues or just get involved as a volunteer with the association.

The Department was reluctant to do this for any of their 170 or so boat launches around the State, because we're afraid that it would, you know, lead to the classic slippery slope. I thought it was reasonable, and I still think it's reasonable that if you have a legitimate, well-recognized association, that there ought to be the opportunity at boat launches for that group to get the word out about themselves and to help in the effort to keep our 6,200 lakes around the State of Maine clean.

So, I appreciate that this may be a losing battle here, but I wanted to at least inform the Body that I don't think there's any harm in this, that I think that it would be of a great help to many of our lake associations throughout Maine and I would ask you to give some consideration to maybe going with the Minority Report on this. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Greene, Representative Wood.

Representative **WOOD**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. We have one on Sabattus Pond, and my Public Works director has to go there at least once a week and remove illegal signs on it, those things you scan with your phone and stuff; yeah, QR codes. The last one that he removed brought you to a porn site.

So, that's why IF&W are taking down the signs, because there's illegal stuff being placed on them. That's why we voted Ought Not to Pass on this. So, please vote with the recommended Ought Not to Pass.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Paris, Representative Lance.

Representative **LANCE**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Representative from Greene stole my thunder on this, but I will say to the Representative from Augusta that the intent was good here. Fabulous. But at the same time, IF&W has informed us that they are removing these kiosks, and some of the ones I have encountered, there is informational overload or there's plenty of graffiti or stuff there that does not belong there. So, that's why we chose to act the way we did. 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. 326

YEA - Adams, Albert, Arata, Ardell, Arford, Babin, Bagshaw, Bishop, Blier, Boyer D, Bunker, Campbell, Carlow, Caruso, Chapman, Cimino, Collins, Cooper, Crafts, Cray, Daigle, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eder, Farrin, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foley, Foster, Fredericks, Fredette, Gattine, Geiger, Gere, Gifford, Graham, Greenwood, Guerrette, Haggan, Hall, Henderson, Hepler, Hymes, Jackson, Javner, Kuhn, Lance, Lavigne, Lee, Lemelin, Lyman, Mason, Matlack, McCabe, McIntyre, Meyer, Mingo, Morris, Murphy, Nutting, Olsen, Osher, Parry, Paul, Perkins, Poirier, Pomerleau, Ray, Rielly, Rudnicki, Salisbury, Sayre, Schmersal-Burgess, Shagoury, Simmons, Sinclair, Smith, Soboleski, Strout, Swallow, Terry, Thorne, Tuell, Underwood, Wadsworth, Walker, White J, White R, Wood P, Wood S, Woodsome, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

NAY - Abdi, Ankeles, Archer, Beck, Bell, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Faircloth, Friedmann, Frost, Golek, Gramlich, Hasenfus, Julia, Kessler, Lajoie, Lookner, Macias, Malon, Mastraccio, Mathieson, Milliken, Mitchell, Montell, O'Halloran, Pluecker, Pugh, Quint, Rana, Roberts, Roeder, Rollins, Sachs, Sargent, Sato, Skold, Supica, Warren, Webb.

ABSENT - Collamore, Crockett, Eaton, Griffin, Lanigan, Libby, Moonen, Runte, Stover.

Yes, 99; No, 43; Absent, 9; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

99 having voted in the affirmative and 43 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**.

Majority Report of the Committee on **JUDICIARY** reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on Bill "An Act Regarding Court Security" (H.P. 661) (L.D. 1032)

Signed:

Senator:

CARNEY of Cumberland

Representatives:

KUHN of Falmouth

HENDERSON of Rumford

LEE of Auburn

O'HALLORAN of Brewer

PUGH of Portland

SATO of Gorham

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-467)** on same Bill.

Signed:

Senators:

HAGGAN of Penobscot

TALBOT ROSS of Cumberland

Representatives:

BABIN of Fort Fairfield

CARUSO of Caratunk

POIRIER of Skowhegan

SINCLAIR of Bath

Representative DANA of the Passamaquoddy Tribe - of the House - supports the Minority **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-467)** Report.

READ.

Representative KUHN of Falmouth moved that the House **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report.

Representative POIRIER of Skowhegan **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 Guilford, Representative White.

Representative **WHITE**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand to; or I rise tonight to speak to this bill.

I put this bill in because the Court in Piscataquis County has been closed a ridiculous amount of time. Since the advent of the Marshal Service less than a decade ago, the Court in Piscataquis has always had trouble keeping marshals. It was

stated during the work session that the Marshal Service feels that redeploying marshals that were assigned to be at a court, a rural court, to a larger court, even the day of the court being open, is a perfectly acceptable practice.

A few counties never gave up the authority of the Sheriff's Department operating as security for the judge and for the courthouse. Piscataquis County went along with the majority of the counties and gave that to the Marshal Service when it was developed. However, the law states that the Marshal Service has the authority to contract with qualified law enforcement, in which the local Sheriff's Office is absolutely qualified, amongst other people.

What's happened in Piscataquis County; in 2024, our Court was closed 25% of the scheduled days. The majority of those days were the morning of. So, you would have a parking lot full of people, over 100 people, waiting to go to court to plead their case and someone would walk out on the step and literally say, 'sorry, we're closed, we don't have security today, everybody go home, we'll tell you when to come back.' So, if there's someone that needs to pay a fine that day and it's the last day to pay their fine, they can't go pay their fine. They may have taken a day off of work, probably the last day that the boss is going to let them take off of work. If there's a young woman that needs a restraining order, the nearest court used to be 45 miles away in Newport; however, they're closed, so, they've got to go about 50 miles to Bangor. Now, if you live in Greenville, and you've already driven an hour to the court in Dover-Foxcroft, and now you have to drive another hour to Bangor; that's a pretty big burden to put on people. And we're not talking about once, 25% of the time in 2024, this happened.

Now, this is probably the most bipartisan thing I've ever worked on. As you'll see, the former Speaker joined me on this bill, both Sponsoring it and voting for it in Committee. The Committee Report was seven to seven. And I know that the Representative from the Tribes doesn't get registered in this Body as they do in Committee; however, you know, this is a real need.

