

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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**LAWS**  
OF THE  
**STATE OF MAINE**

AS PASSED BY THE

ONE HUNDRED AND NINTH LEGISLATURE

AT THE

**SECOND REGULAR SESSION**

January 2, 1980 to April 3, 1980

AND AT THE

**THIRD SPECIAL SESSION**

May 22, 1980

PUBLISHED BY THE DIRECTOR OF LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH IN  
ACCORDANCE WITH MAINE REVISED STATUTES ANNOTATED,  
TITLE 3, SECTION 164, SUBSECTION 6.

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K. J. Printing Co.  
Augusta, Maine

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# MESSAGE

May 22, 1980

by

GOVERNOR JOSEPH E. BRENNAN

to the

**THIRD SPECIAL SESSION**

One Hundred and Ninth Legislature

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REMARKS OF GOVERNOR JOSEPH E. BRENNAN  
TO THE THIRD SPECIAL SESSION  
OF THE 109th MAINE LEGISLATURE  
May 22, 1980

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Mr. President, Mr. Speaker, Honorable Members of the 109th Maine Legislature:

I have called this Special Session to address several items of state business that cannot—and should not—be delayed until the next scheduled session in January.

These include:

— your approval of the latest results of our efforts to bargain in good faith with our state employees;

— a number of pending nominations that require Senate approval;

— and an appropriation to cover overtime and other expenses relating to restoring state control over our prison at Thomaston, a difficult but necessary action that may have averted a grave tragedy.

Foremost, however, is the approval of a final compromise on a highway budget.

Certainly, there is no need to recount the long history of our efforts to resolve the funding problems of the Department of Transportation.

Earlier this year, you had the opportunity to vote on numerous bills addressing highway funding.

At times, the debate and the failure to achieve a compromise became acrimonious.

Various participants, including myself, blamed each other.

Today, we must put all that behind us.

The public isn't the least bit interested in who is to blame.

The public cares only that our roads be maintained.

The public doesn't care if the fault lies with a Democratic Governor, a Republican Senate or anyone else.

But they do care if the potholes are filled, and the bridges are maintained and road improvements are carried out.

And if the public does have to drive on unsafe roads, they will blame all of us.

Let us conduct this session in a spirit of compromise.

We must approach our obligations with a willingness to compromise, for the ability to give and take is at the very heart of our government process.

When strongly differing positions are able to reach agreement no one may be completely happy, and no one may get everything, but the process works.

The compromise measure before you today is similar to bills you have seen before.

It calls for funding of most programs now administered by the Department of Transportation.

It addresses the projected revenue shortfall through modest adjustments in various license and registration fees.

In considering the bill, you should be aware that my Administration is now in the process of choosing a consultant for a management study of the Department of Transportation.

This study will be completed in mid-September.

It will complement the careful study of the Department's finances which was undertaken last year by a special task force chaired by one of your former colleagues, Harvey DeVane.

The new study will take a look at manpower levels, contractual practices and other policies of the Department.

It will ask questions that need to be addressed:

- Do we have too many engineers?
- Would it be more efficient to send more of the work out to the private sector?
- Are the Department's programs truly cost-effective?

With the study in hand, and with the fresh viewpoint of our able new Commissioner, George Campbell, we will be ready to run the Department in line with the realities of the 1980's, which are substantially different from the realities of the past.

A one-day Special Legislative Session is not the time for a comprehensive debate on the philosophy of highway financing.

We will have that opportunity in about seven months, and after our study is completed.

At that time, I intend to submit legislation to undedicate highway revenues.

Today, let us attend only to the business at hand:

- maintaining the safety of our roads and bridges;
- avoiding the crisis that would result from no appropriation;
- and, most of all, keeping faith with the people of Maine.