

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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**STATE OF MAINE
ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-FIRST LEGISLATURE
SECOND REGULAR SESSION
JOURNAL OF THE SENATE**

In Senate Chamber
Thursday
January 11, 2024

Senate called to order by President Troy D. Jackson of Aroostook County.

Prayer by Pastor Kelly Harvell of Bath United Methodist Church.

PASTOR KELLY HARVELL: God, we give you thanks for these servants, for these people who seek to lead your community in this state. We ask that you be with them as they discuss and decide. That all decisions will be made for the wellbeing of the state, of the country, and of the world. And we give you thanks for all these people. Amen.

Pledge of Allegiance led by Senator Joseph M. Baldacci of Penobscot County.

Reading of the Journal of Tuesday January 9, 2024

Medical Provider of the Day, Syd Sewall, MD of Hallowell.

Off Record Remarks

Out of order and under suspension of the Rules, on motion by Senator **VITELLI** of Sagadahoc, the following Joint Order:
S.P. 917

Ordered, the House concurring, that when the Senate and House adjourn, they do so until Tuesday, January 16, 2024, at 10:00 in the morning, or until the call of the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House, respectively.

READ and PASSED.

Ordered sent down forthwith for concurrence.

All matters thus acted upon were ordered sent down forthwith for concurrence.

Out of order and under suspension of the Rules, the Senate considered the following:

COMMUNICATIONS

The Following Communication: S.C. 781

**STATE OF MAINE
ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY FIRST LEGISLATURE
COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AND LEGAL AFFAIRS**

January 8, 2024

The Honorable Troy Dale Jackson
President of the Senate of Maine
131st Maine State Legislature
State House
Augusta, Maine 04333-0003

Dear Mr. President:

In accordance with 3 M.R.S.A., Section 157, and with Joint Rule 505 of the Maine Legislature, the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs has had under consideration the nomination of Diane L. Dunn of Rome, for appointment as the Adjutant General - Commissioner of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management.

After public hearing and discussion on this nomination, the Committee proceeded to vote on the motion to recommend to the Senate that this nomination be confirmed. The Committee Clerk called the roll with the following result:

YEAS	Senators	3	Hickman, C. of Kennebec, Brenner, S. of Cumberland, Timberlake, J. of Androscoggin
	Representatives	5	Supica, L. of Bangor, Hymes, B. of Waldo, Malon, M. of Biddeford, Montell, K. of Gardiner, Williams, L. of Bar Harbor
NAYS	Senators	0	
	Representatives	3	Andrews, J. of Paris, Boyer, D. of Poland, Rudnicki, S. of Fairfield
ABSENT		2	Rep. Collings, B. of Portland, Rep. Rielly, M. of Westbrook

Eight members of the Committee having voted in the affirmative and three in the negative, it was the vote of the Committee that the nomination of Diane L. Dunn of Rome, for appointment as the Adjutant General - Commissioner of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management be confirmed.

Signed,

S/Craig V. Hickman

S/Laura Supica

Senate Chair

House Chair

READ and ORDERED PLACED ON FILE.

THE PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes the Senator from Androscoggin, Senator Brakey.