The only thing this bill does is it changes the word 'may' to 'must,' and it puts a percentage. If the courts are closed a percentage of the time that they should be open, and the reason they are closing is because of lack of marshals, they must contract that out, and they must give the local sheriff first refusal. It's a pretty simple bill; it's a very necessary bill. The people in rural areas really shouldn't be put on the back burner because a larger court needs a marshal. And that is the only excuse that was given.

We had a sheriff from Piscataquis County that said he had talked to several retired officers that could easily; he had a full roster now, currently, and he believed he could have a full roster of people to serve in courthouse security. They did that historically. There's never a documented day that the Court was ever unsecure prior to the Marshal Service, and over the last several years, even prior to COVID, there's been a huge problem. When I was a County Commissioner prior to entering this Body, we were dealing with eight or 10 percent of the days in any given year where the courts would just close at the last minute.

Like I said, there's nothing more dangerous, in my opinion, than to see somebody that's all geared up to go to court, somebody that's taken a day off of work to have that final hearing to see if they can get custody of their children back, or a contentious divorce where both parties are in the parking lot, and to have somebody come out and say, 'well, we don't have security, go home.' You know? Justice delayed is justice denied, and we're fortunate to this point we haven't had a

tragedy, and I ask the Body to please join me in making our courts secure. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Falmouth, Representative Kuhn.

Representative **KUHN**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in support of the pending motion and to offer a couple of points for the Body's consideration.

First, the majority of the Committee had concerns about how to operationalize this bill. In particular, how the court administrator would define and calculate the two-percent threshold to trigger the requirement to outsource to the sheriff's department. Committee Members had questions such as: should the calculation be based on a total number of days, or half days or even hours when events are canceled due to a lack of security? What if some events, but not all events, are canceled on a particular day? Should the calculation be made monthly, with a requirement to contract for the next month, or the next year? And so on. So, the bill did not contain any information about how to operationalize it, which was problematic.

Another concern of the Committee's was that it could actually result in a wasteful diversion of resources. The Judicial Branch pointed out that mandatory contracts with a local sheriff's department don't really make a viable emergency solution to an unexpected closure. The reason for this is that it takes time to negotiate the contracts and to provide the contracted staff with the necessary training. Because sheriffs aren't just interchangeable with judicial marshals, they have different roles, different responsibilities and different procedures. This was echoed, actually, by the Maine State Law Enforcement Association, that indeed recognized that the lack of judicial marshals; or the lack of a sufficient number; is problematic for the Judicial Branch, and said that "there's no doubt that the Judicial Branch has struggled with staffing some facilities, but replacing them with other law enforcement will only spread other law enforcement thinner and likely lead to higher costs. Other law enforcement and private security agencies do not have the specialized training that the judicial marshals have or the relationship the judicial marshals have with the rest of the Judicial Branch whom they work hand in hand with on a daily basis." And really suggested the solution is to hire more judicial marshals, which is something that I know the Judicial Branch brings to this Body every year in the course of their budget submission.

So, for those reasons, I would ask that the Body supports the Majority Report. Thank you.

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

Representative **WHITE**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I need to rebut a few of those points, if I may.

The qualifications, the certifications necessary to perform this duty is already in Statute. The sheriffs are already qualified by Statute, the sheriffs do this in other counties; those counties like Somerset that never gave up the authority to the Marshal Service still do this job. And this doesn't mandate the local sheriff gets the contract, it mandates that it goes out to contract and the local sheriff has the first opportunity to take that contract. This is already in Statute that it can happen, the qualifications are already set, the only difference is this mandates that it happens if they fail to do their job.

And Mr. Speaker, the simple truth here is, they're not doing their job and people in rural communities are being endangered because of it. So, don't be distracted by this. If you'd like to look at the original text, it's pretty simple; pull it up, there's only a couple of words being changed. The sheriffs are absolutely

qualified. The sheriff in my county stood in Committee and testified that he not only has a full slate of manpower, but he has a backup or a reserve force that he's already polled that are willing to do this. What these people are not willing to do is to go to work for the Marshal Service, which several of them have already, but they didn't like to get a phone call at 5:00 in the morning and have the marshal from Portland say, 'hey, we need somebody in Lewiston, we need you to drive from Dover-Foxcroft to Lewiston this morning because we're short, we're going to close Dover and we're going to have you serve down there.'

So, the local guys that are quite qualified, many of them that have already done this job, are willing to do the job. They're just not willing to be redeployed all over the State. So, what's happening is my constituents, the Representative from Dover-Foxcroft's constituents are being left out, literally, in the cold. So, thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Falmouth, Representative Kuhn.

Representative **KUHN**: Thank you. I just wanted to briefly respond that it is true that the Judicial Branch does contract out with the sheriff's department in Lincoln and Somerset Counties. The point is that that is done within the discretion of the Judicial Branch when they feel that it's in the best interests of the public. The problem here is that this is being made mandatory under a framework where the threshold for when that mandatory requirement is triggered is uncertain and undefined in the Statute. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Caratunk, Representative Caruso.

Representative **CARUSO**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in support of the bill.

Repeatedly throughout Session, we have heard from the Judicial Branch that the lack of judicial marshals has been a great hinderance in making sure that court can be in session, and we know that we have a big problem in our State with people having due process. As it's been said, just briefly, I'm going to say; you know, the sheriff's department, as it's been mentioned, has previously provided this, and this is not a mandate; it just gives the county sheriffs the first shot at providing marshals. And the Piscataquis Sheriff is interested in this. He has the ability and he is interested in this and the Piscataquis courthouse is in need of it.

And just this past Monday, we had a confirmation hearing for a judge and when I was reading his survey, when it asked for his greatest concern, he said the lack of judicial marshals. So, I just feel like we have a need, this offers a solution, we should let the courthouses have this opportunity and if the county sheriffs want to provide it, great.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Dover-Foxcroft, Representative Perkins.

Representative **PERKINS**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't know if anybody's aware, I mean, it's 2025 now, but our courts are still cleaning up cases since we closed the courts during COVID. That means that outside of what would normally be done, we are still trying to play catchup. And someone somewhere decided that Piscataquis County; I guess the citizens of Piscataquis County don't deserve the same amount of justice or access to the justice system as the rest of Maine, because they went and pulled their judge package. So, not only are we behind, we're begging and borrowing judges.

