

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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ACTS AND RESOLVES

AS PASSED BY THE

One Hundred and Third Legislature

OF THE

STATE OF MAINE

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Budget Message Address
of
Governor Kenneth M. Curtis
to the
One Hundred and Third Legislature
January 12, 1967

Mr. President, Mr. Speaker and Members of the 103rd Legislature —

Last week in my Inaugural Address the goals and objectives of my administration were highlighted for the first time. They loom on a distant horizon, but the way to them is open and today's message will start us towards achieving these goals and objectives.

State Government

State Government is more than a rigid structure for the administration of its affairs of state. It is the equivalent of a \$200,000,000 a year business, which administers and responds to its people

By developing its economic resources.

By providing opportunity for young people to develop their talents.

By expanding job opportunities.

By conserving our natural resources.

By meeting the needs of those who are disabled, ill or disadvantaged.

By insuring dignity for older citizens and improving the quality of life for all our citizens.

Our resources are not unlimited. But, I believe they can be used more effectively and more efficiently to build a better Maine.

I propose, in line with my Maine Action Plan and the objectives expressed by the platforms of both parties, to get the maximum return on the investment of this \$200,000,000. I am sure that all of us desire more and better jobs for Maine people, better education for our children, development of our resources, improvement of living conditions and a proud place for Maine as a leader among the States.

A budget is more than a collection of facts on how a state government operates. It is an indicator of our currently available resources, the assessment of our needs, and the priorities we have set for meeting those needs, and the decisions we have made on the allocation of our State's fiscal resources.

Objectives of this Budget

Since November 9 I have been consulting with State officials, public-spirited private citizens and my advisors and staff in a thorough item-by-item, line-by-line review of budget requests and proposals that have been made for improvements in State programs for the ensuing biennium. I do not pretend that the result of this collective effort is perfect, but it does represent a thoughtful and careful attempt to carry out the mandate of November 8 and to continue the progressive policies initiated by the 102nd Legislature, and promised by the platforms of both parties.

Now I welcome the scrutiny and refinement that the legislative process will bring.

My first objective is to present a budget balanced within a framework of current revenues authorized by existing laws. This has been done!

My second objective provides meaningful advances in State services and programs, without imposing major new taxes or major increases on existing taxes. This has been done!

My third objective is to increase efficiency in State government through better planning, reorganization and greater coordination. Several proposals contained in this message will advance this objective.

We have not done all we might, but we have done all we could within the fiscal and time limitations imposed on us. Together, we will continue to review this budget, and I look forward to working with you in the months immediately ahead to improve it and refine it.

GENERAL FUND

The Current Services Budget: Part I

The current services Part I budget finances activities authorized under the preceding administration and previous legislatures. For ease of presentation, dollar amounts will be discussed in terms of biennial figures.

Departmental requests for appropriations to continue current services for the ensuing biennium amount to \$248,732,799. These requests were \$58,089,705 more than was appropriated for the current biennium.

I held many executive budget hearings with the State Budget Officer, department heads, and others, discussing ways and means of reducing this large increase in appropriation requests. As a result, requests were reduced to \$216,738,034, not including construction under the school subsidy program. This is a reduction of \$31,994,765.

However, estimates of revenue under current law fall short of that amount by a little more than \$15,000,000. For this reason, in order to present you with a balanced budget, I have reluctantly reduced the \$61,837,578 school subsidy to cities and towns by \$15,200,284. This amount I have included, in full, in the supplemental, or Part II, budget. Therefore, although we must say that current services will cost, under my budget, \$216,738,034, the Current Services Act will carry an appropriation of \$201,537,750. I am well satisfied that this is the minimum amount of appropriation that will continue current services for the next two years and that our existing programs have been carefully reviewed and prudently proposed.

The detailed listing of current service items can be found on pages 119 to 459 of the budget document.

The Supplemental Budget: Part II

In making my proposals to you and all Maine people concerning the size and scope of the supplemental budget, I am troubled and concerned about our inability to fulfill all of the requests of State departments this biennium.

