

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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LAWS
OF THE
STATE OF MAINE

AS PASSED BY THE
ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTEENTH LEGISLATURE

AS PUBLIC LAWS AND CONSTITUTIONAL RESOLUTIONS

at the

THIRD SPECIAL SESSION

September 15, 1988 to September 16, 1988

and the

FOURTH SPECIAL SESSION

November 28, 1988

AND

AS PRIVATE AND SPECIAL LAWS AND RESOLVES

at the

FIRST REGULAR SESSION

December 3, 1986 to June 30, 1987

FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

October 9, 1987 to October 10, 1987

SECOND SPECIAL SESSION

October 21, 1987 to November 20, 1987

SECOND REGULAR SESSION

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THIRD SPECIAL SESSION

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INAUGURAL ADDRESS

of

GOVERNOR JOHN R. MCKERNAN, JR.

January 8, 1987

Mr. President, Mr. Speaker, Members of the 113th Legislature, Mr. Chief Justice and Members of the Judiciary, Mr. Secretary of State, Senator Smith, Members of Maine's Congressional Delegation, Former Governors, Members of the Clergy, and Fellow Citizens:

As I was taking the oath of office a few minutes ago and looked out at the thousands of faces in the audience, I was filled with pride at what we represent. I am especially proud of our diversity. Present here tonight are Republicans, Democrats, and Independents; residents of Portland and Presque Isle, Jackman and Jonesport. We are shipbuilders and shopkeepers, homemakers and health care workers, teachers and technicians.

And we gather here tonight because we share a common love and a common vision: a vision of a great state which we believe can be even greater. It is a vision of Maine as the Opportunity State, a place where, to paraphrase Henry David Thoreau, a person can proceed confidently in the direction of his or her dreams.

I would also like to take just a moment to say how proud I am to have my family with me tonight. I would not be standing before you were it not for their support and their encouragement. I am particularly proud to share this evening with my son, Peter, because providing opportunities for his generation is the critical challenge that lies ahead.

Tonight, as we begin to confront that challenge, we should take a moment to celebrate Maine's richness, her present greatness.

There is much to celebrate.

Thanks, in very large part, to those of you assembled here tonight and to Governor Brennan and other recent governors, Maine has made tremendous strides in recent years.

And throughout those years of change, Maine has managed to hold onto the best of the past, and to value and protect this state's two most important assets: our people and our environment.

Together, they contribute to a quality of life that is unique to Maine. Together, they represent the strength of our past and the promise of our future.

In order for that future to shine as brightly as possible, our quality of life must be strengthened to include good jobs in all parts of this state and it must include an educational system that provides our children the intellectual and vocational skills necessary for the future.

I see Maine as the showcase of the nation — both for the opportunities it provides and the quality of life it offers.

I see Maine as a caring place, a state that meets the needs of our elderly and our veterans — those who have served this state and country so well.

I see Maine, as the Opportunity State, as the very best place in America to live, to work, and to raise a family.

As I begin my term as governor, as we begin this new year, there are two resolutions we must make. One is concerned with education, the other with economic development, and the two are interrelated.

For Maine to become a state of opportunity, a place where people can take a dream and make it reality,

we must continue to improve the quality of our public education system. The 1984 education reforms represent a step toward that goal. We can do more.

I will propose school report cards to parents, reports that compare the education of a child, say, in Millinocket with that of a student in Kennebunk . . . or Auburn . . . or Van Buren.

I will work to get drugs out of our schools and out of the hands of our children.

I will encourage school districts to establish career incentive programs for teachers.

I will fight to make sure that the state no longer mandates local educational programs without paying for them.

Each of us remembers a teacher who made a difference in our life, who awoke within us a love of history, or a curiosity about science, or a sense of our potential. If we want to keep those people in the classroom, people such as Neil Tame of Oxford Hills High School and Ellen Ross of Scarborough, we must reward them. We must, on both the state and local level, validate the profession of teaching.

For in what other profession can one claim, as did our heroic neighbor Christa McAuliffe: "I touch the future. I teach."

In addition to a basic education, we must acknowledge the importance of additional training — be it at the university level, at one of our vocational-technical institutes, or in one of the many and varied job training programs in our state.

Whether in our mills, our fields, or our offices, Maine workers will need new skills so that they can face — not fear — the future.

As we all know, however, those skills alone will not guarantee the jobs and opportunities Maine people deserve.

This brings me then to the subject of my second resolution: economic development. It is only through economic development that we can guarantee job opportunities.

Prosperity for all of Maine will be our goal; for while southern Maine currently enjoys its lowest unemployment rate in years, one out of every twelve adults in parts of northern and eastern Maine is struggling to find work.

We run the risk of becoming a state divided, two Maines which offer starkly different qualities of life.

My goal is to bring the two Maines together.

Maine, regrettably, is still a place young people too often must leave to find opportunity. There isn't a person in this state who hasn't seen a family member or the child of a friend leave Maine for fear that his or her hopes and dreams could not be successfully realized here at home.