Senator **BRAKEY:** Thank you, Mr. President. I am certain that General Dunn is highly distinguished and a highly qualified nominee for Adjutant General of the Maine National Guard in many and, in fact, in most respects. All the same, I rise to oppose this confirmation for one particular reason and one reason alone. Now with several objections in lines of questioning arose during the confirmation hearing early this week, frankly, I found most of those objections to be, to my mind, off base and distractions. I'm certain that General Dunn finds herself in this position of being nominated for this role due to her merits and her decades of experience, and if confirmed by this Chamber, I'm certain she will do a fine job in most respects. But there's one issue that arose which I find myself unable to move beyond. During the hearing Representative Boyer of Poland asked the nominee about her views on the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Syria over the last 23 years, as well as Defend the Guard legislation, calling the Maine National Guard home from foreign wars not declared by Congress, which came before this body last year and will likely come again in years ahead. The nominee deferred on questions of the particulars of these wars and, to be fair, I find no fault there. Even if I would've appreciated hearing more reflection on lessons learned from these -- these unmitigated disasters which have cost the lives of Maine Guardsmen, not to mention trillions in wasted taxpayer dollars, for someone seeking an unelected position, deference on these questions is certainly very reasonable. After all, an Adjutant General is expected to follow orders from officials directly elected by and accountable to the public. But what about when these orders do not come from our elected officials in Congress, as the Constitution requires? The reason I cannot vote to confirm today is her statement during the confirmation hearing that she would lobby this legislature against Defend the Guard legislation, just as her predecessor did, on grounds that we do not have the authority to oppose the federal government's deployment of our Guardsmen into wars that have never been constitutionally declared by Congress. Mr. President, I've made quite clear in this Chamber my estimation that these wars have been and continue to be illegal, undeclared, unconstitutional, and unconscionable, and that the death of every Maine Guardsman in those far-flung lands is an unacceptable tragedy and one we are all complicit in so long as we allow this to continue decade after decade by failing to use the power invested in us by the construction of our U.S. Constitution to bring them home. As former U.S. Secretary of State Daniel Webster once warned, quote, it will be the solemn duty of state governments to protect their own authority over their own militia and to interpose between their citizens an arbitrary of power wielded by the federal government.

THE PRESIDENT: The Senator will defer. The Chair will ask why the Senator from Somerset rises.

Senator **FARRIN:** Point of order, Mr. President. We have a confirmation hearing in front of us and we're debating the Defend the Guard bill, defending that piece of it, and I don't think that's germane to the pending motion in front of us.

THE PRESIDENT: Senator?

Senator **BRAKEY:** Thank you, Mr. President. I'm not debating the merits of the proposal, but this was an issue that was directly brought up at the confirmation hearing, and I'm speaking to the nominee's statements in regards to that issue.

THE PRESIDENT: Sure. The Chair would affirm that we are talking about the nominee, the qualifications. The fact that she disagreed with an issue that is important to you obviously is something you could refer to, but the merits of the issue, just going down that road, I would prefer you not. Again, speaking about the disagreement in policy is perfectly fine.

Senator **BRAKEY:** Thank you, Mr. President. By many respected General Dunn is eminently qualified for this position. People speak well of her experience and her character, and in those respects, I have little doubt she will serve well. But I cannot in good conscience vote to confirm a leader for the Maine National Guard who would deny the authority of this Body, this Legislature, and this State to refuse unconstitutional orders from Washington to send our sons and daughters off to undeclared foreign wars. Mr. President, for this reason, and this reason alone, I will voting against confirmation. I invite others to do as their judgment and their conscience dictates. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes the Senator from Somerset, Senator Farrin.

Senator **FARRIN:** Thank you, Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen of the Senate. I rise today in support of the confirmation of appointment of Diane Dunn as our next Adjutant General for the State of Maine. If you spend any time at all around Diane, you know her leadership style, her integrity, and her commitment to the men and women that wear the uniform and protect us each and every day. Her long-storied history should not reflect that she is going to be -- this is a historic appointment as the first female Adjutant General for the State of Maine. That piece of it shouldn't even enter into the equation. She is the most qualified, and I have to say, you know, after we just got done, the policy piece of it, and you focus on what Diane brings to the table for the men and women that wear our nation's cloth for the State of Maine, just -- not to bore you, but Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal with three bronze oak leaf clusters, Army Superior Unit Award, Army Meritorious Unit Award, it goes on and on and on. Every position that Diane has been put in by those above her, she has excelled - not only excelled but set the bar even higher. And it's not just wearing the uniform that she does that. If you take a look at Diane serves on the Olympia Snowe Leadership Institute, where she mentors young women that can mentor and look at the roles that she's done as well as just Piscataquis - I'm having a hard time this morning, Mr. President, I'm sorry - High School, where she has six sophomore girls that will graduate in 2026 that she has taken under her wing and mentored from that standpoint. I could go on about Diane's qualifications. You look at her resume and her bio and even though in the military, right, we like to say that when you leave a job, you leave it better than you found it, I think we can all agree General Farnham has done a phenomenal job for this state and he has raised that bar, I have full confidence and faith that Diane

is going to do the same thing. So, I ask you to support this confirmation, Mr. President. Thank you, Men and Women of the Senate.

THE PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes the Senator from Kennebec, Senator Hickman.

