

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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SEVENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

HOUSE

NO. 47

House of Representatives, Feb. 30, 1917.

Referred to committee on Ways and Bridges and fifteen hundred copies ordered printed. Sent up for concurrence.

W. R. ROIX, Clerk.

Presented by Mr. Redman of Ellsworth.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD ONE THOUSAND NINE HUNDRED AND SEVENTEEN

RESOLVED, amending Article Nine of the Constitution, so as to Provide for a Bond Issue for Permanent Improvement of Highways.

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine, as follows:

Resolved, Two-thirds of the legislature concurring, that
2 an amendment to the Constitution of the State, by adding
3 to Article Nine thereof the following section, be proposed:

Section 18. The Legislature may, in addition to bonds
2 heretofore issued, authorize the issuing of bonds not ex-
3 ceeding four million dollars in amount at any one time,
4 payable within forty-one years, at a rate of interest not

5 exceeding four per centum per annum, payable semi-
6 annually, which bonds or their proceeds shall be devoted
7 solely to the construction of state and state-aid highways,
8 the expenditure of said money to be divided equitably
9 among the several counties of the state; provided, that the
10 proceeds from such bonds shall in no instance be used ex-
11 cept in paying for and financing the construction in and
12 upon said state and state-aid highways of such features of
13 a permanent nature as may reasonably be expected to out-
14 live the date of the last of said bonds to mature, said perma-
15 nent features to include the expense of straightening and
16 widening of way, where necessary for public safety, and
17 change of location, including the purchase of land therefor,
18 excavation work, including blasting and stone excavation,
19 filling in with borrow material, cutting down of grades, put-
20 ting in of stone base and stone drainage, permanent stone
21 masonry, and such other features of a permanent nature as
22 are necessary in the construction and improvement of state
23 and state-aid highways.

Provided, further, that no part of the proceeds from the
2 bonds to be issued as aforesaid shall be applied to the ex-
3 pense of surfacing, maintaining or the upkeep of said high-
4 ways, or to any features thereof not permanent in their
5 nature; and further provided that the amount applied from
6 the proceeds of the aforesaid bonds on any stated stretch
7 of state or state-aid highway construction shall bear the
8 same ratio to the total amount expended thereon, as the

9 apportioned aggregate cost of the features that are perma-
10 nent, within the meaning of the term as used in this amend-
11 ment, shall bear to the total amount expended on said stated
12 stretch of highway.

Resolved, that the aldermen of cities, the selectmen of
2 towns and the assessors of the several plantations in this
3 state are hereby empowered and directed to notify the in-
4 habitants of their respective cities, towns and plantations to
5 meet in the manner prescribed by law for calling and hold-
6 ing biennial meetings of said inhabitants for the election of
7 senators and representatives, on the second Monday of Sep-
8 tember, in the year nineteen hundred and seventeen, to
9 give in their votes upon the amendment proposed in the
10 foregoing resolution, and the question shall be:

“Shall the Constitution be amended, as proposed by a reso-
2 lution of the legislature, providing for the issuing of State
3 bonds for the purpose of making permanent improvements
4 in state and state-aid highways?”

And the inhabitants of said cities, towns and plantations
2 shall vote by ballot on said question, those in favor of the
3 amendment expressing it by the word “yes” upon their bal-
4 lots and those opposed to the amendment by the word “no”
5 upon their ballots, and the ballots shall be received, assorted,
6 counted and declared in open ward, town and plantation
7 meetings, and returns made to the office of the Secretary of
8 State in the same manner as votes for Governor and mem-
9 bers of the Legislature, and the Governor and Council shall

10 count the same and make return to the next session of the
11 Legislature, and if it shall appear that a majority of the in-
12 habitants voting on the question are in favor of such an
13 amendment, it shall become a part of the Constitution and
14 the same shall be amended accordingly.

Resolved, that the Secretary of State shall prepare and
2 furnish to the several cities, towns and plantations, ballots
3 and blank returns in conformity with the foregoing resolves,
4 accompanied by a copy thereof.

STATEMENT OF FACTS.

In improving both state and state-aid highways, from the narrow undrained country roads to the type that will stand up under automobile traffic and be passable at nearly all times of year, it is necessary that certain permanent features be made a part of our road construction.

Although there may be a difference of opinion as to how wide our roads should be, how much should be expended on cuts and fills and how much realignment is necessary, all factions agree that these features are to a certain extent essential along with the other permanent features mentioned in the foregoing proposed amendment.

In going over the items contained in the construction account of our present day roads, both state and state-aid, it will appear therefrom that on many miles of improved highway the aggregate cost of constructing the features enumerated in this proposed amendment ranges from thirty to sixty-six per cent of the total amount expended thereon.

It is the purpose of this resolve to place before the people of the state the advisability of providing bond money to finance these particular features in highway construction that are of a permanent nature, in order that such funds as are available from taxation may be devoted to the non-permanent features thereof; in order that greater progress may be made in the construction of both state-aid and state highways than would be possible under any plan necessitating the payment for permanent features from immediate taxation, and also that the proceeds from such bonds as are issued pursuant to this amendment may not be devoted to that part of highway construction which will disappear and be non-existent long before the last of such bonds have matured. It is the further purpose of this resolve to obviate the danger of such lavish expenditure of bond money, as to impose an unjust financial burden on the future, by making it necessary that along with this bonding plan, a plan be adopted for raising sufficient funds by means of present taxation to carry on the non-permanent construction work and maintenance of our state and state-aid highways.