However, with prudent and imaginative management, and careful planning, much will be accomplished and a great deal begun.

The supplemental, or Part II, budget provides for significant advances under existing programs, and some new programs. I propose to finance these advances with General Fund money available for appropriation, with estimated surplus as of June 30, 1967, and by recommending adjustment to certain existing taxes.

The bulk of the \$25,495,568 supplemental budget will benefit our elementary, secondary and higher education programs. In accordance with present law, our present obligation to the school subsidy program is \$61,837,578. We must meet this obligation. I have, therefore, in the supplemental budget provided \$15,200,284 for school subsidies to cities and towns. This amount was not included in the Current Services Act because of insufficient revenue under current laws. Along with school construction money, this will provide an increase in school subsidies over the present biennium in excess of \$23,000,000.

I propose that an additional amount of \$14,000,000, earmarked as the State's share of local school construction, be financed through the issuance of bonds. This will carry out the commitment of the 102nd Legislature to expand State assistance to cities and towns and will pay 100% of the formula allocation. The total supplemental commitment to education is \$18,707,103.

The Department of Education, in addition, has been allocated \$446,949 of new money for administrative costs, educational television, grant programs for elementary and secondary education, grants for vocational education, tuition payment support for Maine students at the University of Vermont Medical School, improved educational programs for Indian children on reservations, and for schools in the unorganized territories.

The supplemental budget includes \$495,830 for faculties, equipment and programs in our Vocational Training Institutes and Practical Nursing Schools. Approximately 500 more young men and women should be able to train in occupations of their choosing.

The State Colleges and the Maine Maritime Academy will receive \$891,563 for increased faculty and staff, improved salaries, and added equipment. These provisions should provide opportunities for an estimated 400 more young people who desire and need a college education.

In the supplemental budget the University of Maine has been allocated \$1,672,477. This money, when added to the \$3,165,331 increase in the University's current services budget, will implement long overdue 8% average annual salary increases for the faculty and will add needed funds for research. You will recall that the University of Maine was the only state institution that did not receive merit pay increases at the Special Session of the 102nd Legislature. These supplemental funds will also provide for expansion of programs with increased enrollments at the several campuses and branches as well as the new south campus to be located at Dow Field, Bangor, in 1968.

Maine's role in the education of its people is now being reviewed by those who are studying the AED Report on Higher Education. Because of the importance of this study and its possible effect on Maine's future, I will make specific recommendations on higher education to this legislature in a later special message dealing with human resources.

Increased funds are also provided for the Maine State Library, the Commission on Arts and Humanities, and the Maine Historical Society.

The second major part in the supplemental budget is for health, welfare, Indian affairs and veterans. This part has been allocated \$2,413,192. With this amount of money we will be able to reduce general relief costs to cities and towns, reduce the State's appropriation for general relief, and very substantially increase federal grants to the State. Funds included in this part of the budget are designed to improve welfare programs: by providing additional homemaker services and expanded professional staff for public assistance programs, by increasing aid for the blind and the disabled, by increasing assistance to widows and orphans of veterans and elderly veterans, and by improving placement services for disabled and problem children.

I propose that we initiate a new public health program under Title 19 of the Medic-Aid Program. It includes payments for drugs, limited dental care, and selective medical treatment. The funds also provide for selective improvement of the effectiveness of central staff services. Indians on reservations will be provided funds for expanded professional services and support for self-government. This will also allow the State to continue the imaginative work experience program designed to provide job training, employment counseling and other needed services to present and potential welfare recipients so that they may become self-supporting. The requested \$150,000 appropriation is expected to generate over two and one-half million dollars in federal money.

The third major category is Mental Health and Corrections, which will receive \$1,437,313 of new funds under the supplemental budget.

These funds will increase grant-in-aid subsidies to approved community health projects, expand out-patient care and consultant psychiatric services, and improve psychiatric service to children at the Maine Medical Center. This will allow for accreditation of the Bangor State Hospital.

