

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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E I G H T Y - E I G H T H L E G I S L A T U R E

Legislative Document

No. 37

S. P. 57

In Senate, Jan. 19, 1937.

Referred to Committee on Claims and 500 copies ordered printed. Sent down for concurrence.

ROYDEN V. BROWN, Secretary.

Presented by Senator Martin of Penobscot.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED
THIRTY-SEVEN

RESOLVE, in Favor of Charles Murray.

Charles Murray, reimbursed. Resolved: That there be, and hereby is, appropriated to be paid to Charles Murray, of Bangor, to reimburse him for money expended for legal services in connection with the investigation by the 84th legislature of the state highway commission, the sum of \$5,000; said sum to be paid from the general state fund.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

In a special message to the 84th legislature, His Excellency quoted a letter by him received from Honorable W. M. Jardine, the then Secretary of Agriculture, wherein reflection was made by him upon the integrity of the State Highway Commission, of which Mr. Murray then was a member; in his letter, Secretary Jardine said: "The integrity of the State Highway department personnel which discharges any duties in connection with the construction of Federal Aid projects thus becomes a matter of serious concern to the Federal Government. If such personnel should be corrupt, dishonest, or inefficient, the interests of the Federal Government are certain to suffer."

Without awaiting the determination of a hearing upon any charges, His Excellency requested the resignation of Mr. Murray from the Commission, which was not then given.

Following this special message of the Governor, a joint order was passed to investigate the State Highway Commission by a committee which was directed "to obtain, if possible, from the United State Department of Agriculture, the United States Department of Justice, and other sources, such data, evidence and information as they have in their possession, including names of witnesses, which will assist the committee in recommending the advisability and form of proceedings against the aforesaid members of the State Highway Commission or any of them, for malfeasance or misfeasance and unfitness to hold their office."

An extended hearing was held by the committee appointed under the joint order, excitement ran high, and, in order to protect his rights, his good name and his interests, Mr. Murray employed counsel.

While the investigation was exhaustive yet no wrong doing was found to have been committed by Mr. Murray and he was absolved from the commission of any illegal acts, with the result that no charges were preferred against him.

In 1935, the legislature reimbursed Edward T. Clifford, a member of the State Highway Commission with Charles Murray for his counsel fees in the same investigation, as has been the practice in this state on other occasions.