

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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Sixty-Sixth Legislature.

SENATE.

No. 201.

STATE OF MAINE.

STATE OF MAINE, EXECUTIVE CHAMBER, }
March 27, 1893. }

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives:

In view of the growing tendency towards excessive legislation of a private character, the prevailing feeling of uncertainty and doubt as to the scope that should be given to this class of legislation, under the prohibitory clauses of our constitution applicable to this subject, it is apparent that some effort should be made to limit within reasonable bounds the private legislation that is constantly increasing with each succeeding legislature. It unnecessarily encroaches upon the time of the legislature and has a tendency to divert our attention from legislative matters that more intimately concern the public interests of the State.

A thorough and exhaustive examination of this subject will require much care and attention. With the great accumulation of public matters requiring the attention of legislative committees during the session of the legislature, they do not have the necessary time to devote to this special subject.

The legislature will permit me to suggest the desirability of providing for a committee or commission to take into consideration the general subject of private and special legislation, to ascertain what subjects of this character may properly be provided for by general laws, and report to the next legislature, with necessary drafts of bills applicable to such subjects. The whole matter can in this way be placed before the legislative branch at the commencement of the next session, and such general laws can be passed as are deemed advisable; then the legislature can properly relieve itself from considering a large mass of subjects that should be provided for by such laws.

From the information I have been able to obtain bearing upon our expenditures in this direction, if suitable provision can be made by public acts for such subjects of private legislation as may appropriately be provided for, it will reduce future State expenditures at each session of the Legislature, *at least twelve thousand dollars.*

I am satisfied, from an examination of previous legislation, that the enactment of such general or public laws, applicable to special and private legislation as are contemplated under the provisions of our constitution, requiring that the Legislature shall provide as far as practicable by general laws for all matters usually appertaining to special or private legislation, and for the formation of private corporations, will dispense with a very large portion of the private and special acts that will in the future require legislative attention, better conserve the people and business interests of the State, curtail the enormous expense attending legislation of this character, and shorten the sessions of future legislatures by several weeks.

I believe there is a general demand that a movement in this direction should be inaugurated, and if any other method more desirable to secure this purpose, suggests itself to the Legislature, I shall be pleased to co-operate with you in its accomplishment.

HENRY B. CLEAVES.

STATE OF MAINE.

IN SENATE, March 27, 1893.

Read, and on motion by Mr. LIBBY of Androscoggin, laid on table to be printed.

KENDALL M. DUNBAR, *Secretary*.