So, every day that our Court is open is precious to us, and it's precious to my constituents. And then, we have this additional problem now that all of a sudden, on one of those few days where we can get a judge up there and we've got things

under control and people can have access to the constitutionally protected court system, it gets closed because we don't have marshals. And it's just not acceptable, Mr. Speaker.

There are too many things hindering us up in Piscataquis County where, as my Dear Friend from Guilford said, we have people that will drive an hour just to get to the court in their own county to find out it's closed and then they have to go an additional hour. And some of these people, because of their situation, you've got victims that don't have access to their own cars. You've got people that are elderly, you've got bad weather, you've got all sorts of things that just conspire against them. And I don't know how I can say it any more plainly, but the people of Piscataquis County need access to our courts. They need to be open every day possible, and we need to have the same access to the justice system as the entire State of Maine. And if there is any solution that we can use to forward that, and that includes allowing our sheriffs to contract services on days when the judicial marshals can't fulfill that duty, I would encourage every person in this room to vote for that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Harpswell, Representative Golek.

Representative **GOLEK**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question that I'd like to ask.

The SPEAKER: The Representative may proceed.

Representative **GOLEK**: I believe we just passed a bill that increased our State troopers, I think by 15 to 20, to assist with the shortage of sheriffs already in our State. So, it seems to me that if this bill was to pass, it would also continue to feed on the shortage of sheriffs that we have.

The SPEAKER: The Representative from Harpswell, Representative Golek, has posed a question through the Chair to any Member who wishes to answer. The Chair recognizes the Representative from Guilford, Representative White.

Representative **WHITE**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I only rise to answer the question.

There are areas in the State where the sheriff's departments are struggling. It is not Piscataquis County. Our sheriff testified before this Committee that he has a full slate of officers currently and that he has reserve officers that he could put into this duty that he had already spoken to, that many of which have already served in this position.

The other thing that I rise to mention is that there is a standard in this bill, and if anyone wants to pull the text up, you can read it plainly, it's less than a paragraph. It states clearly that --

The SPEAKER: The Member will defer. The Member is allowed to answer the question, but the Member has already risen twice. So, the Chair would ask unanimous consent for the Member to address the House for a third time. Hearing no objection, it is so ordered. The Member may proceed.

Representative **WHITE**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that. I appreciate it, my colleagues.

The standard for triggering the mandate is if the courts are closed more than two percent of the scheduled days on the calendar, they're already scheduled out and it has to be because of lack of marshals. If it's a lack of a judge, that doesn't trigger the event, if it's a weather day, that doesn't trigger it, it has to be specifically two percent of the time because of lack of marshals. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for being graceful.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Caratunk, Representative Caruso.

Representative **CARUSO**: Just to answer the question. It's an option; it's not required by the sheriffs.

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. 327

YEA - Abdi, Beck, Bell, Boyer M, Brennan, Cloutier, Copeland, Crafts, Dhalac, Farrin, Friedmann, Frost, Gattine, Gere, Graham, Gramlich, Hasenfus, Hepler, Julia, Kessler, Kuhn, Lajoie, Lee, Lookner, Macias, Malon, Mastraccio, Mathieson, Matlack, Meyer, Mitchell, Montell, Moonen, Murphy, O'Halloran, Pugh, Rana, Ray, Rielly, Roberts, Roeder, Rollins, Sachs, Salisbury, Sato, Sayre, Shagoury, Skold, Supica, Terry, Webb, Yusuf, Zager.

NAY - Adams, Albert, Ankeles, Arata, Archer, Ardell, Arford, Babin, Bagshaw, Bishop, Blier, Boyer D, Bridgeo, Bunker, Campbell, Carlow, Caruso, Chapman, Cimino, Cluchey, Collins, Cooper, Cray, Daigle, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eder, Faircloth, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foley, Foster, Fredericks, Fredette, Geiger, Gifford, Golek, Greenwood, Guerrette, Haggan, Hall, Henderson, Hymes, Jackson, Javner, Lance, Lavigne, Lemelin, Lyman, Mason, McCabe, McIntyre, Milliken, Mingo, Morris, Nutting, Olsen, Osher, Parry, Paul, Perkins, Pluecker, Poirier, Pomerleau, Quint, Rudnicki, Sargent, Schmersal-Burgess, Simmons, Sinclair, Smith, Soboleski, Strout, Swallow, Thorne, Tuell, Underwood, Wadsworth, Walker, Warren, White J, White R, Wood P, Wood S, Woodsome, Mr. Speaker.

ABSENT - Collamore, Crockett, DeBrito, Eaton, Griffin, Lanigan, Libby, Runte, Stover.

Yes, 53; No, 89; Absent, 9; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

53 having voted in the affirmative and 89 voted in the negative, with 9 being absent, and accordingly the Majority **Ought Not to Pass Report was NOT ACCEPTED.**

Subsequently, on motion of Representative KUHN of Falmouth, the Minority **Ought to Pass as Amended Report was ACCEPTED.**

The Bill was **READ ONCE. Committee Amendment "A" (H-467) 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-467)** and sent for concurrence.

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

Majority Report of the Committee on **JUDICIARY** reporting **Ought to Pass** on Bill "An Act to Bring Parity to the State's Recognition of the Wabanaki Nations' Authority to Provide Electric Power Districts and Child Support Enforcement" (H.P. 1271) (L.D. 1900)

Signed:

Senators:

CARNEY of Cumberland
TALBOT ROSS of Cumberland

Representatives:

KUHN of Falmouth
LEE of Auburn
O'HALLORAN of Brewer
PUGH of Portland
SATO of Gorham
SINCLAIR of Bath

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

Signed:

Senator:

HAGGAN of Penobscot

Representatives:

BABIN of Fort Fairfield
CARUSO of Caratunk
HENDERSON of Rumford
POIRIER of Skowhegan

Representative DANA of the Passamaquoddy Tribe - of the House - supports the Majority **Ought to Pass** Report.

READ.

Representative KUHN of Falmouth moved that the House **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought to Pass** Report.

Representative POIRIER of Skowhegan **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**: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Skowhegan, Representative Poirier.

Representative **POIRIER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to express my opposition to this LD 1900. While the intent behind this legislation may be to promote equity and self-governance for the Wabanaki Nations, I believe it raises significant concerns that merit careful consideration.

