

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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

Legislative Document

No. 1098

S. P. 565

In Senate, March 24, 1939.

Partial Report of the Joint Select Committee created by the Joint Order S. P. 412, passed in the Senate on February 14, 1939, and passed in the House in concurrence on February 15, 1939.

Read and placed on file. Sent down for concurrence and 500 copies ordered printed.

ROYDEN V. BROWN, Secretary.

S T A T E O F M A I N E

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED
THIRTY-NINE

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the 89th Legislature:

Pursuant to the above designated Joint Order, this committee has devoted its attention to the subjects therein specified. Although the time available during the progress of the Legislative session is inadequate for any complete and thorough study of all departments of the State, we have been able to reach certain conclusions which we believe warrant consideration by this Legislature.

Adoption of the proposals herein submitted will, we estimate accomplish a saving to the taxpayers of approximately \$700,000 during the next biennial period.

We find that the present system of automobile travel is subject to abuses which, in the aggregate, are costly and substantial, and that State-owned cars are, in too many instances, operated for private purposes at the taxpayers' expense. Mileage paid employees for privately-owned cars can and should be reduced. We believe a scale of payment based on mileage should be graduated downward to discourage unnecessary travel at the taxpayers' expense. It is also our opinion that substantial savings to the taxpayers

can be effected by curtailment of the use of state-owned cars. We recommend passage of the accompanying bill entitled, "An Act relating to automobile travel by State employees." Such action will, in our judgment, cause no undue hardship to State employees.

We recommend the creation of a board of sanitation, licensing, and inspection, to consist of the Commissioner of Agriculture, the Director of Health, and the Attorney General, serving without additional compensation, to have full supervision of examining, licensing, and inspecting services now conducted under the Department of Agriculture and the Bureau of Health, with authority to consolidate such services and to eliminate needless duplication, supervision, travel and other expenses.

We further recommend that whenever any department, division or bureau is incurring expense and using funds of the State in connection with carrying on the work of any board or commission which collects fees from the persons supervised and licensed, that sufficient sums be transferred from such board or commission to reimburse the state for such expense. This will effect savings from the general appropriation for certain salaries, for light, heat, rent and other overhead expense.

To accomplish these purposes we recommend passage of the accompanying bill entitled, "An Act Creating the Board of Sanitation, Licensing, and Inspection, and defining its powers and duties."

We further recommend the elimination of Inspectors of Railroad Tracks under the Public Utilities Commission. We are convinced that the maintenance of such inspectors is an unnecessary expense. We submit a bill herewith entitled, "An Act Relating to the Examination of Railroads by the Public Utilities Commission" to amend the law in this respect.

There are at present fifteen beer inspectors in the employ of the State Liquor Commission. We believe beer inspections in the small communities of the State can and should be conducted by the state police. This we estimate will make possible the elimination of about ten beer inspectors, at a saving of some \$15,000 a year in salaries, without any impairment in the efficiency of this service. A bill to accomplish that purpose entitled, "An Act Relating to the Duties of the State Police" is submitted herewith.

So long as eligible citizens of Maine are unable to obtain old age assistance, aliens should be stricken from the rolls and citizenship made a requisite for old age assistance. We are informed that some 800 aliens are receiving such assistance under the present law. To eliminate them would save the taxpayers approximately \$100,000 a year in state funds plus a

proportionate saving in any expansion of the present Old Age Assistance program. To accomplish that end, we advocate the passage of appropriate legislation based on L. D. 91, H. P. 286, "An Act Relating to Requisites for Old Age Assistance" now pending before this Legislature.

We recommend elimination of further appropriations for poultry improvement believing this to be an unnecessary function which the State, under present circumstances, can ill afford to maintain. A bill for that purpose is herewith submitted.

We recommend also the passage of the bill herewith submitted to discontinue so-called blueberry fly control. We feel that the field inspection of blueberries can and should be performed by the farmers themselves without state interference, and expenditure of the taxpayers' money.

An increasing expense to the taxpayers of Maine is imposed under the present provisions for Emergency Aid to cities, towns, and plantations. It seems essential to the preservation of sound state finances, that this function be, in some manner, further restricted. We believe that certain municipalities capable of financing their own needs under proper management, have been too ready to look to the State for this form of relief. We think this tendency would be substantially curtailed by the passage of the bill herewith submitted entitled, "An Act Relating to Emergency Aid in Certain Organized and Unorganized Territory," providing that such relief hereafter be extended only to cities, towns, and plantations whose financial affairs are under the management of the Emergency Municipal Finance Board, or such municipalities as shall have made voluntary application to said board for such management and control.

We believe that responsible relatives should be compelled by law to contribute to the support of recipients of Old Age Assistance, and herewith submit a bill to carry out that purpose.

We find upon investigation that the State is burdened in making a semi-annual report to the towns, cities, and plantations, on the collection of the excise tax on automobiles, and we recommend passage of the accompanying bill to repeal Chapter 166 of the Public Laws of 1933. We believe this will result in a saving to the taxpayers amounting to \$15,000 a year.

This is not a final report. The committee is engaged in further investigations with reference to a major portion of its work. We shall submit a further report making recommendations consistent with sound business principles adapted to the present economic condition of the taxpayers.

Respectfully submitted,

JOINT LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

HILL of Cumberland
WENTWORTH of York
TOMPKINS of Aroostook

Members on the part of the Senate

NOYES of Franklin
DEAN of Greenville
S. ARTHUR PAUL of Portland
HAWES of Vassalboro
DOW of Eliot
WILLIAM H. HINMAN

Members on the part of the House

(Representative Smith of Thomaston, because of illness has had no opportunity to sign this report.)

Your committee respectfully suggests that the bills herewith submitted be referred to the Joint Standing Committee on Legal Affairs except Senate papers 559 and 560 which we suggest be referred to the Committee on Agriculture and that public hearings be held thereon.