

132nd Legislature
Senate of
Maine
Senate District 6

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LD 373 - An Act to Establish "Welcome Home" as the Official State Anthem

Good morning, Senator Baldacci, Representative Salisbury and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government. I'm here to introduce LD372 - *An Act to Establish "Welcome Home" as the Official State Anthem*.

My name is Marianne Moore. I proudly represent Senate District 6 which includes all of Washington County and 16 Communities in Eastern Hancock County as well.

During the summer of 2023, Gordon Thomas Ward reached out to me and shared his song "*Welcome Home*", a song all about Maine, that had just been released. He asked me to help champion "*Welcome Home*" to be considered the **Maine State Anthem**.

Knowing I really couldn't introduce this bill during the second session of the 131st Legislature since this type of matter was not really an "emergency"; 😊 once re-elected, I turned this bill in as one of my first for the 132nd Legislature for your consideration.

I am reminded an Anthem is defined as "a rousing or uplifting song identified with a particular group, body, or cause." That's us - Mainers!

Research tells us Maine has four musical pieces adopted by the state of Maine.

1. The "*State of Maine*" was adopted as the **State Song** in 1937. It was written and composed by Roger Vinton Snow, who died in 1953. This piece, although it has lyrics, has a "march" tempo, and while it's a strong piece of music, it sounds quite dated.

2. In 2012, "*The Dirigo March*" was unanimously approved by the Maine State Legislature as the **Official State March**. Leo J. Pepin, an Augusta native, composed this march, a musical score with no lyrics, in 1961.
3. More recently, The Ghost of Paul Revere folk band had their ballad "*The Ballad of the 20th Maine*" confirmed as the official **State Ballad** on June 7, 2019. The ballad focuses on the 20th Maine Regiment's crucial role in winning the Battle of Gettysburg during the Civil War. Again, the ballad is excellent but does not address the present day.
4. In 2021, the legislature adopted Terry Swett's "*My Sweet Maine*", which was written to celebrate Maine's bicentennial in 2020, as the **State Song of the 21st Century**.

"*Welcome Home*" offers something different from the examples listed above. It underscores a multitude of both historical and modern characteristics that make our state appealing and recognized by others as special and unique. There are mentions of what Mainers and tourists see as valuable and precious, even mentioning that Mainers are "the hardest workin' folks you'll ever know." There's definitely room for "*Welcome Home*" in Maine as a state anthem.

Did you know that Tennessee has twelve official state songs, the most in the country, and an official bicentennial rap?

When you hear the song, "*Welcome Home*", you will see how it is a positive song, upbeat, catchy, acknowledges the Wabanaki heritage and history, and embraces many locations, occupations, activities and groups of people. More of that is needed in today's world! 😊 It even mentions the little-known behavior of rolling the windows down when driving into Maine, which, apparently, is more common than I realized. 😊

Gordon Thomas Ward, the songwriter, will be performing the song for you to hear. 😊 I have attached the lyrics to his song for you to follow along!

Maine deserves to have its own State Anthem. I hope you will agree and support this bill!

Thank you!

“Welcome Home” © 2023, Gordon Thomas Ward

My home state has a different state of mind.
When I have to leave, I miss her every time.
From the harbors to the highlands, from Aroostook to the bays
This corner of our country's doin' fine.
And you mighta heard you can't get theyah from heyah,
But we'll point you in the right direction, deayah.
From the forests of Paul Bunyan to our wild blueberry fields.
Yes, Dirigo won't disappoint you theyah.

**From the Allagash to Androscoggin,
Fishin' boats and timber loggin',
Maine's the way that life's supposed to be.
Lobster rolls and cans of Moxie,
Dawnland of the Wabanaki,
Mount Katahdin to the rocky sea,
We've got Paris. We've got Rome.
Welcome home.**

And if you're a fan of blueberry pie
Or popovers that reach up to the sky,
We've even got a desert, white pine, moose, and chickadee
It's all here January or July.
Climb a trail and breathe those mountain winds
Where it's hard to tell where earth and sky begins.
We're the home of Stephen King, but the scarier Maine thing
Is tellin' people that you've never been.

Chorus

*Cadillac and tourmaline,
Lighthouses and L.L. Bean,
Hardest workin' folks you'll ever know.
There's Acadia and Caribou.
Presque Isle's not an isle, that's true,
But we're the first to see God's sunrise glow.
Only heaven has a better view, you know.*

Cross that Piscataqua, roll your windows down
Some head to Portland, some are Bangor bound
Midcoast to Downeast, whoopie pies are quite a feast
4,000 Islands you can sail around
And you mighta heard you can't get theyah from heyah,
But we'll point you in the right direction, deayah.
From the forests of Paul Bunyan to our wild blueberry fields.
Yes, Dirigo won't disappoint you theyah.
Dirigo won't disappoint you theyah.

Chorus x2

**Welcome home.
Welcome home.
Welcome.**