

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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**LAWS**  
OF THE  
**STATE OF MAINE**

AS PASSED BY THE  
  
ONE HUNDRED AND TWELFTH LEGISLATURE

**SECOND REGULAR SESSION**  
January 8, 1986 to April 16, 1986

**SECOND SPECIAL SESSION**  
May 28, 1986 to May 30, 1986

AND AT THE

**THIRD SPECIAL SESSION**  
October 17, 1986

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

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# **SPECIAL SESSION ON LABOR CONTRACTS AND LANDFILL MORATORIUM**

by

GOVERNOR JOSEPH E. BRENNAN

to the

ONE HUNDRED AND TWELFTH LEGISLATURE

October 17, 1986

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REMARKS OF GOVERNOR JOSEPH E. BRENNAN  
 SPECIAL SESSION ON STATE LABOR CONTRACTS  
 AND LANDFILL MORATORIUM  
 STATE HOUSE  
 October 17, 1986

Welcome back to the State House.

I know that some of you would rather be home campaigning.

But I wouldn't worry about it...

... with the Red Sox winning...

... I'm not sure anyone wants to hear about politics.

In fact some have suggested a moratorium on politics...

...until after the world series...

...as well as a moratorium on dumps...

...but no bills on the subject have been submitted... *yet*.

\* \* \*

This is the last session... of the 112th Legislature.

It will be my last address to a joint convention.

Twenty years ago...

...I entered the Legislature...

... and sat right over there.

... in seat 64... Representative Allan Bonney's seat.

I came here... as all of you did...

...committed to certain basic values.

Among those values were...

...justice and fair treatment for working men and women...

...and a commitment to preserving...

...Maine's special quality of life.

It is only fitting then that today...

...my last two proposals to the Maine Legislature...

...deal with these very same values...

... justice to workers...

... and quality of life.

\* \* \*

Let me begin with the first proposal...

...the ratification of seven new state employee contracts.

Maine ranks among the very best states in the country...

...for its government services.

Our programs in mental health...

... in transportation...

... in care to the elderly...

... in housing and business finance...

... are all considered...

... models for this nation.

And the people who make these programs work...

... are our state employees.

Their jobs are tough.

Many times their jobs are thankless.

But our state employees do them...  
 ... and they do them *well*.

They deserve our thanks.

These contracts... seven in all...  
 ... totalling about \$6 million...  
 ...and providing 4% raises...  
 ... are a small token of that appreciation.

By approving these contracts now...  
 ... the way will be clear for the next administration...  
 ... coming in January...  
 ... to start with a clean slate.

When I became Governor...  
 ... the slate was far from clean.

The State Employee Bargaining Law was new and untested.  
 Five of the seven state bargaining units...  
 ... were without contracts.

Some state employees...  
 ... were even earning salaries...  
 ... below the federal minimum wage.

Since then...  
 ... we have signed 43 state contracts.

And with the signing of these contracts before you...  
 ... the average state employee salary...  
 ... will become roughly twenty thousand dollars a year.

I urge you to approve the contracts before you.

Clear the way for the new administration.

And thank our state employees...  
 ... by giving them their well-deserved pay raises...  
 ...in time for Christmas.

The second issue before you...  
 ... is our proposal for a commercial landfill moratorium.

This is a non-partisan issue.

The proposal has been endorsed by both...  
 ... the Democratic... and Republican...  
 ... candidates for Governor.

It is also a simple issue.

Should Maine allow the creation of new landfills...  
 ... in the absence of clear state policy...  
 ... on such important questions as...  
 ...how should we deal with imported waste...  
 ... from Massachusetts and New Hampshire?...  
 ... what are proper roles...  
 ... for the public and private sector?...  
 ... how should state and local governments...  
 ... plan and manage solid waste disposal?

This Legislature very wisely set up a group...  
 ... to study these questions...  
 ... and report back its recommendations next year.

But while the Legislature is *studying*...  
 ... the developers are *acting*.

Five or six new commercial facilities...  
 ... are in the planning stages already.

The possibility exists...  
 ... that when the Legislature sets its policy next year...  
 ... many major landfills will already be underway.

In that case...  
 ... the Legislature will simply be closing the barn door...  
 ... after the horses have left.

This development pressure... is *not* caused by...  
 ... unmet solid waste needs...  
 ... of Maine businesses and local governments.

The moratorium under consideration...  
 ... would allow the expansion of existing landfills...  
 ... by fifty percent...  
 ... to accommodate any local needs.

The *real* reason for this pressure...  
 ... is that developers see a market...  
 ... for importing solid waste...  
 ... from neighboring states.

Massachusetts... for example...  
 ... has highly restrictive rules...  
 ... that make commercial landfill development...  
 ... nearly impossible there.

Maine has been highly responsible...  
 ... in all its environmental regulations.

Now are we to be penalized for our responsibility...  
 ... because our neighbors have not met their own obligations?

Let's take our time...  
 ... and for the sake of our future generations...  
 ... let's handle this issue wisely.

That is why we need a moratorium.

\* \* \*

I understand you have a variety of proposals before you...  
 ... coming out of committee.

Without going into detail on the proposals...  
 ... I would like to offer two principles...  
 ... you should keep in mind.

First... you should treat all developers equally.

No developers should gain from this bill.

No developers should be given monopoly privileges.

There are constitutional questions involved...  
 ... as the Attorney General's Office has pointed out.

But more importantly...  
 ... there are questions of fairness...  
 ... and questions of justice.

Everyone should get the same treatment.

Secondly...

... there should be no commercial landfills approved...  
 ... before the Legislature completes its study.

The exact dates of the moratorium are not as important...  
 ... as the simple principle involved.

... we should set sound comprehensive state policy...  
 ... *before* we approve any specific projects.

It's a matter of keeping faith...

... with this Legislature's own decision...  
 ... to study the commercial landfill issue.

It's a matter of keeping faith...

... with the legislators you appointed...  
 ... to do that study.

And it's a matter of keeping faith...

... with Maine citizens...  
 ... who live in very real fear of uncontrolled...  
 ... commercial landfill development.

We must do all we can...

... to insure that our state's special character...  
 ... is preserved.

We must do it right.

Yes... I don't want Maine...

... to be a big town dump...  
 ... for the rest of New England.

\* \* \*

So those are the issues...

... justice for workers...  
 ... safeguarding Maine's special quality of life.

They are not Republican issues...

... they are not Democratic issues...  
 ... they are issues for Maine.

I urge you... to act responsibly...

... on both of these measures.

Thank you very much.