

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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DOCUMENTS

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THE LEGISLATURE

OF THE

STATE OF MAINE,

A. D. 1858.



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1858.

THIRTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE.

HOUSE.]

[No. 36.

STATE OF MAINE.

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IN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, }  
March 13, 1858. }

Your Committee find that George M. Weston is at Washington by appointment as a Commissioner, under authority of a Resolve of Legislature, approved March 12, 1855. He was the first man appointed for that place, and afterwards removed to make place—from political motives—for one Fairfield, who appears on record here, more prominent for extravagance and length of name, than prudence and weight of judgment.

We think it may be proper, and quite necessary to continue our agency, but would recommend a revision of the amount and mode of payment for services. A proposition has been received from Mr. Weston, (as per sheets marked A,) to receive a percentage when the claims are allowed, on such sums and nothing more. The report from Mr. Weston is very satisfactory and minute, but so lengthy that a condensed statement (as per sheet D) will present all facts of interest without the necessity of printing the whole. Much of the same substance matter was reported and printed last year—as per House Doc. No. 8, Senate Doc. No. 5.—*Documents, Second Part, 1857.*

We have also, by request, kindly and promptly been aided by letters (marked B and C) from Hon. Ex-Governor Hamlin and

Hon. Israel Washburn, Jr., now in Congress, whose position, experience and ability in matters of this kind, deserve great deference. And in view of all facts and prospects, we conclude the State will in no event suffer, and may be largely benefitted by continuing our present able and faithful agent at Washington, and for that purpose ask leave to present the Resolve herewith submitted.

MOSES BUCK, *Chairman.*

## A.

WASHINGTON, February 6, 1858.

*To the Governor and Council of Maine :*

GENTLEMEN:—As I advised Gov. Williams, I do not propose to ask any compensation for my services as Commissioner here since the adjournment of the last Congress, until some of our claims here are realized, and only in the event that some of them are realized.

This proposition, of course, is necessarily upon the condition that the prosecution of the claims is not taken out of my hands.

I received from the State (in November, I think,) two hundred dollars, being for actual expenses in the management of these claims. I do not anticipate that I shall make any further call of that kind. This grew (chiefly) out of the necessity of employing accountants to make up an interest statement on the payments (upwards of fifty-five hundred) for the Civil Posse in 1839.

Respectfully, your ob't servant,

GEO. M. WESTON.

WASHINGTON, February 23, 1858.

HON. L. M. MORRILL:

*Dear Sir :*—What I wish the Legislature might do, and I am sure it is for the interest of the State, is to authorize the Governor and Council to make an arrangement to pay a contingent percentage upon our claims here. Our delegation in the last Congress were unanimously of the opinion, that this should be done, and so they are now, if it can be done without party opposition from the democrats. The amount of the percentage could be arranged hereafter.

If such an arrangement is made with me, I will allow it to be retroactive, and will release all claims to *per diem* pay, from the 4th of last March. It is true that I need money for my personal

expenditures, but the proposed arrangement would answer my purposes, as it would be a basis for borrowing what I want.

There are considerations in this case, which cannot be submitted to the Legislature, and they ought to be willing to leave it to the Executive, in the confidence that no arrangement will be entered into, which is not for the interest of the State.

It is very easy to say that our delegation might attend to these claims. It is impossible, and experience proves it to be so. Our extra interest claim, which a Senate Committee has agreed to allow, has been dead here for six years. What time have they had to make that examination of the precedents which has enabled me to revive it?

Mr. Washburn said last winter before a Committee of the Legislature, that the delegation would employ an attorney, *if these claims were their own private property.*

If the Legislature give you the authority I propose, you will not be obliged to use it. But I believe I can satisfy you that you ought to use it, and that it does not imply any use of money here which is not perfectly legitimate.

Yours truly,

GEO. M. WESTON.

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B.

WASHINGTON, February 7, 1858.

MY DEAR SIR:—In reference to the continuance of a Commissioner at Washington to look after and prosecute the claims of the State of Maine against the general government, I would observe in reply to your letter, that Mr. Weston says that he does not understand or claim that he is now under a salary; and that he will not demand or expect further pay for his services, unless he shall be successful in his efforts to obtain their allowance, and that he so informed Ex-Governor Williams, and Col. Coburn, a member of the late Council. He has undoubtedly rendered valuable service to the State in preparing the cases in his charge for the consideration and

action of the Departments and Congress; and he informs me that he has good reason to believe that some of them will be favorably acted upon at an early day. Mr. Weston states to me, that he will very soon transmit an official communication to the Governor and Council, from which I presume the members of the Legislature will be able, in connection with other information, to arrive at satisfactory conclusions in the premises,—better founded, I dare say, than could be formed from any opinions of mine.