Senator **HICKMAN:** Thank you, Mr. President, Women and Men of the Senate. I rise in strong support of confirming this incredible nominee. I first want to thank General Douglas Farnham for his service to our nation, to our state, for his tremendous leadership, and I wish him the very best in his retirement. In the words of a constituent and a patriot, Mr. President, I will quote, I am flabbergasted that anyone on the Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee voted against confirming Diane Dunn as our new Adjutant General. I served with her for many years and can say unequivocally that she is one fine person and one fine leader. I encourage soldiers to emulate her leadership, which is calm, informed, poised, and inspiring. The same cannot be said of the lawmaker whose query about Diane's career was an insult to her and anyone wearing a military uniform, especially our female soldiers. Please, by all means, support her confirmation and encourage others to do so. Sincerely, Lieutenant Colonel Gregory Limebeck, Maine National Guard, resident of Greenfield. Having presided over the confirmation hearing, Mr. President, I can say that everything that I read here is true, even from that short amount of time in the committee. Mr. President, Diane Dunn is more than deserving of our enthusiastic votes to confirm her historic nomination, and I welcome my colleagues in joining me in doing exactly that. Thank you, Mr. President.

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

Senator **BRENNER:** Thank you, Mr. President, Men and Women of the Senate. I also had the privilege as a VLA member to attend General Dunn's confirmation hearing in front of committee, and I just want to echo both the Good Senator from Somerset and the Good Senator from Kennebec in saying that the presentation of her strong merit -- record of merit and the incredible recommendations from folks who attended to speak on her behalf about her capacity for creative leadership were incredibly encouraging as she steps into this role, and her stellar records of military service is nothing short of impressive. There was discussion at the committee about blind promotion in the military based on race and gender, so it is important to, I think, remark on General Dunn's merits unrelated to her gender. But that said, I am incredibly excited and honored to be voting for the first female for this role and it feels like an exciting and historic day. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes the Senator from Aroostook, Senator Stewart.

Senator **STEWART:** Thank you, Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen of the Senate. I, too, rise in support of the nominee, General Dunn, for this position. I also would like to congratulate and thank Adjutant General Doug Farnham for his many years of service to our state. I think he's done a fantastic job, even for an Air Force guy. I, too, look forward to confirming General Dunn here later today. And I do rise for my friends in the media, in particular, I want to set the record straight on something. It was

said earlier this week that General Dunn would be confirmed because of the Democrat-controlled Senate. And I want to be as plain as possible and say that is not at all why she will be confirmed. She will be confirmed because she is an incredibly qualified applicant, whose reputation and record speak for itself. And I feel very confident, as I know many of you in this Chamber do - if not all of you in this chamber do - that she will do a fantastic job for our veterans, for our men and women in uniform who are serving in the Guard right now, and for all those that work in that department and, in fact, the entire State of Maine. We're very fortunate to have her here today with us and I look forward to seeing the many great things that she will do in this new role. This is not at all a partisan thing, this shouldn't be a partisan thing, and I hope that our friends in the media portray it as such. This is indeed a historic day, and we should all be very happy and very excited about this opportunity that we have in front of us as a state. So, with that, I would encourage everybody to vote to confirm General Dunn and wish her all the best in this new role. Thank you.

The President requested the Sergeant-At-Arms escort the Senator from Sagadahoc, Senator **VITELLI**, to the rostrum where she assumed the duties as President Pro Tempore.

The President took a seat on the Floor.

The Senate was called to order by President Pro Tempore **ELOISE A. VITELLI** of Sagadahoc County.

THE PRESIDENT PRO TEM: The Chair would recognize the Senator from Franklin County, Senator Timberlake -- no, not Franklin - Androscoggin County. How could I get that wrong? Senator Timberlake.

Senator **TIMBERLAKE:** I would almost call it an insult but, you know. No, I understand. I rise today, Ladies and Gentlemen of the Senate, in my full support. As I sat through the confirmation hearing for General Dunn, it was an eye-opening experience. I've never sat through one for when we were doing the Adjutant General, and it was an experience that I'm proud to say that I participated in. I look forward to supporting her. You know, in the years I've known General Farnham who has preceded, and I didn't know as we'd ever really come across anybody that I thought was as well qualified as he was, but I think today we found somebody that's met his equal. And I really do look forward to supporting her, and I look forward to the rest of the body hopefully supporting her because I think she has shown great leadership and when you read her bio, it's really, really impressive. And thank you for stepping up, General Dunn, and I really look forward to supporting you.