Granting authority over electric power districts and child support enforcement could lead to jurisdictional conflicts with existing State and local authorities. The regulation of electric power involves complex infrastructure, safety standards and interstate coordination. Introducing multiple governing bodies could result in confusion for customers and potentially disruption in service delivery. Child support enforcement is a critical function that ensures the well-being of children and families across the State. Allowing a Tribal Court that admits they are not yet equipped to administer this function could lead to discrepancies in enforcement, potential conflicts in legal interpretations and challenges in ensuring uniformity and fairness in the application of child support laws.

Enacting LD 1900 also sets a precedent for further expansion of tribal authority into other areas traditionally managed by the State. While self-governance is a fundamental principle, it's essential to ensure that such expansions do not undermine the coherence and effectiveness of State governance. It's extremely important to note that any changes in the 1980s Implementing Act are permanent changes. By enacting these changes in piecemeal, we are binding future

Legislatures, and we're not able to undo these changes if they see negative impacts in the future.

There were concerns that I actually heard from tribal members about what kind of impact having these courts expanded into the additional tribes would be. Their fear is they're seeing on; I'll put it out there; the Penobscot Nation, some issues with the way judges are selected. It's not the traditional process like we have, going through confirmations. They're appointed by a Chief. You have to be an attorney, but that's about it. And the tribal people that I've spoken with have seen that lots of times, the way the tribal government works is it's lots of family members. And when you're looking at an issue like child support, when you have such a close-knit community, you're often not getting; you're getting a biased view, is what you're getting. So, they're not seeing complete fairness in that, and that is a concern.

The complexity of the issue addressed in LD 1900 necessitates thorough discussion and consensus building among all stakeholders, including tribal people, State agencies, local governments and all the Wabanaki Nations. I feel that this has been a rushed and pretty much unilateral approach in two Committee days for something that has impacts that will last a lifetime. It's imperative that any changes to governance structures are made with careful planning, transparent dialogue and broad-based support.

While the aspirations of LD 1900 to empower the Wabanaki Nations are commendable, the proposed expansions of authority over electric power districts and the child support enforcement presents significant challenges. So, I urge you to consider these concerns carefully and don't act in haste, because there's a lot of members of the tribes that are going to be impacted should this go through. Thank you.

The **SPEAKER**: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Falmouth, Representative Kuhn.

Representative **KUHN**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to start by just acknowledging that there was zero testimonies submitted in opposition to this bill. And now, I would just like to take a moment to explain it.

So, this bill would increase parity among Wabanaki Nations under State law in two ways. Section 1 of the bill would amend existing law which allows the Penobscot Nation and Tribal Court to enforce tribal child support orders through revocation of a professional license; or an IFW registration; and compliance action to enforce a tribal court support order. This is similar to the law and process followed by the State of Maine courts. This bill increases parity among the Wabanaki Nations by recognizing the same child support enforcement authority for the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians. Chief Clarissa Sabbatis, Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians, explained that the child support enforcement provision is a top priority for her Tribe. In January 2024, the Maliseet Tribal Court established a Health and Wellness Court and began providing judicial services to their community. She noted the importance of tools to support strong and healthy families. She said to protect our children and ensure that they have the resources they need to thrive, the Maliseet Tribal Court will soon begin hearing parental rights and child support cases. While there is a well-established formula to determine the amount of child support, it's the enforcement of that support order that often proves the most challenging. The Court's ability to enforce these orders will enhance their ability to recognize and the essential role of tribal courts in protecting tribal children.

Section 2 of the bill would increase parity among Wabanaki Nations under State law by granting the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians and the Mi'kmaq Nation authority to establish

tribal utility districts. That is identical to the authority already granted to the Penobscot Nation and the Passamaquoddy Tribe. Chief Sabattis described the importance of this aspect of the bill as well. While the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians does not currently have their own power district, the ability to establish one is an important tool for advancing their energy, sustainability and climate resilience goals. Specifically, the current grid system in place is not sufficient to support full electrification. This authority would also allow this Band to access federal funding for tribal utility projects, allowing them to strengthen their infrastructure and pursue energy self-sufficiency.

So, for these reasons, I'd ask the Body to support the pending motion.

The SPEAKER: 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. 328

YEA - Abdi, Ankeles, Archer, Arford, Beck, Bell, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Eder, 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, Mingo, Mitchell, Montell, Moonen, Murphy, O'Halloran, Osher, Pluecker, Pugh, Rana, Ray, Rielly, Roberts, Roeder, Rollins, Sachs, Salisbury, Sargent, Sato, Sayre, Shagoury, Sinclair, Skold, Supica, Terry, Warren, Webb, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

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

ABSENT - Collamore, Crockett, DeBrito, Eaton, Griffin, Lanigan, Libby, Runte, Stover.

Yes, 75; No, 67; Absent, 9; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

75 having voted in the affirmative and 67 voted in the negative, with 9 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**.

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

The Chair laid before the House the following item which was **TABLED** earlier in today's session:

HOUSE DIVIDED REPORT - Report "A" (8) **Ought Not to Pass** - Report "B" (3) **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-404)** - Report "C" (1) **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "B" (H-405)** - Committee on **EDUCATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS** on Bill "An Act to Prohibit School Boards from Implementing or Enforcing Mask Mandates"

(H.P. 953) (L.D. 1461)

Which was **TABLED** by Representative KUHN of Falmouth pending **ACCEPTANCE** of any Report.

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

Representative EDER of Waterboro **REQUESTED** a roll call on the motion to **ACCEPT** Report "A" **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 Waterboro, Representative Eder.

Representative **EDER**: Mr. Speaker, Men and Women of the House, masks caused immeasurable damage to the fabric of our communities, our schools and our children. Our public health bureaucracies worked hand in hand with Big Pharma to push the vaccine, and they blatantly told us that being able to remove your mask was the carrot for the stick of the untested and injurious jab. Neither stopped transmission. This proves that mask compliance was an exercise in behavioral science more than actual science. Yes, kids were thrown out of school and parents were tackled and dragged from school board meetings over masks. They caused enormous consternation. And it's clear now that the dissenters were right to refuse.

