

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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NEW DRAFT.

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SEVENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE

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HOUSE

NO. 612

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*House of Representatives, March 21, 1913.*

*Reported by Mr. Mitchell from Committee on Appropriations  
and Financial Affairs and ordered printed under joint rules.*

*W. R. ROIX, Clerk.*

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STATE OF MAINE

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RESOLVE in favor of People's Ferry Company, Bath.

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*Resolved,* That there be and hereby is appropriated the  
2 sum of two thousand dollars to be paid to the People's  
3 Ferry Company, Bath, for the year nineteen hundred and  
4 thirteen, and two thousand dollars for the year nineteen  
5 hundred and fourteen, for maintenance.

STATEMENT OF FACTS ACCOMPANYING RESOLVE  
IN FAVOR OF PEOPLE'S FERRY COMPANY.

The People's Ferry Co. operates the steam ferry "Hockomock" across the Kennebec river between Woolwich and Bath. The river at this point is about seven-eighths of a mile wide. The boat makes half-hourly trips, running from six A. M. to six P. M.

Under the navigation laws of the United States she is obliged to carry a crew of five men—captain, engineer, fireman, purser and one deck hand.

The boat is now twelve years old, and cost about \$25,000.

The stock of the company is owned by the town of Woolwich and the city of Bath, in proportions of one-fourth and three-fourths. The present ferry-boat was paid for in the same proportions, the last installment note on account of the construction price having been paid in 1911.

The earnings of the ferry from tolls, and it has no other source of income, has never been sufficient to meet the operation and maintenance charges, the deficit running from \$1600.00 to \$2,500.00 per annum. But a bridge at this point would be wholly inexpedient and impracticable; it would not, in all probability, be permitted by the Federal government, because it would constitute a serious obstruction and menace to commerce and navigation; and if this were not so, the cost would, in itself, prohibit construction. The ferry, therefore, becomes not merely a convenience, but a necessity. The deficit for the current year, owing largely to necessary repairs on the slips, will be about \$2000; for the next year it would be as much, even if the boat were operated under its present schedule, owing to imperatively necessary repairs on the engines and hull.

This ferry constitutes a part of the main highway between Brunswick and Rockland, and forms a part of any well considered scheme of highway trunk lines through the State, under the various plans for the improvement of highways. It is being used to an increasing extent by automobilists who wish to travel along the shore roads of the State. While this travel

has in the past two or three years increased the earnings of the ferry, it bids fair now to increase by a greater amount the operating expense.

The Maine Automobile Association demands that the boat be run until at least nine o'clock P. M., on penalty of having this route stricken from its route book. The people of Bath and Woolwich realize that for the convenience of the travelling public, as well as of their own citizens, this extension of service ought to be made, but in view of the ever present annual deficit, and the increased deficit assured by the additional running time, they cannot meet it. By the requirements of the laws of the United States they must double the number of men employed, (the crew now working to the full limit allowed by law); while the increased use, and cost, of the amount of coal used, and the additional wear and tear upon machinery, will further largely increase the cost of operation.

While a ferry is a necessity to Woolwich and Bath, *this* ferry, as it must now be maintained and operated, is a very serious burden, especially in view of the fact that practically all of the increased future expense is not, primarily, for the benefit of their citizens, but for the public generally, and the State as a whole.

Inasmuch as this ferry fulfils all the purposes of a bridge at this point, and a bridge, however desirable, is impossible, (and there is no bridge between Gardiner and the sea, a distance of forty miles at least), we believe there is no argument which can be used to secure State aid for a bridge or road which does not apply, with at least equal force, to this ferry.