THE PRESIDENT PRO TEM: The Chair recognizes the Senator from Aroostook, Senator Jackson.

Senator **JACKSON:** Thank you, Madam President, Ladies and Gentlemen of the Senate. I'm honestly not trying to pile on here, but I did have a little bit different perspective. I also want to thank General Farnham for all his work and for being very responsive when I called him. I wanted to come down and make sure I said that in front of soon-to-be General Dunn, so she knows and I'm

hoping she's going to be as responsive as General Farnham, which I'm sure she will. But I also came down because I think all of you should thank me very, very much. I -- you know, sometimes things happen and, you know, you feel bad about the way they may have transpired, but in the end, they work out for the best - actually, probably even better. Because I don't know Ms. Dunn from her outstanding military career, which, I mean, is impressive as anyone that I've probably run across, but I do know her in a completely different role, as a nominee for Executive Director of this building. Whenever Grant Pennoyer chose to leave, Ms. Dunn was one of the people that actually applied, and I had the privilege of interviewing her. And that is the only time I've met her, until today. Impressive is not even the word I could -- I would use, it's more than that, overqualified, even for this, but just really someone that I could've saw easily taking control of the Legislature as far as the job of Executive Director and doing unbelievable things. And I told her this morning, this is the second time that I've talked to her, that the only reason why she isn't doing the Executive Director's job today as opposed to being nominated to be the General, is because we had someone that I had known for 15 or more years, which is Suzanne Gresser, and who equally, I thought, was outstanding, and the fact that I knew her, obviously, I guess my bias went with her, but when I made that decision, you know, I thought at that time about other things that Ms. Dunn might be able to do here, and not just how impressive, you know, her interview was and, you know, meeting her, and I think that's the type of mindset that, you know, she gives. She, you know, gives -- well, I'm not really sure, but she has a way that just shows that she knows what she's doing, she's not afraid to make hard decisions, she's not afraid to, you know, upset the applecart if needed, and very competent. And so, that's why when I heard that the Governor had nominated her, I actually thought well, that's -- that's fitting. She's in an even better role than we could've provided here at the Legislature. So, I, too, am very excited that she's been nominated, that we're going to confirm her today, because she is someone that I know that we're all going to be very proud of in the future, and it just makes me feel good that I made that decision three or four years ago.

The President Pro Tem laid before the Senate the following:
"Shall the recommendation of the Committee on **VETERANS AND LEGAL AFFAIRS** be overridden?"

The Chair noted the absence of the Senator from Androscoggin, Senator **ROTUNDO**, and further excused the same Senator from today's Roll Call votes.

In accordance with 3 M.R.S.A., Chapter 6, Section 158, and with Joint Rule 506 of the 131st Legislature, the vote was taken by the Yeas and Nays.

The Doorkeepers secured the Chamber.

The Secretary opened the vote.

ROLL CALL (#502)

YEAS: Senator: BRAKEY

NAYS: Senators: BAILEY, BALDACCI, BEEBE-CENTER, BENNETT, BLACK, BRENNER, CARNEY, CHIPMAN, CURRY, DAUGHTRY, DUSON, FARRIN, GROHOSKI, GUERIN, HARRINGTON, HICKMAN, INGWERSEN, KEIM, LAFOUNTAIN, LAWRENCE, LIBBY, LYFORD, MOORE, NANGLE, PIERCE, POULIOT, RAFFERTY, RENY, STEWART, TIMBERLAKE, TIPPING, VITELLI, PRESIDENT JACKSON

EXCUSED: Senator: ROTUNDO

1 Senator having voted in the affirmative and 33 Senators having voted in the negative, with 1 Senator being excused, and none being less than two-thirds of the Membership present and voting, it was the vote of the Senate that the Committee's recommendation be **ACCEPTED** and the nomination of **Diane L. Dunn** of Rome for appointment as the Adjutant General - Commissioner of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management was **CONFIRMED**.