This money will also provide mental health education, establish and staff an Interdepartmental Committee on Mental Retardation, expand and improve staff and services at the State institutions by adding 73 positions.

It will support the expansion of staff and improved rehabilitation programs at the State correctional institutions, and provide for necessary additional staff and equipment at the Governor Baxter School for the Deaf and the Military and Naval Children's Home. These funds will increase central staff and management support for the entire program.

The fourth major category under the supplemental budget is Economic and Natural Resource Development, which has been allocated \$746,265 of new money.

Funds provided for this area will establish a new Environmental Improvement Administration with an improved water pollution control program and an air pollution control program.

It provides for a new Department of Transportation.

It will improve professional staff and implement the Federal Technical Services Act within the Department of Economic Development. It will expand conservation activities in agriculture and forestry, accelerate conservation of anadromous fisheries, increase marine resources research, provide for a full-time oceanographer in the Sea and Shore Fisheries Department, expand and improve State Park and Recreation areas, and improve consumer protection.

Finally, in the supplemental budget a total of \$474,772 has been included to improve the performance of State government. Among these improvements are: a central computer service; establishing the office of a chief medical examiner and increasing the Attorney General's staff; and support for regional programs including the New England Governor's Conference, the New England River Basins Commission, and the Bi-State Commission on Oceanography. Provision is made for the office of a planning coordinator in the Governor's Office, a survey of State office building requirements and community planning needs in the State Capital, expansion of the Bureau of Purchases, and increased support for the Air National Guard at Dow Air Force Base. The detailed listing of supplemental recommendations appears on pages 522 to 533 of this budget document.

Capital Improvements

The supplemental budget is concentrated on personal services, grants, and investment in equipment and materials.

Beyond these immediate needs are large-scale capital investments which will return benefits to our State for many years to come. I propose to finance these long-term investments, as do prudent private businesses, by issuing bonds.

State departments have documented a need for capital improvements totalling \$71,387,300. This is \$27,316,900 more than requested just two years ago. In an attempt to meet a portion of these needs on a priority basis I propose a \$23,029,300 capital improvement bonding program designed to expand our educational and public welfare facilities, improve educational opportunities for our youth, increase our capacity for resource development, improve our air transportation facilities, and further develop our parks and recreational facilities. This is in addition to the previously-mentioned \$14,000,000 school construction bond issue for cities and towns.

The bulk of the capital expansion program is directed at the enhancement of our human resources. This includes almost \$10,000,000 for facilities at our State Colleges and the Maine Maritime Academy, \$940,500 for our Vocational Technical Institutes, \$3,170,000 for the University of Maine, \$3,234,100 for Mental Health and Corrections, and \$304,700 for water and sewage systems on our Indian Reservations. The expected acquisition in 1968 by the University of Maine of a number of buildings at Dow Field will enable the University to expand residential and learning facilities through modest renovations at Dow rather than through new dormitory construction. The necessary remodeling is included in the bond request.

Included in the bonding request for education is \$5,227,300 for additional residential facilities at State Colleges, and the Maine Maritime Academy. This bond issue would be self-liquidating.

Natural and Economic Resource Development requires an investment of \$4,238,400. This includes \$2,550,000 for airport expansion and smaller amounts for forestry, sea and shore fisheries facilities, port facilities, park development, and for moving the State of Maine Montreal Expo '67 visitors' building to Kittery following the end of the exposition, as a new tourist center. Also included in this, I propose a \$1,000,000 bond issue for acquisition of coastal and other land for park and recreational area expansion. This is a particularly important item. We must protect our vital resources.

My program also includes \$456,600 for renovations and completion of projects under construction.

An additional bond issue of \$3,000,000 is recommended as the State's share in support of a number of already approved area vocational high schools.

This capital program will generate an additional \$6,329,600 in matching funds.

