

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

N I N E T Y - S I X T H L E G I S L A T U R E

Legislative Document

No. 1555

S. P. 624

In Senate, September 21, 1954

Referred to the Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs, sent down for concurrence and ordered printed.

CHESTER T. WINSLOW, Secretary

Presented by Senator Collins of Aroostook.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED
FIFTY-FOUR

RESOLVE, Relating to Wages and Work-Week of State Employees.

Emergency preamble. Whereas, recruitment and retention of high calibre employees is seriously affected by the limitations imposed by present salary schedules and the present length of the work-week among several employee classes; and

Whereas, fair and equitable wages and working conditions are essential with respect to the state employee group; and

Whereas, in the judgment of the legislature these facts create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety, now, therefore, be it

Wages and work-week of state employees. Resolved: That the present wages of all employees of the state be increased by approximately 4½% by assigning each class of employment to the salary range next above that range to which it is presently allocated in the salary plan; and be it further

Resolved: That the present wage rates of all classes whose standard work-week is greater than forty hours, except those classes where the work-week has already been reduced with an accompanying increase in

hourly rates, shall be increased by an additional approximately $4\frac{1}{2}\%$ over and above that increase provided for all employees by assigning each such class of employment to the second salary range above that range to which it is presently allocated in the salary plan; and be it further

Resolved: That no part of such increase shall be granted to any employee which has the effect of placing such employee's salary above the adjusted maximum salary rate established for his class; and be it further

Resolved: That the salary rate for any employee who is regularly being paid at or above the adjusted maximum rate established for his class shall not be changed as the result of the approval of this resolve; and be it further

Resolved: That the present wage rates of employees in departments supported wholly or in part by fees or special revenue funds shall be made consistent with the provisions contained herein. Such sums as may be necessary shall be provided from the revenues of these several departments effective with the payroll week ending October 16, 1954; and be it further

Resolved: That there be, and hereby is, appropriated from the unappropriated surplus of the general fund of the state the sum of \$514,588 for the balance of the fiscal year ending June 30, 1955 for the purpose of making the changes herein provided for the general fund department, effective with the payroll period ending October 16, 1954.

Emergency clause. In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this resolve shall take effect when approved.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

The present official salary plan for state employees was adopted by the 94th Legislature in January, 1951. The general 4½% increase granted by this Legislature, the 96th, in regular session was equal to **one-half** of the total adjustment determined to be essential by the State Personnel Board to bring state wages into line with comparable positions in private industry in Maine and in competing governmental jurisdictions within the state and in New England.

The provisions of the Legislative Order Relating to State Wage Policy conditionally authorized additional funds for wage increase purposes from economies effected by the several departments. Such economies amounted to \$270,000 and either lapsed to the Unappropriated Surplus of the General Fund or were carried forward.

Had the Order been placed into effect a large number of state employees would have received an increase, but gross inequities in the whole state pay plan would have resulted. This Resolve will complete the necessary adjustment, bringing most classes in line with prevailing competition, particularly for those positions where the standard work week is 40 hours.

During the past 2 years many of the private institutions in Maine and elsewhere in New England have granted substantial increases in hourly rates and have simultaneously reduced the work-week for their employees from 48 hours or more to 40 or 44 hours. It is the intent of this Resolve to permit the State of Maine to effectuate a substantial reduction in the work-week for institutional and other workers at no reduction in gross wages.