

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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LAWS
OF THE
STATE OF MAINE

AS PASSED BY THE
ONE HUNDRED AND ELEVENTH LEGISLATURE

SECOND SPECIAL SESSION

November 18, 1983

AND AT THE

SECOND REGULAR SESSION

January 4, 1984 to April 25, 1984

AND AT THE

THIRD SPECIAL SESSION

September 4, 1984 to September 11, 1984

PUBLISHED BY THE DIRECTOR OF LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH
IN ACCORDANCE WITH MAINE REVISED STATUTES
ANNOTATED, TITLE 3, SECTION 164, SUBSECTION 6.

J.S. McCarthy Co., Inc.
Augusta, Maine
1986

LEGISLATIVE ADDRESS

January 4, 1984

by

GOVERNOR JOSEPH E. BRENNAN

to the

SECOND REGULAR SESSION

One Hundred and Eleventh Legislature

REMARKS OF GOVERNOR JOSEPH E. BRENNAN
 JOINT CONVENTION
 111TH MAINE LEGISLATURE
 January 4, 1984

EMBARGOED UNTIL DELIVERED

Mr. President, Mr. Speaker, Honorable Members of the 111th Maine Legislature:

I am pleased to welcome you back to the State House for the beginning of this second regular session.

The record of your first session must surely rank among the most productive of any Maine Legislature.

And, on a personal note, I must say that as Governor I have found no Legislature easier to work with or more sincerely positive in its desire to act affirmatively on behalf of the people of Maine.

For during the 100 days allotted to you, look at all you achieved:

- You enacted a landmark bill that finally puts some control over the runaway cost of health care.

- You stood up for justice by passing a state equal rights amendment.

- You gave the state three important new tools for economic growth — the new Finance Authority of Maine, interstate banking, and the state's new Tourism Division.

- You took a stand for the wise management of our precious river resources.

- You made it possible for more of our elderly to continue living in their own homes.

- You promoted highway safety by discouraging teenagers from driving after drinking and by requiring safety seats for small children.

- You enacted a fiscally sound highway finance program.

And yet this list is just the beginning.

I welcome you back with the hope that the cooperative spirit, the positive outlook, that marked your first 100 days will also be the approach you bring with you for your final 50 days.

In the weeks to come, I will send you my legislative and budget messages which outline what I believe to be the unfinished agenda of this Legislature.

- We must still address the overcrowding in our correctional facilities.

- We have defined some very serious problems among our children, and we must do more to protect them from abuse and neglect.

- We must seize this opportunity for creative change to improve educational opportunity for our young.

- We must address the problem of disposing of low-level radioactive wastes.

- And we must still finance our efforts to clean up some of our most dangerous hazardous waste sites.

- We must strengthen our drunk driving law to get even tougher with the habitual offender who has refused to change his habits.

- We must enact changes in our bail system to keep dangerous defendants off the street.

— And we must continue our efforts to strengthen Maine's economy.

These are among the challenges that await you.

They will cost money.

And it's money we just do not have.

Let me give you some idea of the problem.

In recent weeks, the departments and agencies of state government have sent me requests amounting to \$65 million.

These are not just requests for new programs and expanded services.

In some cases, these requests do nothing more than keep the store open.

And that \$65 million does not include the cost of the collective bargaining negotiations in progress or those just concluded.

The amount of money available to finance the needs I've mentioned and the requests I've received is just a very small percentage of the cost of all this new spending.

How then will we propose to finance these recommendations?

First, most of the requests I've received will not be recommended to this session.

We are using very strict criteria to identify those new spending requests that must be financed.

Second, I will ask this Legislature to join with me in cutting back on the budget enacted last year.

I will recommend programs and services that can be reduced or eliminated, so that we can afford to pay for higher priority needs.

Then — and only then — should this Legislature begin to explore the possibility of raising new revenues.

Any proposal to expand state services at a time when we have so little to spend must receive the strictest scrutiny from you, from me, and from the public.

Any proposal to cut back on existing services will meet opposition from those who benefit from those services, even where there is little or no benefit to the state as a whole.

But I am confident we will find the answers.

For my part, I pledge the full cooperation of my Administration as we work together for the people of our state.

I look forward to working with you again.

Thank you.