Finally, I propose an additional, separate, \$500,000 bond issue for increased funds for continued State participation in the Federal Higher Education Act to guarantee the student loan program. Under provisions of this Act this bond issue will make an additional \$6,000,000 of new funds available for student loans.

The detailed listing of capital improvement projects is found on pages 75 to 85 of the budget document. Specific bonding proposals can be found on pages 534 to 544 of the budget document.

Financing

To support my recommendations for program expansion under the supplemental budget I make a series of revenue recommendations. As I have said before, I do not think Maine people or our economy can afford a major new tax at this time. We do not need an overall increase in the sales tax, removal of exemptions on food, or a major income tax in this biennium. My proposals are limited to corrections in existing tax structures, coupled with reasonable increases on such items as cigarettes and alcoholic beverages.

Improved and expanded services can be achieved in part by increased appropriations. Beyond this, however, our goals must be to generate new revenues through growth. We must make every effort to improve the efficiency of State government so that the taxpayers will receive a greater return for every dollar spent by the State.

Some increased efficiency can be achieved through the reorganization of State departments. In a special message to the Legislature I shall submit recommendations dealing with reorganization of the Department of Economic Development, establishment of a Department of Transportation, establishment of an Environmental Improvement Administration, and the organization of our higher education program.

In addition, I plan to take steps administratively to insure cooperation and coordination between departments and agencies and to institute effective planning in all departments and agencies in state government.

We must all look to the future, recognize what its pressing demands are and prepare ourselves for the demands that are still to be heard.

Long-range goals can be established today, but there is also the need for short-range objectives that will make these distant goals attainable.

Here in this building we must develop budgets that will meet this two-fold purpose.

Revenue: Part I and II

The proposed general fund appropriations, including Part I and II total \$227,033,318. The departments estimated the 1967 and 1968 undedicated revenues at \$201,537,750, leaving an imbalance of \$25,495,568. I propose to finance this in the following manner:

Estimated Surplus, June 30, 1967	\$ 4,368,968
Increasing the cigarette tax by 2¢ per pkg.	5,000,000
Removing the exemption on auto trade-ins from sales tax	6,400,000
Removing sales tax exemptions on rental, repair, service and installation of tangible personal property	2,540,000
Increase estimates	4,000,000
Liquor (administratively raised approximately 5%)	3,186,600
Total	<u>\$25,495,568</u>

My decision to raise the estimate of undedicated revenues is based on a careful review of the past history of the State's general revenue. During the last ten years the average annual increase has been over 4.5 per cent more than the preceding year. In addition, current year revenues are running over \$1,000,000 more than the estimates. It is clear that earlier estimates of 1967 and 1968 general fund revenues will be exceeded. So, I have realistically raised the revenue estimates by about 2 per cent.

Capital Improvements:

Of the \$23,485,900 capital program \$456,600 will be financed from unappropriated surplus. A general bond issue of \$17,802,000 is recommended, and a self-liquidating bond issue of \$5,227,300.

Financing of Recommended Appropriations 1967-69 Biennium

	Dept. Request	Transfers In and (Out)	Increases (Reductions)	Recom- menda- tions
Current Services—				
Part I	\$248,732,799	\$(36,620,284)	\$(10,574,765)	\$201,537,750
Supplemental—Part II	27,226,954	15,200,284	(16,931,670)	25,495,568
Capital Construction	71,387,300	—	(47,901,400)	23,485,900
School Construction				
Subsidies	—	14,000,000	—	14,000,000
Area Vocational Schools	—	7,420,000	(4,420,000)	3,000,000
Student Loan Program	—	—	500,000	500,000
Total	<u>\$347,347,053</u>	<u>\$ - 0 -</u>	<u>\$(79,327,835)</u>	<u>\$268,019,218</u>

Earlier in my message I mentioned the need for increased efficiency in State government. Because I feel so strongly about the importance of improving the machinery of government, and making the best use of the talents of our dedicated State officials and employees, I want to outline for you some of the recommendations I shall make and the actions I shall take.

