

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# DOCUMENTS

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# THE LEGISLATURE

OF THE

# STATE OF MAINE,

DURING ITS SESSION

**A. D. 1836.**

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*AUGUSTA:*  
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1836.

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**SIXTEENTH LEGISLATURE.**

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**NO. 78.**

**HOUSE.**

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**REPORT**

**RELATING TO THE DEFENCE OF THE STATE.**

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**STATE OF MAINE.**

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, }  
April 2, 1836. }

The Committee appointed for the purpose of enquiring into the expediency of taking any measures to call the attention of Congress to the subject of fortifying our rivers and frontiers, have had that subject under consideration, and ask leave to report. The Committee deem this a subject of high importance, both to the State and Nation, and notice with pleasure that the voice of our State is heard upon this subject, in the Halls of Congress, and in glancing at some of the important interests, which entitle us to the consideration of the General Government, we shall but repeat in part what has been said. We have five hundred miles of sea-coast following the indentations of the shore, stretching

from the Piscataqua to the St. Croix, all along which there are numerous and excellent harbors. We have several important Rivers, amongst which, are the Penobscot, Kennebec and the St. Croix, the two former take their rise far in the interior, and after wending their way through immense forests of valuable timber lands, fall into the sea, near the centre of the State; upon one of these rivers stands our Capitol, and upon the other our second city. The banks of both, are dotted all along with flourishing towns and villages, and both, are, while undefended, easy of access to an enemy, but if fortified, would afford a safe retreat to our merchantmen, and navy; to our view much importance is attached to the St. Croix, from the fact, that it is the dividing line, between the United States, and a British Province; Eastport, one of our principal towns, is situated at its entrance, and Calais at the head of navigation, a town containing about 4000 inhabitants, which with the surrounding regions is rapidly increasing; ships of War, of any class can approach within about four miles of Calais; opposite to Calais on the English side, is St. Stephens, and about sixteen miles below stands the city of St. Andrews, where fleets and armies may rendezvous, and bring their power to bear upon us, at any time.

A large portion of our territory is yet covered with its native forest. At the same time, millions of acres are devoted to Agriculture, affording a vast field for industry and enterprise, yielding sustenance

to a large population, and contributing to the wealth of the State and nation at large. The developments of every day prove that inexhaustible stores of wealth, lie hidden beneath the surface of our soil, which time and enterprise will bring forth to enrich and build up our sea-ports, and advance our commerce and navigation. The fisheries upon our coast are of high importance both to the State and Nation, —we possess every natural advantage for carrying on this branch of industry, and of enlarging it to an indefinite extent, thus constituting a nursery of hardy seamen, fitted to fight the battles of our Country, in time of war, and to extend its commerce in time of peace. One of the greatest sources from which Maine is to draw her prosperity for centuries, is our immense forests of valuable timber lands, connected with it, as we have, water power unsurpassed by that of any other country; already has these important interests, attracted the attention of capitalists, and the latter is unquestionably destined at no distant day, to be extensively occupied for manufacturing purposes. We have nearly three hundred thousand tons of shipping, making us the third State in the Union for navigation, and increasing more rapidly than that of any other State, and we possess in rich abundance all the natural advantages for its continual augmentation for ages to come; this immense fleet manned by fifteen to twenty thousand seamen unrivalled for enterprise and skill by that of any other country, trading to the most distant ports,

and daily returning to us the riches of other lands, and contributing to the National wealth. We have a population of half a million rapidly increasing, spread over a territory of upwards of twenty millions of acres, energetic, enterprising and industrious, and who have already in the navy, and army, and in the battles of the Country, "done the State some service." It is worthy of consideration, that the circumstances which give to our State its greatest importance, viz. our extensive sea boards and frontiers, renders our situation the most exposed, and places us the most in need of Government aid and protection. This was painfully demonstrated in our experience during the last war, with Great Britain, a portion of our territory then in a defenceless state, without fortifications or troops, fell an easy prey to the enemy, and though the General Government, was solemnly bound by the compact to guarantee the integrity of the Union, still for years a foreign enemy, was suffered to retain possession, and force martial law upon our citizens. While liberal appropriations have been made by the General Government, all along the Atlantic shore, and the Gulf of Mexico, a mere trifle, (less than ten thousand dollars,) from 1791, to 1833, has been appropriated to Maine for fortifying our sea ports, and protecting all our great interests. We have on the sea board but three forts, and even these were built mostly at the expense of the State, and they can now contribute, but little to our defence. Upon our own 600

miles of interior frontier, we have but a single military post; if dependant alone upon our maritime fortifications, a small naval force could burn our infant cities, with all the flourishing towns and villages, upon our 500 miles of sea board, destroy our navigation, and prostrate our commerce, and blast for a season the happy prospects of our young and rising State. We deem ourselves therefore, of all the States in the Union, the most defenceless and exposed—exposed upon the Canadas,—exposed upon New Brunswick,—exposed upon the sea board, the outward wall upon which the American Standard will first be raised in the event of war, and though in an emergency, we should confidently rely upon the patriotism of our citizens for defence, still it would be at the hazard of great interests, our homes, our property, and our best blood. While the Nation was in debt, and while there was nothing which threatened to interrupt our pacific relations, with the nations of the earth, we waited long, and patiently without complaining, but now with national means vastly augmented, and with a national Treasury literally overflowing, we ask a right guaranteed to us by the Constitution, that we no longer be forgotten in the “common defence” of the Country. In view of the whole subject your Committee are forced irresistibly to the conclusion that the time has arrived when the great interest of the State imperiously demand of the General Government

vastly more liberal interposition for its protection and defence, Therefore

**RESOLVED**, That the Government of the United States are solemnly bound, without any unnecessary delay, to establish upon our sea board and interior frontier such fortifications as will give to the State assurance of necessary protection in time of war.

**RESOLVED**, That our Senators in Congress be instructed, and our Representatives be requested to vote for liberal appropriations for the defence of Maine and the Country.

**RESOLVED**, That the Governor be requested to transmit copies of the above preamble and resolutions to the President and Vice President, of the United States, the Secretary of War, and to each of our Senators and Representatives in Congress.

**STEPHEN C. FOSTER, PER ORDER.**

STATE OF MAINE.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, }  
April 2, 1836. }

The foregoing Report was accepted, and Resolves passed, and both ordered to be engrossed, and one thousand copies thereof ordered to be printed for the use of the members; and when printed, forwarded by the Secretary of State by mail to the several members of the present Legislature.

JONA. CILLEY, Speaker.

IN SENATE, April 2, 1836.

The foregoing Report was accepted, and the same with the Resolves passed to be engrossed and printed in concurrence.

JOSIAH PIERCE, President.





STATE OF MAINE.

OFFICE OF SECRETARY OF STATE, }  
Augusta, April 10, 1836. }

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of the original deposited in this office.

Attest: A. R. NICHOLS, Secretary of State.