The Secretary has so informed the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Senator **MOORE** of Washington requested and received leave of the Senate that members and staff be allowed to remove their jackets for the remainder of this Legislative Day.

The President Pro Tem requested the Sergeant-At-Arms escort the Senator from Aroostook, Senator **JACKSON**, to the rostrum where he resumed his duties as President.

The Sergeant-At-Arms escorted the Senator from Sagadahoc, Senator **VITELLI**, to her seat on the Floor.

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Off Record Remarks

The Following Communication: S.C. 780

STATE OF MAINE ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY FIRST LEGISLATURE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY

January 8, 2024

The Honorable Troy Dale Jackson
President of the Senate of Maine
131st Maine State Legislature
State House
Augusta, Maine 04333-0003

Dear Mr. President:

In accordance with 3 M.R.S.A., Section 157, and with Joint Rule 505 of the Maine Legislature, the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry has had under consideration the nomination of Thomas Dubois of Salem Township, for appointment to the Maine Land Use Planning Commission.

After public hearing and discussion on this nomination, the Committee proceeded to vote on the motion to recommend to the Senate that this nomination be confirmed. The Committee Clerk called the roll with the following result:

YEAS	Senators	1	Black, R. of Franklin
	Representatives	4	Cray, D. of Palmyra, Guerrette, T. of Caribou, Hall, R. of Wilton, Jackson, C. of Oxford
NAYS	Senators	2	Ingwersen, H. of York, Hickman, C. of Kennebec
	Representatives	5	Pluecker, B. of Warren, Hepler, A. of Woolwich, Jauch, R. of Topsham, Osher, L. of Orono, Shaw, K. of Auburn
ABSENT		1	Rep. Costain, D. of Plymouth

Five members of the Committee having voted in the affirmative and seven in the negative, it was the vote of the Committee that the nomination of Thomas Dubois of Salem Township, for appointment to the Maine Land Use Planning Commission be denied.

Signed,

S/Henry Ingwersen
Senate Chair

S/Bill Pluecker
House Chair

READ and ORDERED PLACED ON FILE.

Senate at Ease.

The Senate was called to order by the President.

On motion by Senator **INGWERSEN** of York, the Nomination was **COMMITTED** to the Committee on **AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY**.

All matters thus acted upon were ordered sent down forthwith for concurrence.

THE PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes the Senator from Arostook, Senator Stewart.

Senator **STEWART:** Thank you very much, Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen of the Senate. I rise briefly to just kind of un-orthodoxically introduce somebody who is with us today in our Chamber, a good friend of mine, some of you probably recognize him, if you've attended any NCSL meetings over the last few years, the Senate President of Ireland is with us today, Mark Daly. And we will be recognizing him in a moment, but I just wanted to share a little bit on the Senate Floor about the good work that he's doing to build relationships between the States and Ireland - the whole island of Ireland. Mark has been very diligent and often has the longest commute out of anybody at NCSL meetings, except for I think that one in Hawaii. But Mark has, if you've gotten the opportunity to know him, his personality really lends itself to the work that he's doing. He's the first one to greet you at pretty much any function, he's about as outgoing as it gets, and does a really great job being the face and the persona of the Emerald Isle. Obviously, Maine has a very strong connection and lineage with the people of Ireland, a lot of overlap in our ancestors, and mine included, came from that island many years ago and so, building this relationship with him with different legislators in Maine has been a really exciting thing to watch and has been very beneficial and I think will continue to be beneficial for us as a state as we look to strengthen our trade and economic ties with that island, which is the gateway into Europe. So, we're going to recognize him in just a minute, but I wanted to say a few words about him today. I encourage you to meet him. If you don't, I'm sure he's going to come meet you, and please talk with him about the good work that's going on between the different caucuses around the country, in all of the states, and indeed here in Maine, too. And I'll make a plug for him here on the floor as well that you don't have to be Irish to join the Irish caucus, so, you just have to be a supporter of Ireland, and I encourage you all to do that, it's really exciting. We're so glad to have you here with us today, Mark. Thanks for all that you're doing, and I look forward to continuing to work with you. Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: The Chair definitely wants to introduce Senator Daly. I think what I'm going to actually have him do is come up and introduce himself. So, Senator Daly, will you be escorted by the Sergeant-at-Arms?