Mr. Speaker, you yourself used masks here in this Chamber to force compliance under threat of Members losing their votes and Committee assignments. In the spirit of reconciliation, I'm wondering if you would like to apologize for that, those regrettable behaviors then. The point is, we need to acknowledge that these devastating mistakes must never be repeated, especially since much of our COVID response was forced error.

It seems to me insanity that we would seek to do this to children again, because while masks were ineffective at preventing transmission, they effectively destroyed children's social and emotional well-being and hindered their learning, lost years of normal development that they can never get back. And numerous educational studies confirm this. Suicides are now the leading cause of death among adolescents, and the rise has been attributed to pandemic measures like masks.

I'm for local control, Mr. Speaker, but this failed, cruel and dark experiment must never be repeated on our children. Masks have no place in the learning environment, and I beg you all to acknowledge this and follow my light. Thank you.

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

Representative **MURPHY**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. School boards are charged with a duty to ensure the safety of students and staff within their school administrative units. Although we are a local control State, there are times, for the safety, health and well-being of the State, that Statutes and requirements are developed that benefit the State as a whole and that protect everybody's health and well-being. It's short-sighted to prohibit school boards and superintendents from enforcing mask mandates in the future when we don't know what that future may hold, and the safety of the State may require mask mandates in the future. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Paris, Representative Lance.

Representative **LANCE**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and Members of the House. I'm a recovering teacher. I did 35 years. The two worst years I had, I was wearing a mask. And only to come find out that later on, the effectiveness of the mask was being challenged, I continued to see kids get sick. High school kids, being high school kids, tended to wear the same one over and over and over again, quite disgusting. And I had some great micro labs, because we swabbed the inside of some of those masks and got some great culture disks from them. So, I'm quite worried about the safety and effectiveness of those masks in my room. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Chelsea, Representative Lemelin.

Representative **LEMELIN**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When it comes to this bill, the only thing that really matters is the science.

Three years ago, I emailed you and the President of the Senate, and I presented to you in an email the actual science. I was blown away then, when you and the President of the Senate actually read my email and you actually reviewed the science, and I thank you for that. By doing so, the mask mandate was removed here in the House, which was very important.

Now, I'd like to reveal to the House the actual science. The University of Waterloo; and for those Members that don't know anything about the University of Waterloo, it's the MIT of Canada. It is a very prestigious and well-respected university. They did an extensive scientific research on the use of masks, and they proved unequivocally that the mask did not work, that they were basically useless. The N95 mask, if worn perfectly by a doctor, a well-trained doctor on how to wear a mask, was remotely useful. How can we possibly not pass a bill to ban these masks, when they have been proven by a university through incredible scientific study that the masks are worthless, why would we ask children in schools to wear these masks? So, we're not talking about opinions here. It doesn't matter what the future brings; it doesn't matter what new virus comes up, it's not going to be worse than COVID, and this university proved that the COVID virus penetrated these masks.

So, Mr. Speaker, we always talk about science in this room. Now, we need to actually follow that science and not put these schools into the horror of going back to wearing masks when it's been proven that they're worthless. When it comes; now, they may prevent spit from getting on somebody, but the virus from that spit will penetrate those masks. That's proven science. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from New Gloucester, Representative Arata.

Representative **ARATA**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, I would not support the bill as originally written, but I will oppose this motion because I support Committee Amendment "A," which allows masks at the direction from a State or local health authority. I believe that that is a very intelligent compromise. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Harrington, Representative Strout.

Representative **STROUT**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. This issue is actually one of the reasons I decided to run to be a legislator, because I sit on the school board, and I sat on my school board when I had parents pleading in the crowd to please don't make my child wear a mask, because they had the scientific things that were making them sick, and they just wanted their kids to be able to come to school and learn. My son didn't go to school, he chose

to see his teachers 15 minutes a week, which benefitted him because he got to go sternman four days a week, so, I have to thank the masks for that.

But I was told that the school board could not stop the mandate of the masks, because if we did, the State would stop providing us with funding. So, in rural Maine, funding is very important for what comes from the State, especially where my district is. So, it's really a tricky question, because the school board didn't want to mandate it, but we were told we had to mandate it. So, you know, I would never make a mandate for that, I think the parent should be able to choose, but that's one reason I came here, is so I could fight to make sure that parents did have the right to choose what they thought was best for their kids. So, I oppose this motion. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Westbrook, Representative Salisbury.

Representative **SALISBURY**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wanted to take a moment to thank the Representative from Chelsea for highlighting the Waterloo study. I hadn't read that before, so, I took the opportunity to Google it, and the study; this is from August of 2021, and it says, "there is no question it is beneficial to wear any face covering, both for protection in close proximity and at a distance in a room," and it talked about the effectiveness. It just is a matter of which type of mask you wear, and it talks about the N95 mask being; the KN95, excuse me. So, I appreciate the highlight on that study.

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

ROLL CALL NO. 329

YEA - Abdi, Ankeles, Archer, Arford, Beck, Bell, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, 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, Montell, Moonen, Murphy, O'Halloran, Osher, Pluecker, Pugh, Rana, Ray, Rielly, Roberts, Roeder, Rollins, Sachs, Salisbury, Sargent, Sato, Sayre, Shagoury, Sinclair, Skold, Supica, Terry, Warren, Webb, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

NAY - Adams, Albert, Arata, Ardell, Babin, Bagshaw, Bishop, Blier, Boyer D, Campbell, Carlow, Caruso, Chapman, Cimino, Collins, Cooper, Cray, Daigle, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eder, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foley, Foster, Fredericks, Fredette, Gifford, Greenwood, Guerrette, Haggan, Hall, 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, Underwood, Wadsworth, Walker, White J, White R, Wood P, Wood S, Woodsome.

ABSENT - Collamore, Crockett, DeBrito, Eaton, Griffin, Lanigan, Libby, Runte, Stover.

Yes, 73; No, 69; Absent, 9; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

73 having voted in the affirmative and 69 voted in the negative, with 9 being absent, and accordingly Report "A" **Ought Not to Pass** was **ACCEPTED** and sent for concurrence.