The principal need in State government today is to develop a clearer understanding of our State needs, to assess our resources, to set objectives based on reasonable priorities, and to organize our efforts to achieve those objectives.

To help set the tone for such an effort I have provided for the office of planning coordinator in the Governor's office. This office will help set a standard of planning and coordination for the several departments and agencies of State government. Such an effort is long overdue in our State government and has been recommended by an advisory commission on state planning.

While working to develop a budget for presentation to the Legislature, I have found that there is no logical pattern of budget presentation which goes beyond the simple requirements of accounting. It is difficult for the Governor and the Budget Officer to develop an accurate picture of departmental priorities.

To correct these and other problems I propose to take the following action:

(1) I intend to develop a "cabinet" of State department heads, with subcommittees based on the natural divisions of responsibilities between human resources, economic and natural resources, and government administration. The first value of such a system will be mutual education by the different department heads. The second value should be an increased appreciation of the problems of other departments, a realization of the interrelationship of departmental programs, and an increased awareness of the need for more effective cooperation and coordination between departments. Finally, such meetings should enable the Governor and department heads to stimulate the greatest possible effort in the economic development of our State.

(2) I intend to appoint a series of task forces calling on qualified Maine citizens to deal with specific problems in State government, including government organization, economic development, education, conservation of natural resources, state and regional planning, and taxation. The latter task force will be particularly important as it relates to the improvement of our State tax system and local tax assessing.

Over the years a number of studies have been conducted and recommendations made on reforms in our tax system at the State and local level. Little has been done to correct the inequities and inadequacies those studies have disclosed. The task force I appoint for this purpose will be charged with the responsibility of bringing recommendations to me no later than July 1, 1968, so that its recommendations can be reviewed and developed for presentation to the next session of the Legislature.

I anticipate that the task force on State government will submit recommendations for reorganization and consolidation of various departments and agencies to eliminate duplication, overlapping responsibilities, and lack of coordination. This can lead to economies in operation. More important, it should lead to more effective service.

(3) I have three specific reorganization recommendations to make to this Legislature. The first involves an internal reorganization of the Department of Economic Development and the transfer of the Maine Industrial Building Authority and the Maine Recreational Authority to the Department of Economic Development as a Division of Economic Assistance. This will permit us to provide more effective economic assistance with the combined resources of the two Authorities, which have combined resources of about \$30,000,000.

The second reorganization involves the creation of an Environmental Improvement Administration to combine the functions of the present Water Improvement Commission and a proposed Division of Air Pollution Control. The problem of

environmental pollution is an increasing problem, even in Maine, and we need an agency equal to the task if we are to protect and improve the quality of Maine life.

Finally, I propose to create a Department of Transportation, to consist of a Bureau of Ground Transportation, a Bureau of Aviation, and a Bureau of Marine Transportation. The Maine Aeronautics Commission and the Maine Port Authority would be transferred to the new department. Such a department would enable us to do a much more effective job of coordinating the planning and development of our transportation systems in Maine.

All of these steps are aimed at improving the quality of State government. This, I submit, is an objective on which we can all agree.

Miscellaneous:

There are many other programs and policies in State government that can be improved through judicious decisions of the Legislature and my office.

Among items to consider are

In the field of Education:

Establishment of a Target Date for completion of all School Administrative Districts so that all Maine children will be afforded the best possible educational opportunities.

Increased emphasis on the use of secondary and post-secondary facilities for adult study programs.

Permit the admission of the physically and mentally handicapped in public schools.

In the field of Labor:

A revision of the minimum wage law to establish a \$1.60 an hour minimum to keep pace with the federal minimum wage scales.

Increase in unemployment benefits to a level equal to Workmen's Compensation benefits.

Elimination of the waiting period for receipt of unemployment benefits.

Increase in the number of unemployment benefit weeks from 26 to 39.

Provide compensation that starts on the first day of an injury.