Senator **DALY:** Thank you. This is truly unexpected and indeed a great honor. It was so great to meet so many of you this morning and I mentioned in my remarks that there are people alive in Ireland today because the United States got involved in our peace process over 25 years ago and stayed involved. But one of the key people in all of that was Senator George Mitchell. And people don't recognize that the fact that he was appointed is because State Legislators had prevailed upon presidential candidates that there should be a special envoy appointed to Northern Ireland, and this, of course, led ultimately to the

appointment of George Mitchell to the role of the peacemaker. So, it was from State Houses and State Legislators like yourselves that ultimately led to peace on our island. But peace is not a moment, it is not when the document is signed, it is the implementation of the peace agreement that made all the difference. We are delighted this year to mark the 100 anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Ireland and the United States of America. The first ambassador we appointed was to the U.S. and as I also mentioned that George Washington and the Irish struggled together in the dark days of 1776 when it seemed that American independence hung in the balance, and all seemed lost. My own ancestor - who unfortunately was not the governor of Maine but was the governor of New Hampshire - fought with General Washington in Boston and then at the crossing of the Delaware. So, in two years' time we look forward to marking American independence. We wouldn't be an independent country today if it was not for the support of the United States of America, so we look forward to marking the anniversary of our establishment of formal diplomatic relations but our relationship as we all know goes way back over the centuries and we look forward to celebrating that relationship for centuries to come. Thank you for this humble and great honor.

The Following Communication: S.C. 782

**STATE OF MAINE
ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY FIRST LEGISLATURE
JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON HOUSING**

January 9, 2024

Honorable Troy Dale Jackson, Senate President
Honorable Rachel Talbot Ross, Speaker of the House
131st Maine State Legislature
State House
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear President Jackson and Speaker Talbot Ross,

Pursuant to Joint Rule 310, we are writing to notify you that we have approved the request by the bill sponsor Sen. Daughtry of Cumberland, to report the following bill Leave to Withdraw:

L.D. 721 An Act to Preserve Historic Buildings and
Promote Affordable Housing

Sincerely,

S/Sen. Teresa S. Pierce
Senate Chair

S/Rep. Traci Gere
House Chair

READ and with accompanying papers **ORDERED PLACED ON
FILE.**

The Following Communication: S.C. 783

**STATE OF MAINE
ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY FIRST LEGISLATURE
JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON HOUSING**

January 9, 2024

Honorable Troy Dale Jackson, Senate President
Honorable Rachel Talbot Ross, Speaker of the House
131st Maine State Legislature
State House
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear President Jackson and Speaker Talbot Ross,

Pursuant to Joint Rule 310, we are writing to notify you that we have approved the request by the bill sponsor Sen. Hickman of Kennebec, to report the following bill Leave to Withdraw:

L.D. 314 An Act to Establish the Permanent Commission
on the Status of Housing in Maine

Sincerely,

S/Sen. Teresa S. Pierce
Senate Chair

S/Rep. Traci Gere
House Chair

READ and with accompanying papers **ORDERED PLACED ON
FILE.**

The Following Communication: S.C. 790

**STATE OF MAINE
ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY FIRST LEGISLATURE
COMMITTEE ON INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE**

January 4, 2024

Honorable Troy Dale Jackson, Senate President
Honorable Rachel Talbot Ross, Speaker of the House
131st Maine State Legislature
State House
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear President Jackson and Speaker Talbot Ross,

Pursuant to Joint Rule 310, we are writing to notify you that we have approved the request by the bill sponsor Sen. Grohoski of Hancock, to report the following bill Leave to Withdraw:

An Act to Designate a State Wildlife Sanctuary at Blue Hill Falls

Sincerely,

S/Sen. David P. LaFountain
Senate Chair

S/Rep. Scott Landry
House Chair

READ and with accompanying papers **ORDERED PLACED ON FILE.**

The Following Communication: S.C. 785

**STATE OF MAINE
ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY FIRST LEGISLATURE
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, UTILITIES AND TECHNOLOGY**

December 29, 2023

Honorable Troy Dale Jackson, President of the Senate
Honorable Rachel Talbot Ross, Speaker of the House
131st Legislature
State House
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear President Jackson and Speaker Talbot Ross:

Pursuant to Joint Rule 310, we are writing to notify you that the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology has voted unanimously to report the following bill(s) out "Ought Not to Pass":

L.D. 297 An Act to Reduce Electric Rate Increases Due to Renewable Energy Credits

This is notification of the Committee's action.