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

Eight Members of the Committee on **JUDICIARY** report in Report "A" **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-472)** on Bill "An Act to Reimburse the City of Ellsworth for an Access Road to a New Court Facility in Hancock County"

(H.P. 481) (L.D. 739)

Signed:

Senators:

CARNEY of Cumberland
TALBOT ROSS of Cumberland

Representatives:

KUHN of Falmouth
BABIN of Fort Fairfield
LEE of Auburn
PUGH of Portland
SATO of Gorham
SINCLAIR of Bath

Four Members of the same Committee report in Report "B" **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "B" (H-473)** on same Bill.

Signed:

Senator:

HAGGAN of Penobscot

Representatives:

CARUSO of Caratunk
HENDERSON of Rumford
O'HALLORAN of Brewer

One Member of the same Committee reports in Report "C" **Ought Not to Pass** on same Bill.

Signed:

Representative:

POIRIER of Skowhegan

READ.

Representative KUHN of Falmouth moved that the House **ACCEPT** Report "A" **Ought to Pass as Amended**.

Representative POIRIER of Skowhegan **REQUESTED** a roll call on the motion to **ACCEPT** Report "A" **Ought to Pass as Amended**.

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 Skowhegan, Representative Poirier.

Representative **POIRIER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker and Esteemed Colleagues, I rise today to express my opposition to LD 739. While the intent behind this legislation may be to facilitate the development of a new judicial facility, it raises significant concerns that we have to think about.

The Maine Judicial Branch is tasked with ensuring the fair and impartial administration of justice. It's not the practice or responsibility of the Judicial Branch to fund or act as a pass-through agency for funding of construction of public infrastructure such as access roads. Historically, the construction and maintenance of roads have been within the purview of municipal and State transportation departments.

Passing this bill sets a concerning precedent for future requests. The proposed reimbursement of \$750,000; 50% of the project cost; to the City of Ellsworth for the construction of an access road represents a significant financial commitment. Given the current fiscal constraints faced by the State, it's imperative that we prioritize spending on essential services. Allocating funds to infrastructure projects that fall outside of the Judicial Branch's core responsibilities could divert resources from critical areas of need. The State's limited resources should be directed towards initiatives that benefit the broader public

rather than just specific projects. Given the concerns, it's prudent to explore alternative funding sources for construction of the access road. Federal grants and even county financial support have not been adequately explored.

The development of the new judicial facility in Hancock County is necessary, but the proposed reimbursement for the construction of an access road raises concerns. The Judicial Branch's role should remain focused on its core mission of administering justice and resources should be allocated accordingly. So, I urge my colleagues to consider these points carefully, and please vote against the pending measure.

The **SPEAKER**: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Falmouth, Representative Kuhn.

Representative **KUHN**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There's a little bit of a backstory with this project.

The Judicial Branch initially purchased a lot elsewhere in Ellsworth, which was evidently in a mostly residential area, and it was purchased evidently without the prior knowledge of the neighbors in that neighborhood. I'm getting this information, by the way, from the testimony from the Representative from Ellsworth, Representative White. As a result, there was a significant outcry in the community and the Judicial Branch ended up arranging for a land swap and finding another parcel that met the needs of the community.

This second lot requires the building of a public access road in order to make it functional, and I think that's why the Representative brought the bill. The majority of the Committee felt it was reasonable and appropriate for the State to go in on a cost-share to build this road, because it leads to a State-owned asset that will be serving all of Hancock County. So, splitting the cost at 50/50 instead of at a lower level, which is one of the Minority Reports, seemed appropriate and important, because it will offset the impact of the project for municipal property taxpayers in Ellsworth. It seemed unreasonable for those property taxpayers to be burdened with this significant expense, since they are hosting a facility that is serving the entire county.

So, for these reasons, this seemed like a sensible solution and important to support those property taxpayers. Thank you.

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

ROLL CALL NO. 330

YEA - Abdi, Ankeles, Arata, Archer, Arford, Babin, Beck, Bishop, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Campbell, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, 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, Osher, Pluecker, Pugh, Rana, Ray, Rielly, Roberts, Roeder, Rollins, Sachs, Salisbury, Sato, Sayre, Shagoury, Sinclair, Skold, Supica, Swallow, Terry, Warren, Webb, White R, Wood S, Woodsome, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

NAY - Adams, Albert, Ardell, Bagshaw, Blier, Boyer D, Carlow, Caruso, Chapman, Cimino, Collins, Cooper, Cray, Daigle, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eder, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foley, Foster, Fredericks, Fredette, Gifford, Greenwood, Guerrette, Haggan, Hall, Henderson, Hymes, Javner, Lance, Lavigne, Lemelin, Lyman, Mason, McIntyre, Mingo, Morris, Nutting, O'Halloran, Olsen, Parry, Paul, Perkins, Poirier, Pomerleau, Quint, Rudnicki, Schmorsal-Burgess, Simmons, Smith, Soboleski, Strout, Thorne, Tuell, Underwood, Wadsworth, Walker, White J, Wood P.

ABSENT - Bell, Collamore, Crockett, DeBrito, Eaton, Griffin, Lanigan, Libby, Runte, Sargent, Stover.

Yes, 79; No, 61; Absent, 11; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

79 having voted in the affirmative and 61 voted in the negative, with 11 being absent, and accordingly Report "A" **Ought to Pass as Amended** was **ACCEPTED**.

The Bill was **READ ONCE**. **Committee Amendment "A" (H-472)** 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-472)** and sent for concurrence.

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

Six Members of the Committee on **TAXATION** report in Report "A" **Ought to Pass** on Bill "An Act to Amend the State Tax Laws"

(H.P. 32) (L.D. 68)

Signed:

Senators:

GROHOSKI of Hancock
TIPPING of Penobscot

Representatives:

CLOUTIER of Lewiston
FRIEDMANN of Bar Harbor
MATLACK of St. George
SAYRE of Kennebunk

Six Members of the same Committee report in Report "B" **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-426)** on same Bill.

Signed:

Senator:

BICKFORD of Androscoggin

Representatives:

LAVIGNE of Berwick
QUINT of Hodgdon
RUDNICKI of Fairfield
SWALLOW of Houlton
WHITE of Ellsworth

READ.

Representative CLOUTIER of Lewiston moved that the House **ACCEPT** Report "A" **Ought to Pass**.