Provide compensation for permanent disfiguration.

Include illnesses and diseases contracted in employment under the Workmen's Compensation Act.

This administration stands opposed to any Right-to-Work legislation.

State Employees:

We should review the Cresap, McCormick & Paget personnel study and implement all practical and economically feasible items.

I recommend establishing grievance procedures for state employees, and paying time and one-half compensation to highway maintenance personnel and garage mechanics for duties beyond their basic 45-hour work week.

We should take steps so that the State would be the policyholder for all health, life and accident insurance for state employees.

In the field of Health and Welfare:

Allow Old Age Assistance recipients to earn at least \$1,000 a year per couple, or \$500 for each individual, before their benefits are affected.

Institute a program that calls for the upgrading of nursing and boarding homes.

Prevent reduction of Old Age Assistance when Social Security payments are increased.

In the Administration of Justice:

Place the power of probate court appointments with the Governor.

Establish a District Attorney system that corresponds with the progressive District Court system already in effect in this State.

Create regular Traffic Court sessions in the District Courts.

Consideration should also be given to a reapportionment of the geographical area of the various District Courts and changing the system of financing so that they are financed out of the General Fund.

In the field of Government Reform:

Abolish the archaic Executive Council.

Hold annual sessions of the Legislature.

Allow the Governor to appoint the Attorney General, the Secretary of State and the State Treasurer.

Establish the office of Lieutenant Governor.

Permit the Governor to have the power of item veto.

Move the primary date from June to September.

Lower the voting age to 18.

Establish more home rule for Maine communities.

HIGHWAYS

With our continuing effort to expand and modernize Maine's vast highway system and the rapidly rising construction and maintenance costs, the pressure for additional financing becomes increasingly necessary if we are to keep up with the pace of present highway programs.

The State Highway Commission has presented a budget requesting allocations of \$93,708,999 from the General Highway Fund and from bond proceeds for the next biennium. This budget has been presented on the basis of carrying on highway activities at approximately the same level as has existed in previous years.

In the 102nd Legislature a bond issue in the amount of \$9,600,000 was authorized for highway construction in the 1968-69 biennium. The Special Session of the Legislature in January, 1966, authorized allocations from the bond issue in the amount of \$3,300,000 for worthwhile purposes. Because of this allocation of the proceeds of the \$9,600,000 bond issue it was necessary for the Highway Commission to present a budget showing a deficit of \$2,600,000 for the next biennium.

I have adjusted the budget as presented by the Commission as follows :

(1) Reduced the Unappropriated Highway Surplus Account by \$1,000,000 suggesting that this sum be used for debt retirement.

(2) Added \$317,000 to the budget, of which 75% will be taken from the Highway Fund, for the purpose of providing a 20-year personnel retirement program to strengthen the State Police.

(3) Added \$479,000, again 75% from the Highway Fund, to provide salaries, equipment and expenses for 28 additional State Police Troopers, as a start toward increasing the capability of the State Police to cope with the rising number of traffic accidents and fatalities and the rising crime rate.

(4) Added \$380,000 to allow for paying time and one-half for hours over 45 hours per week for highway maintenance and garage hourly paid personnel, whose low wages were not increased in the previous biennium during which other state employees received substantial increases.

With these adjustments the deficit in the General Highway Fund budget for the next biennium amounts to \$2,900,000. I have adjusted the Highway Fund budget to provide for a balanced budget by decreasing the highway construction allocations by the amount of \$2,900,000. A careful examination of the allocations from the Highway Fund has convinced me that, at least from an accounting standpoint, it is desirable to balance the budget in this manner.

Long-range planning for highway financing has been recognized as necessary by the past five Legislatures. In keeping with this practice, I am recommending that we provide financing at this time for a three-year period; that is, for the next biennium and the following fiscal year as well. In the third year of the immediate future, the Highway Commission anticipates a deficit just under \$4.5 million for the year and thus a total deficit of \$7.5 million for the three-year period. Meeting this deficit with new money will only provide for the current level of services and programs. That is not enough.

