

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

The following document is provided by the  
**LAW AND LEGISLATIVE DIGITAL LIBRARY**  
at the Maine State Law and Legislative Reference Library  
<http://legislature.maine.gov/lawlib>



Reproduced from scanned originals with text recognition applied  
(searchable text may contain some errors and/or omissions)

Senate Legislative Record  
One Hundred and Twenty-Third Legislature

State of Maine

Daily Edition

First Regular Session  
December 6, 2006 to June 21, 2007

Pages 1 - 1266

Committee Amendment "A" (H-394) as Amended by Senate Amendment "A" (S-215) thereto, **ADOPTED**, in **NON-CONCURRENCE**.

**ASSIGNED FOR SECOND READING NEXT LEGISLATIVE DAY.**

---

Senate at Ease.

Senate called to order by the President.

---

The Chair laid before the Senate the following Tabled and Later Today Assigned matter:

HOUSE REPORTS - from the Committee on **TAXATION** on Bill "An Act To Allow a Tax Credit for College Loan Repayments" I.B. 2 L.D. 1856

Majority - **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-414)** (12 members)

Minority - **Ought Not To Pass** (1 member)

Tabled - June 6, 2007, by Senator **SCHNEIDER** of Penobscot

Pending - motion by same Senator to **ACCEPT** the Majority **OUGHT TO PASS AS AMENDED** Report, in concurrence

(In House, June 6, 2007, the Majority **OUGHT TO PASS AS AMENDED** Report **READ** and **ACCEPTED** and the Bill **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED AS AMENDED BY COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" (H-414).**)

(In Senate, June 6, 2007, Reports **READ.**)

**THE PRESIDENT:** The Chair recognizes the Senator from York, Senator Nass.

Senator **NASS:** Thank you Madame President and men and women of the Senate. It seems to be my prerogative this year to speak to deep minority reports, and this is another one. However, just to bring to your attention, this is initiated bill number two, which means it's here because there's a referendum proposed. A lot of signatures were collected, the press is reporting 73,000 collected, on what's called 'Opportunity Maine.' It came before the Taxation Committee and I think the Senate was in session so I missed the public hearing. I went down to find that the committee had voted unanimously, except me, to pass this thing as written. I've never voted for one of those, so I voted against it. The point is that it is my hope that this will eventually go out to the voters, which I think is the proper thing. I think the plan from the committee members over there was that it would go to the table and therefore be rejected and then go to the voters. It's not that we disagree on the end point for this initiated referendum, it's just on the passage to get there where some of us differ. Madame President, more importantly, there is a degree of irrationality about this idea. While we may be concerned about how we're going to pay for the things that we're doing, this has the

possibility, even though the fiscal note is small, of developing into a very expensive program. The fiscal note shows the end of the fourth year about \$3 million, maybe \$3.8 million, but looking out into the future it could be huge. As it gets out to referendum and to our constituents, I hope that they realize that too, and with me, try to figure out how in the world we're going to pay for it. Thank you Madame President.

**THE PRESIDENT:** The Chair recognizes the Senator from Cumberland, Senator Bartlett.

Senator **BARTLETT:** Thank you Madame President. I rise in support of the pending bill. I do think that it is one of the most important things we can do this year. As the good Senator from York, Senator Nass, pointed out, there are 73,000 people signed on to this initiative. It is very popular and I have no doubt if it were to go out to referendum that it would pass. By enacting it ourselves, we have some control over it, the direction of it or how to fund it, and so forth. I think it's important that we take that initiative and take the responsibility for those issues. One of the big reasons that motivated me to run for office was that I was looking around and seeing that a lot of my peers were unable to return to Maine after college or law school because of the expense of paying off their loans relative to the incomes they'd make. I think this is an important issue and as it gets up and running and more young people stay here, we can attract better jobs, people will have higher incomes, it will pay for itself. So I think some of the scariness of long-term high costs are far overstated and I certainly hope you will join me in setting a strong vote of support, as this bill has a small fiscal note for this biennium. Let's see how it works and we can always revisit it in the future.

On motion by Senator **MITCHELL** of Kennebec, **TABLED** until Later in Today's Session, pending the motion by Senator **SCHNEIDER** of Penobscot to **ACCEPT** the Majority **OUGHT TO PASS AS AMENDED** Report, in concurrence.

---

Senator **SULLIVAN** of York was granted unanimous consent to address the Senate off the Record.

---

Senator **DIAMOND** of Cumberland was granted unanimous consent to address the Senate on the Record.

Senator **DIAMOND:** Pertaining to the issue we talked about earlier, flavored cigars and cigarettes, I thought the good Senator from Somerset had come up with a good amendment, but I'm a little nervous about the Attorney General deciding which cigar I can smoke. I would hope that we send the message that this is a more complicated issue than just the obvious. With that, I leave my message on the record.

---

Senator **TURNER** of Cumberland was granted unanimous consent to address the Senate off the Record.

---