Representative RUDNICKI of Fairfield **REQUESTED** a roll call on the motion to **ACCEPT** Report "A" **Ought 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 Fairfield, Representative Rudnicki.

Representative **RUDNICKI**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The basics on this has to do with the BETE. And I know that can get kind of confusing, but the biggest thing that this does with businesses is that if they are currently on the BETE program, this Amendment to the bill actually eliminates the automatic extension for businesses. So, it's more work that they're going to have to be doing on a yearly basis to keep involved with this. That's the biggest reason on it, and that's why I oppose this, excuse me, I oppose this; such a long day, sorry.

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

Representative **CLOUTIER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, LD 68 is a Department bill that makes several minor updates to the State tax laws. The Taxation Committee, as my friend, the Good Representative from Fairfield said, agreed on most of the items in the bill but diverged on two.

The first, as the Good Representative mentioned, is Section A-2, which is a common-sense cleanup. The current deadline for BETE; which is the Business Equipment Tax Exemption; applications is April 1, with an automatic extension until May 1. Unsurprisingly, everyone files as if May 1 were the deadline. So, the Majority Report simply established May 1 as the due date and eliminated the automatic extension and it then establishes that municipalities may choose to grant further extension for good cause. The Minority Report just strikes that section altogether. Thank you.

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

ROLL CALL NO. 331

YEA - Abdi, Ankeles, Archer, Arford, Beck, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, Cray, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, 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, Sachs, Sargent, Sato, Sayre, Shagoury, Sinclair, Skold, Supica, Terry, Warren, Webb, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

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

ABSENT - Bell, Collamore, Crockett, DeBrito, Eaton, Griffin, Lanigan, Lavigne, Libby, Runte, Salisbury, Stover.

Yes, 73; No, 66; Absent, 12; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

73 having voted in the affirmative and 66 voted in the negative, with 12 being absent, and accordingly Report "A" **Ought to Pass** 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.

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

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

The following matter, in the consideration of which the House was engaged at the time of adjournment yesterday, had preference in the Orders of the Day and continued with such preference until disposed of as provided by House Rule 502.

SENATE DIVIDED REPORT - Majority (9) **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-220)** - Minority (3) **Ought Not to Pass** - Committee on **AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY** on Bill "An Act to Strengthen Oversight of Kennels by Changing the Licensing Authority from Municipalities to the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry"

(S.P. 689) (L.D. 1771)

- In Senate, Majority **OUGHT TO PASS AS AMENDED** Report **READ** and **ACCEPTED** and the Bill **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED AS AMENDED BY COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" (S-220)**.

TABLED - June 3, 2025 (Till Later Today) by Representative PLUECKER of Warren.

PENDING - **ACCEPTANCE OF EITHER REPORT.**

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

Representative FAULKINGHAM of Winter Harbor **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: 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. 332

YEA - Abdi, Ankeles, Archer, Ardel, Arford, Beck, Blier, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, Dhalac, Dodge, Doudera, 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, Montell, Moonen, Murphy, Osher, Pluecker, Pugh, Rana, Ray, Rielly, Roberts, Roeder, Rollins, Sachs, Sargent, Sato, Sayre, Shagoury, Sinclair, Skold, Supica, Terry, Warren, Webb, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

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

ABSENT - Bell, Collamore, Crockett, DeBrito, Eaton, Griffin, Lanigan, Lavigne, Libby, Runte, Stover.

Yes, 71; No, 69; Absent, 11; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

71 having voted in the affirmative and 69 voted in the negative, with 11 being absent, and accordingly the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended** Report was **ACCEPTED**.

The Bill was **READ ONCE**. **Committee Amendment "A" (S-220)** was **READ** by the Clerk.

Representative PLUECKER of Warren **PRESENTED** **House Amendment "A" (H-488)** to **Committee Amendment "A" (S-220)**, which was **READ** by the Clerk.

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

Representative **PLUECKER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This House Amendment just clarifies that the Department can go and do inspections if there is no ACO hired or appointed in the town. It just clears things up for us. Thank you.

Subsequently, **House Amendment "A" (H-488)** to **Committee Amendment "A" (S-220)** was **ADOPTED**.

Committee Amendment "A" (S-220) as Amended by **House Amendment "A" (H-488)** thereto was **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-220)** as Amended by **House Amendment "A" (H-488)** thereto in **NON-CONCURRENCE** 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:

An Act to Strengthen Maine's Workforce Through Certified Preapprenticeship Training Programs

(H.P. 736) (L.D. 1117)

(C. "A" H-388)

Which was **TABLED** by Representative MOONEN of Portland pending **PASSAGE TO BE ENACTED**. (Roll Call Requested)

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 Passage to be Enacted. All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

ROLL CALL NO. 333

YEA - Abdi, Ankeles, Arata, Archer, Arford, Babin, Beck, Bishop, Blier, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Carlow, Caruso, Cloutier, Cluchey, Cooper, Copeland, Crafts, Cray, Daigle, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eder, Faircloth, Farrin, Faulkingham, Foley, Fredericks, Fredette, Friedmann, Frost, Gattine, Geiger, Gere, Golek, Graham, Gramlich, Guerrette, Hall, Hasenfus, Henderson, Hepler, Hymes, Jackson, Javner, Julia, Kessler, Kuhn, Lajoie, Lee, Lemelin, Lookner, Macias, Malon, Mastraccio, Mathieson, Matlack, McCabe, McIntyre, Meyer, Milliken, Mingo, Mitchell, Montell, Moonen, Murphy, Nutting, O'Halloran, Osher, Parry, Pluecker, Pugh, Rana, Ray, Rielly, Roberts, Roeder, Rollins, Sachs, Salisbury, Sargent, Sato, Sayre, Shagoury, Simmons, Sinclair, Skold, Smith, Strout, Swallow, Terry, Tuell, Warren, Webb, White J, White R, Wood S, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

NAY - Adams, Albert, Ardel, Bagshaw, Boyer D, Campbell, Chapman, Cimino, Collins, Flynn, Foster, Gifford, Greenwood, Haggan, Lance, Lavigne, Lyman, Mason, Morris, Olsen, Paul, Perkins, Poirier, Pomerleau, Quint, Rudnicki, Schmearsal-Burgess, Soboleski, Thorne, Underwood, Wadsworth, Walker, Wood P, Woodsome.