In considering the amount of money necessary for the construction of our highways it has been necessary to take recognition of the fact, as stated by the State Highway Commission, that the cost of constructing highways has increased. This has been brought about by (a) increased cost of labor, materials and equipment charges; (b) the need for higher design standards for highways, particularly on the main-travelled roads, because of heavier loads and higher volumes of traffic; and (c) increased emphasis which the Commission must place on safety requirements.

By state law the Commission does have the responsibility of reconstructing approximately 4,000 miles of the main-travelled roads as the need for such reconstruction develops. Prior to 1958 the Commission had been constructing approximately 100 miles of such highways each year. Since 1958 the number of miles constructed per year has decreased until it is now only approximately 60 miles per year. During this time the money made available by the Legislature has either remained the same or has been increased.

The Commission has determined that in 1958 it was possible to construct a typical mile of rural, primary highway for \$127,000 whereas in 1965 the cost had increased to \$218,000. In recent months the increase in costs has accelerated because of inflationary trends.

If we are to maintain our highways in a satisfactory condition, it is apparent that additional funds must be made available for highway construction. It is for these reasons that the Highway Commission submitted its regular construction program and recently a \$6,000,000 supplemental program for the construction of highways for the next biennium.

After careful review and consultation with the Highway Commission, in order to meet these needs, I am recommending to you a \$10 million bond issue to finance this next three-year period. This \$10 million will take care of the deficit I have described to you and will finance in part the supplemental construction program as submitted by the State Highway Commission. The \$7.5 million of the bond authorization needed to finance the "deficit" will insure continuation of the highway activities at approximately the same dollar level and the new programs I have described to you. Included in this is the continuation of the joint state aid construction, special state aid construction and construction of town road improvements which your towns need so badly.

It must be pointed out that while I am proposing that you authorize \$10 million in new bonds for the three-year period \$9,500,000 in bonds will be retired during the same period. Therefore, the outstanding bonded indebtedness will remain essentially unchanged.

With this program I am urging continued emphasis on completing the New Hampshire - Kittery Interstate Bridge and completing the extension of I-295 Expressway in Portland.

We must also plan for the completion of four lanes on I-95 to Fort Kent and carefully study all the proposals for East-West connections and aim for the earliest completion date. I also recommend support for construction of a toll bridge between Lewiston and Auburn.

Highway Safety

I recommend implementation of programs recommended by the Federal Highway Safety Act and creation of a separate Department of Motor Vehicles.

Enactment of school bus safety legislation.

Creation of new traffic safety laws to bring the State's laws into greater conformity with the Uniform Traffic Code.

Increase the number of State Troopers by 28, and establish a 20-year retirement program for all state police.

VETERANS

In recognition of our fighting men in Viet Nam, the least we can do is to extend all Maine veterans' benefits to those men who will have served during this time of conflict.

I propose a long overdue increase in maximum grants that can be made under World War Assistance programs.

Finally, in this budget I have included proposals to construct, maintain, and staff a Maine Veterans' Memorial Cemetery.

CONCLUSION

The budget I have submitted to you today was drafted to meet Maine's needs, to make maximum use of our available resources, and to set the stage for even greater progress in the future. It does not represent a final answer to any of Maine's problems. It does not begin to exhaust all of Maine's opportunities. But it does represent a new beginning.

This budget and the detailed program which I shall submit to you in the next two weeks offer new challenges to the executive and legislative branches of our State government. We have an opportunity, working together, to make this budget and the legislative program a record of accomplishment for the people of Maine. Some of the actions we take will show immediate results. Some of our actions will not bear fruit for several years. But unless we do act with imagination and wisdom, Maine will not grow. Maine's resources will be wasted. And Maine people will suffer. For, as it has been wisely said, "Those who look to the future will indeed have a past; but those who look to the past will indeed have no future."

Kenneth M. Curtis
Governor of Maine