

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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EIGHTIETH LEGISLATURE

SENATE

NO. 145

In Senate, March 18, 1921.

Tabled by Mr. Tuttle pending acceptance and 100 copies ordered printed.

L. ERNEST THORNTON, Secretary.

Presented by Senator Tuttle of Aroostook.

STATE OF MAINE

**IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD ONE THOUSAND
NINE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-ONE**

*To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of
the Eightieth Legislature:*

Pursuant to the order of the Seventy-ninth Legislature directing the appointment of a committee to visit the Eastern States Exposition Grounds, at Springfield, Massachusetts, and report upon the advisability of the erection of a State of Maine building upon the said grounds, we hereby transmit the accompanying committee report.

L. E. TUTTLE, Chairman.

REPORT OF LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE IN AT-
TENDANCE AT THE EASTERN STATES EXPOSI-
TION, 1920

Pursuant to an order of the Seventy-ninth Legislature at the special session of September, 1920, a committee was appointed and authorized to attend the meeting of the Eastern States Exposition at Springfield, Massachusetts, for the purpose of determining the advisability of the erection of a building by the State of Maine for the annual display of agricultural and other products of the State, and to report to the next regular session.

This committee begs to submit the following: Four members of the committee, to wit, Senators Tuttle and Babb and Representatives Plummer and Perkins, visited the Exposition and were in attendance thereon for three days, September 21, 22 and 23. The committee found the location of the Exposition at West Springfield most happily chosen, having been decided upon because within a radius of one hundred and fifty miles, there is a greater population than that of any other point within a similar radius anywhere in the United States. The grounds comprising one hundred and seventy-two acres are situated on the banks of the Agawam and Connecticut Rivers with suitable rail, highway and trolley connections and terminals, making the plant extremely convenient for both exhibitors and visitors. Structures comprising the Exposition group are of permanent brick, steel and concrete construction. These include a coliseum building, machinery and exhibition buildings, agricultural and boys' and girls' building, horse show building, cattle barn, Massachusetts State building, home department cottages, and sheep and swine barns.

The Massachusetts building erected by that Commonwealth under legislative act of 1917, is the first of the series of structures to be erected by the several states. It is a replica of the old State House in Boston to which two wings have been added with a total cost of fifty thousand dollars. The Massachusetts building is devoted exclusively to the exhibition of Massachusetts products, and is under the control of the State Department of Agriculture.

More than fifteen hundred head of livestock can be accommodated in the horse show building, cattle barns and the sheep and swine barns, while the agricultural and boys' and girls' building houses the display of products of field, farm and orchard, and is also used for demonstration and the showing of the work of boys' and girls' clubs. It was noticeable that none of the usual midway attractions were to be found about the Exposition grounds. These are but a few of the principal features in which your committee was interested, but a short history of the exhibitions held to date may be profitably included in this report.

The first industrial exhibition was held and the first show given in 1917. It attracted an attendance of one hundred and thirty-eight thousand, and from that date the shows have drawn ever increasing attention and attendance. During 1918, the grounds and buildings were requisitioned by the United States Government, no exhibitions being held. But in 1919, the most successful exhibition ever held in the East up to that date,

took place and was attended by one hundred and eighty-six thousand persons.

In 1920, even greater progress was made, and the attendance reached a total only a few thousand short of a quarter million. In spite of the immense floor space of the permanent building, there was an excess of exhibits placed under canvas, twenty-two thousand square feet of such tent space being required.

Your committee was highly gratified with the exhibit provided and arranged for at this exhibition by the Maine Department of Agriculture, and it is with sincere pride that we are able to report that the exhibits of Maine farm products were excelled by none, either in quality or arrangement; seventy-two feet of floor space on each side of one of the principal aisles of the agricultural building were put to use, showing the fine agricultural products of our State. Mr. James of the Fish and Game Department also furnished an exhibit which gave testimony to his ability as an artist and an expert in this line.

We are pleased to learn that already many material results have come from these exhibits; many inquiries for seed potatoes have been received from visitors from this show, and many carloads have already been sold as a result. The Maine-grown seed shown here was sold before it was placed in the booths. We are glad to note that the Maine exhibit will be enlarged and improved in 1921, and that increased floor space has already been engaged.

With regard to the question of the advisability of erecting a State building upon these grounds, your committee is unanimously of the opinion that such a building should be undertaken and at once. The present cost of the floor space rented is one thousand dollars per year, and this cost will increase if we are to maintain and improve our exhibits. To this should be added the cost of suitable accommodations for the officials of the Department, as such accommodations for the officials might well be provided in the building when constructed. Furthermore, the State, presenting its advantages through the medium of a State building, has an immense advantage over its competitors. An immediate market for its products is created through close contact with the consumer. As an advertising proposition, its worth cannot be characterized in mere dollars and cents; it sells more effectually than any method of indirect approach yet devised.

In four years, the Eastern States Exposition has been attended by more than six hundred thousand persons; its permanency is assured; its future is an established fact. An attractive location for state buildings has been set aside on the Exposition grounds. This is the Avenue of States, and will be comprised wholly of state buildings. Connecticut and Vermont are making plans for state buildings; and the project is this year being presented to New Hampshire. Perpetual exemption from taxation is guaranteed; land occupied by the state structures is to be deeded outright to the erecting commonwealth, and the state interests are safeguarded at all times.

This proposition is now open to the State of Maine, and in consideration of the facts herein set forth, we earnestly recommend to the Legislature of the State of Maine that the erection of a State building be undertaken, and that the sum of fifteen thousand dollars for each of the years 1921 and 1922 be provided for this purpose.

(Signed) L. E. TUTTLE,
GEO. H. BABB,
H. A. PLUMMER,
JAMES B. PERKINS,
F. P. WASHBURN,

Members of the Legislative Committee from
the Seventy-ninth Legislature.