Sincerely,

S/Sen. Mark W. Lawrence S/Rep. S. Paige Zeigler
Senate Chair House Chair

READ and with accompanying papers **ORDERED PLACED ON FILE.**

The Following Communication: S.C. 786

**STATE OF MAINE
ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY FIRST LEGISLATURE
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, UTILITIES AND TECHNOLOGY**

January 05, 2024

Honorable Troy Dale Jackson, President of the Senate
Honorable Rachel Talbot Ross, Speaker of the House
131st Legislature
State House
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear President Jackson and Speaker Talbot Ross:

Pursuant to Joint Rule 310, we are writing to notify you that the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology has voted unanimously to report the following bill(s) out "Ought Not to Pass":

L.D. 412 An Act to Fully Engage the Efficiency Maine Trust in Mitigating Climate Change by Creating Electrification Programs

This is notification of the Committee's action.

Sincerely,

S/Sen. Mark W. Lawrence S/Rep. S. Paige Zeigler
Senate Chair House Chair

READ and with accompanying papers **ORDERED PLACED ON FILE.**

The Following Communication: S.C. 784

**MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE
OFFICE OF PROGRAM EVALUATION AND
GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY**

January 5, 2024

The Honorable Craig V. Hickman, Senate Chair
The Honorable Jessica Fay, House Chair
Members of the Government Oversight Committee
82 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

The Honorable Troy D. Jackson, President of the Senate
Members of the 131st Maine Senate
3 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

The Honorable Rachel Talbot Ross, Speaker of the House
Members of the 131st Maine House of Representatives
2 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Government Oversight Committee Members, Senators and Representatives:

In accordance with 3 MRSA §995(4), I respectfully submit the Office of Program Evaluation and Government Accountability (OPEGA) Annual Report for 2023. OPEGA's service to the Legislature as an independent, non-partisan resource is meant to support the important role of legislative oversight and to help improve the performance of State government. We remain committed to serving Maine's legislators and citizens as a trusted source of objective, credible information.

Sincerely,

S/Peter Schleck
Director

READ and with accompanying papers **ORDERED PLACED ON FILE.**

The Following Communication: S.C. 787

**MAINE GOVERNMENTAL FACILITIES AUTHORITY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

January 10, 2024

Honorable Troy D. Jackson
President of the Senate
3 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

Honorable Rachel Talbot Ross
Speaker of the House
2 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear President Jackson and Speaker Talbot Ross:

Pursuant to 5 M.R.S.A., Section 12023, please consider this the letter of transmittal for the required report from the Maine Governmental Facilities Authority due by February 1, 2024.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or if you need additional information. I can be reached at 622-9386 or by email at Terry@mgfa.com.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

S/Terry Hayes
Executive Director

READ and with accompanying papers **ORDERED PLACED ON FILE.**

The Following Communication: S.C. 788

**MAINE MUNICIPAL BOND BANK
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

January 10, 2024

Honorable Troy D. Jackson
President of the Senate
3 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

Honorable Rachel Talbot Ross
Speaker of the House
2 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear President Jackson and Speaker Talbot Ross:

Pursuant to 5 M.R.S.A., Section 12023, please consider this the letter of transmittal for the required report from the Maine Municipal Bond Bank due by February 1, 2024.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or if you need additional information. I can be reached at 622-9386 or by email at Terry@mmbb.com.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

S/Terry Hayes
Executive Director

READ and with accompanying papers **ORDERED PLACED ON FILE.**

The Following Communication: S.C. 789

**MAINE HEALTH AND HIGHER
EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES AUTHORITY**

January 10, 2024

Honorable Troy D. Jackson
President of the Senate
3 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

Honorable Rachel Talbot Ross
Speaker of the House
2 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear President Jackson and Speaker Talbot Ross:

Pursuant to 5 M.R.S.A., Section 12023, please consider this the letter of transmittal for the required report from the Maine Health and Higher Educational Facilities Authority due by February 1, 2024.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or if you need additional information. I can be reached at 622-1958 or by email at Terry@mhhefa.com.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

S/Terry Hayes
Executive Director

READ and with accompanying papers **ORDERED PLACED ON FILE.**

SENATE PAPERS

Bill "An Act to Require Electricity Providers to Inform Customers of Alternative Electric Rates and Gather Consent Prior to Contract Renewal"
S.P. 918 L.D. 2163

Presented by Senator GROHOSKI of Hancock.
Approved for introduction by a majority of the Legislative Council pursuant to Joint Rule 203.