ABSENT - Bell, Collamore, Crockett, Eaton, Griffin, Lanigan, Libby, Runte, Stover.

Yes, 108; No, 34; Absent, 9; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

108 having voted in the affirmative and 34 voted in the negative, with 9 being absent, and accordingly the Bill was **PASSED TO BE ENACTED**, 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. 626) (L.D. 1542) Bill "An Act to Amend the Membership of the Washington County Budget Advisory Committee" Committee on **STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-266)**

(S.P. 681) (L.D. 1735) Bill "An Act to Provide an Income Tax Deduction for Certain Contributions to a Qualified Achieving a Better Life Experience Program Account" Committee on **TAXATION** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-263)**

(H.P. 144) (L.D. 221) Bill "An Act to Address the Effect of Changes to Federal Income Tax Laws on Maine Income Tax Laws" Committee on **TAXATION** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-483)**

(H.P. 458) (L.D. 719) Bill "An Act to Amend the Share of State Funding for the County Jail Operations Fund" Committee on **CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-494)**

(H.P. 614) (L.D. 949) Bill "An Act to Clarify Licensing Jurisdiction for Manufactured Housing Communities" Committee on **HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-491)**

(H.P. 713) (L.D. 1091) Bill "An Act to Reinforce Free Speech at Town Meetings by Allowing Persons a Minimum Amount of Time in Which to Speak" Committee on **STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-509)**

(H.P. 772) (L.D. 1167) Resolve, to Create a Pilot Program to Assist Nonprofit Housing Developers in Rehabilitating Existing Aging Housing Stock for First-time Home Buyers Committee on **HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-492)**

(H.P. 806) (L.D. 1231) Bill "An Act Requiring Ferries to Dock Overnight on Certain Islands for Emergency Purposes" Committee on **TRANSPORTATION** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-493)**

(H.P. 937) (L.D. 1428) Bill "An Act to Increase Access to Child Care for Maine Families" Committee on **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-508)**

(H.P. 1130) (L.D. 1695) Bill "An Act to Provide Law Enforcement Agencies with an Anti-sex-trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation Protocol" Committee on **CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-495)**

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

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

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

ENACTORS

Emergency Measure

An Act to Support Survivors of Military Sexual Trauma and Active Duty Military Members Transitioning to Civilian Life

(H.P. 430) (L.D. 662)
(C. "A" H-469)

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. 126 voted in favor of the same and 1 against, and accordingly the Bill was **PASSED TO BE ENACTED**, signed by the Speaker and sent to the Senate.

Acts

An Act Directing the Department of Education to Develop Pilot Programs to Place Child Care Facilities in Selected School Administrative Units

(H.P. 291) (L.D. 437)
(C. "A" H-396)

An Act to Prohibit a Person from Obtaining an Elver Dealer's License for a Minimum of 5 Years in Cases of Repeat Violations of License Conditions

(H.P. 716) (L.D. 1094)
(C. "A" H-475)

An Act Regarding Physical Escort and Restraint and Seclusion of Students in Schools

(H.P. 823) (L.D. 1248)
(C. "A" H-399)

An Act to Provide Funding for Summer School Programming

(H.P. 1078) (L.D. 1624)
(C. "A" H-401)

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, Directing the Department of Education to Convene a Stakeholder Group to Improve High School Graduation Rates and Review Policies Related to Graduation Rate Data

(H.P. 634) (L.D. 974)
(C. "A" H-398)

Resolve, Directing the University of Maine System to Study Student Teacher Compensation

(H.P. 862) (L.D. 1327)
(C. "A" H-400)

Resolve, to Direct the Governor's Energy Office to Solicit Information Regarding the Creation of a Thermal Energy Networks Program in Maine

(H.P. 1073) (L.D. 1619)
(C. "A" H-411)

Resolve, Directing the Department of Education to Establish a Working Group to Study the Maine Learning Results

(H.P. 1136) (L.D. 1701)
(C. "A" H-403)

Resolve, to Expand the Recipients of the Report on the Public Safety Health and Wellness Grant Pilot Program and Authorize Legislation to Be Submitted in Response to the Report

(H.P. 1225) (L.D. 1830)
(C. "A" H-474)

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**.

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

Representative **FAULKINGHAM**: Mr. Speaker, is the House in possession of LD 894?

The SPEAKER: The Chair would answer in the affirmative. However, the flow of work is at the discretion of the Chair and the Chair has not laid before the House Supplement No. 8. The Chair is not going to lay before the House Supplement No. 8.

The Chair **RULED** that the item will not be laid before the Body.

Representative **FAULKINGHAM** of Winter Harbor **APPEALED** the **RULING OF THE CHAIR**.

Representative **MOONEN** of Portland **REQUESTED** a roll call on **SUSTAINING** the **RULING OF THE CHAIR**.

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 Portland, Representative Moonen.

Representative **MOONEN**: I also request that because we've been here before that you explain what a yes means and what a no means on appealing the ruling of the Chair.

The SPEAKER: If you're in favor of the Ruling of the Chair, you'll vote yes. If you're opposed to the Ruling of the Chair, you'll vote no.

A roll call has been ordered. The pending question before the House is to Sustain the Ruling of the Chair. All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

ROLL CALL NO. 334

YEA - Abdi, Ankeles, Archer, Arford, Beck, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Faircloth, Farrin, Friedmann, Frost, Gattine, Geiger, Gere, Golek, Graham, Gramlich, Hasenfus, 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, Roeder, Rollins, Sachs, Salisbury, Sargent, Sato, Sayre, Shagoury, Sinclair, Skold, Supica, Terry, Warren, Webb, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

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

ABSENT - Bell, Collamore, Crockett, Eaton, Griffin, Lanigan, Libby, Runte, Stover, Woodsome.

Yes, 71; No, 70; Absent, 10; Excused, 0.

71 having voted in the affirmative and 70 voted in the negative, with 10 being absent, and accordingly the **RULING OF THE CHAIR** was **SUSTAINED**.

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

On motion of Representative **CARLOW** of Buxton, the House adjourned at 7:58 p.m., until 10:00 a.m., Thursday, June 5, 2025.