Last summer, at my high school reunion in Bangor, I was struck by the number of my classmates who had left the state in order to pursue their careers. I was struck by how many of those who, having left, wanted to come home. Maine's emotional pull is a strong one. We must make Maine's economic opportunities equally difficult to resist.

We must never forget that our children are our future.

We must never forget that they are our most important natural resource.

It is time our children were no longer Maine's number one export.

Our administration will implement an innovative economic strategy. It will respond to the special needs of individual communities throughout this state and will work to ensure that my son, or your son or daughter, has the opportunity to stay in Maine.

To foster a partnership between the public and private sectors, I will ask the legislature to approve a complete reorganization and consolidation of existing state economic and community development activities.

This new cabinet-level department will be responsible for implementing the job-creation and incentive programs that I will ask the legislature to approve during the current legislative session.

If we truly believe in opportunity for all in our state, we must be willing to help those areas that are economically disadvantaged.

From expanding tourism, to improving the marketing of our marine and agricultural products, to making better use of our vast forest resources, our administration will take constructive advantage of Maine's unique resources.

And by preparing for future jobs in such areas as telecommunications and by addressing the needs of our traditional industries and our many small businesses, we can truly make Maine the Opportunity State.

But being the Opportunity State means providing opportunities and options for all. Consequently, we must pay particular attention to the needs of women — who, in 1985, comprised 45 percent of Maine's workforce.

I am committed to economic equity for women — as the number of women in our administration will attest.

But these appointments are not enough.

The most important issue affecting women in the workforce is a lack of quality child care. In 1980, seven years ago, nearly 100,000 working Maine women had children under the age of seventeen. Any successful economic development strategy must include provisions for quality child care.

We must have economic development, but, as we have found in parts of southern Maine, with growth comes certain pressures which must be anticipated if we are to shape the future rather than be shaped by it. In no other area is that planning more important than in the protection of our environment and the health and safety of our people. As E. B. White wrote from his saltwater farm in Brooklin, Maine, over forty years ago:

The land must be held in safekeeping, . . . one generation is . . . responsible to the next . . . and it is contrary to the public good to allow an individual . . . to destroy almost beyond repair any part of the soil or water.

Our generation must be responsible to the next. One of my first actions will be to set in motion the development of a comprehensive plan for the economic growth of Maine.

Maine is special and our administration will work to keep it that way.

Likewise, in order to have economic growth, we must have a sound fiscal policy. I have pledged not to raise either the state sales or income tax. I have also pledged that the state will return to the citizens of Maine the windfall it may receive from federal tax reforms.

These are promises I made.

They are promises I will keep.

With the start of this new year and this new administration, I envision a government that does things in new ways, that develops new approaches to old and entrenched problems.

Ours will not be a *status quo* administration. We will dare to be different.

And to you legislators in joint convention here tonight, I pledge that we will work with the legislature in a spirit of cooperation. There is little we can do separately. There is much we can do together.

We will aggressively seek out ways to economize and to deliver services more efficiently.

We will set priorities to meet the essential educational, health, and job development needs of this state.

We will seek advice from experts outside of government.

And we will ask the advice of experts within government — the thousands of dedicated Maine State Employees who know best how to economize and make more efficient this state's operation.

We will work to make sure that our administration is known for turning bureaucratic red tape into a red carpet for all its citizens.

Because there are limits to what government can do for people, we must rekindle a volunteer spirit of citizen helping citizen. Maine people are good and caring neighbors. We must foster and support that sense of personal, individual, involvement.

In order to do that, I will create within the Executive Department a program to promote volunteerism in Maine. One of the program's first projects will be a four-year celebration of Maine pride.

I can think of no better way to prepare for the next decade than for all of us to work together for the next four years to understand our past and to celebrate our future.

And, even more importantly, I can think of no better way to help raise the aspirations of Maine children than by relating to them the successes of other Maine children.

I want children in Piscataquis County to know about two brothers, twins, who grew up in Parkman 50 years ago.

I want them to know that those brothers, raised on a dairy farm and educated in the town's one-room school house, worked hard, set high goals, and achieved them.

The children of Parkman should know that one of those brothers is now a world-renowned geneticist.

And they should also know that his twin, Vincent McKusick, who happens to be seated to my right, is now the Chief Justice of the Maine Supreme Judicial Court.

The McKusick brothers' story, like so many Maine success stories, is one of hard work, determination, and commitment to excellence. It is one that reminds us all of the solid virtues Maine engenders. It is one that hints to us how bright our future can be if we are but willing to raise our sights and aspire to greatness.

As we look to our future, let us make a commitment to excellence.

Let us vow to work together.

Let us vow to break down geographic, economic, and educational barriers.

Let us vow to keep Maine special.

Let us vow to make Maine the Opportunity State.

Only history will judge whether or not we are successful, but I know, that with your help, we will not fail.

Thank you.