Yours, very truly,

I. WASHBURN, JR.

M. BUCK, Esq., H. R., Augusta, Me.

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C.

WASHINGTON, February 6, 1858.

MY DEAR SIR:—Your favor of the 4th inst. came to hand this day, and I will give you an immediate reply.

I concur with you fully in the propriety and necessity of a rigid economy in the affairs of the State. To do that is simply our duty; still, for the true interests of our State, I do not believe the agency here should be discontinued, but should remain.

It is impossible for me to go into all the details of what an agent can do here. But I can give you some idea—for while *I know* our whole delegation will do their *whole duty*, there are many things they cannot do. Quite a portion of our claim is for interest which our State paid on its loans, and which by the Treaty of Washington, the government is to repay. An examination of all the accounts at the Department, to get at the sums due us on interest, would require the time of one man for many months. If disposed, a member could not do it. It is a work which an agent must do.

Then all the claims, when reported for action, require that some one shall seek interviews with Senators and Representatives to explain the matter. It is the only way it can impart a knowledge of the matter, so necessary to success. Most men here will not examine private claims; and if disposed to do so, they have not the time.

We have a great many cases, and many where the evidence occupies hundreds of pages. I think it would take *all the time* of any man, to read the cases of private claims. The only way then, to visit Senators and Representatives and explain and do away objections; and while our Senators and Representatives would do all they can, an agent who devotes his time to it is desirable, for the best interests of the State. That is my opinion.

Mr. Weston has written or will write the Governor, that he will *not* call for his pay until he obtains the money to pay him from the government. That will relieve the State. I think we will get some of the claim at this session. Mr. Weston is busy at work with us to effect it, and I think we will succeed.

Yours, truly,

H. HAMLIN.

MOSES BUCK, Esq., Augusta, Maine.

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#### D.

1st. The claim of organizing and holding in readiness one regiment of Infantry for the Mexican War in 1846, \$5,885.69.

2d. Balance of interest on advance paid to defray Aroostook War expenses; supposed to amount to about \$6,000; but can only be ascertained by computation of interest on 2,246 accounts. Five thousand calculations of interest will be required.

3d. Claim for second commission to complete the ascertainment of the right of settlers, \$3,776.50.

4th. Claims for pensions about which there is no dispute, and will be eventually refunded to this State, about \$5,000.

*To be submitted directly to Congress.*

5th. Losses of the State in discounts over 6 per cent. for raising money for Aroostook War in 1839, \$24,234.16.

6th. For value of lands set off to settlers under 4th article of Treaty of Washington, amount claimed indefinite, 50 to 75 thousand dollars.



COMMISSIONER AT WASHINGTON.

7

7th. For expense of the extra session of Legislature of Maine in 1842, convened at special request of Secretary of State for the United States, \$15,000, more or less.

| To negotiate for. |                      | To legislate for. |             |
|-------------------|----------------------|-------------------|-------------|
| 1st.              | 5,885 69             | 5th.              | 24,234 16   |
| 2d.               | 6,000 00             | 6th.              | 50,000 00   |
| 3d.               | 3,776 50             | 7th.              | 15,000 00   |
|                   | <hr/>                |                   | <hr/>       |
|                   | 15,662 19            |                   | \$89,234 16 |
| 4th.              | 5,000 00 undisputed. |                   |             |
|                   | <hr/>                |                   |             |
|                   | \$20,662 19          |                   |             |



## STATE OF MAINE.

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*Resolved*, That the governor with advice and consent  
2 of the council, be authorized and instructed, to employ  
3 and continue, an agent at Washington on such terms  
4 as they may deem proper and advisable, subject and  
5 conditioned in payment for services, to a percentage  
6 or specified sum, from the payments and receipts of  
7 such claims from the general government to this state,  
8 but not further or otherwise; and all acts or resolves  
9 relating thereto, inconsistent with this, are hereby  
10 repealed.



STATE OF MAINE.

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, March 13, 1858.

On motion of Mr. JOHNSON of Augusta, this report, resolve and accompanying papers were laid on the table, and 350 copies of same ordered to be printed for the use of the Legislature.

GEO. W. WILCOX, *Clerk.*