On motion by Senator **LAWRENCE** of York, **REFERRED** to the Committee on **ENERGY, UTILITIES AND TECHNOLOGY** and ordered printed.

Sent down for concurrence.

Bill "An Act to Establish the Maine-Ireland Trade Commission and Improve Collaboration with Ireland"
S.P. 919 L.D. 2164

Presented by Senator STEWART of Aroostook.
Cosponsored by Representative TERRY of Gorham.
Approved for introduction by a majority of the Legislative Council pursuant to Joint Rule 203.

On motion by Senator **CURRY** of Waldo, **REFERRED** to the Committee on **INNOVATION, DEVELOPMENT, ECONOMIC ADVANCEMENT AND BUSINESS** and ordered printed.

Sent down for concurrence.

Off Record Remarks

All matters thus acted upon were ordered sent down forthwith for concurrence.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

House

Divided Report

The Majority of the Committee on **ENERGY, UTILITIES AND TECHNOLOGY** on Bill "An Act to Support Municipal Franchise Agreements"
H.P. 1264 L.D. 1967

Reported that the same **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-728)**.

Signed:

Senators:
LAWRENCE of York
GROHOSKI of Hancock

Representatives:
ZEIGLER of Montville
GEIGER of Rockland
KESSLER of South Portland
RUNTE of York
WARREN of Scarborough

The Minority of the same Committee on the same subject reported that the same **Ought Not To Pass**.

Signed:

Senator:
HARRINGTON of York

Representatives:
BABIN of Fort Fairfield
FOSTER of Dexter
PAUL of Winterport

Comes from the House with the Majority **OUGHT TO PASS AS AMENDED BY COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" (H-728)** Report **READ** and **ACCEPTED** and the Bill **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED AS AMENDED BY COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" (H-728)**.

Reports **READ**.

On motion by Senator **LAWRENCE** of York, **TABLED** until Later in Today's Session, pending **ACCEPTANCE OF EITHER REPORT**.

Senate at Ease.

The Senate was called to order by the President.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Unfinished Business

The following matter in the consideration of which the Senate was engaged at the time of Adjournment had preference in the Orders of the Day and continued with such preference until disposed of as provided by Senate Rule 516.

The Chair laid before the Senate the following Tabled and Later Assigned (1/3/24) matter:

Bill "An Act to Equalize Funding for the Maine Maritime Academy"
S.P. 885 L.D. 2092

Tabled - January 3, 2024 by Senator **RAFFERTY** of York

Pending - **REFERENCE**

(In Senate, January 3, 2024, **READ**.)

(Committee on **EDUCATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS**
suggested and ordered printed.)

On motion by Senator **RAFFERTY** of York, **REFERRED** to the
Committee on **EDUCATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS**.

Sent down for concurrence.

Out of order and under suspension of the Rules, the Senate
considered the following:

PAPERS FROM THE HOUSE

House Paper

Bill "An Act Regarding the Homestead Property Tax Exemption
and the Property Value Reassessment Process" (EMERGENCY)
H.P. 1384 L.D. 2162

Comes from the House, **REFERRED** to the Committee on
TAXATION and ordered printed.

On motion by Senator **GROHOSKI** of Hancock, **REFERRED** to
the Committee on **TAXATION** and ordered printed, in
concurrence.

All matters thus acted upon were ordered sent down forthwith for
concurrence.

Off Record Remarks

On motion by Senator **VITELLI** of Sagadahoc, **ADJOURNED**,
pursuant to the Joint Order, until Tuesday, January 16, 2014 at
10:00 in the morning, or until the call of the President of the
Senate and the Speaker of the House.