

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

NOVEMBER 4, 1977

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Rep. John L. Martin, Chairman at 10:30 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Senators: Sen. Conley, Sen. Huber, Sen. Sewall (11:20)

Representatives: Rep. Garsoe, Rep. Martin, Rep. Palmer,
Rep. Quinn, Rep. Tierney

Staff: Ronald Lord, Legislative Finance Officer
David Silsby, Legislative Research Director
Charles Priest, Leg. Research Assistant Dir.
Edith Hary, Law Librarian
Helen Ginder, Legislative Staff Coordinator

Guests: Dr. John Callahan, Dir. Legislators' Educ. Action Project
Dr. William Wilken, Asso. Director (LEAP)
Mr. Patrick Bond, Policy Analyst (LEAP)
Mr. Bob Edwards, Data Processing Specialist (LEAP)
Rep. Arthur Lynch, House Chairman - Committee on Educ.
Sen. Richard Pierce, Committee on Education
Mr. Ron Duprez, Health Policy Analyst

NEW BUSINESS

At this time the Council took up, out of order, Item #1 under New Business.

#1 - Report on Maine School Finance. Rep. Arthur Lynch introduced Dr. John Callahan to the members of the Council. Dr. Callahan distributed copies of the report "Maine's School Finance System: Is It Equitable?" and introduced the members of his staff. He explained that the report was divided into four major parts and that his people would go into detail on each of the following sections:

1. Characteristics and Rationale
2. Interstate perspective
3. Impact of Maine Finance Law
4. Computer Printout (which provides a variety of school, non-school and property tax base information for all school districts and towns for all House and Senate seats in Maine. This was intended as an aid for individual legislators.)

After the staff explained the various sections of the report, Rep. Martin asked Dr. Callahan to clear the record and tell how his group become involved in relation to the Education Committee and Leadership.

Dr. Callahan related that in April of 1977 his people had been working in various states and knew of the upcoming controversy in Maine. He stated that he had been contacted by Senator Katz and Rep. Lynch, and in discussion it was learned that there was clearly a need for information on this matter in the State of Maine. He explained that Sen. Katz and Rep. Lynch asked them to come up in April to conduct an analysis of what had been happening in Maine on the School Reform Law since 1973. Dr. Callahan advised they have only done work when asked by appropriate legislators who are concerned about this decision. He added that once requested they set about to analyze the Maine School Finance Law, not to comment nor take a pro or con side on the referendum, but to provide a service for all legislators. Dr. Callahan related that in the process of completing this report the staff worked and reviewed data from the Maine Department of Educational & Cultural Services and the Property Tax Division of the Bureau of Taxation. He emphasized the fact that the staff was able to use this data to complete the report unhindered and uninfluenced by any single legislator. Dr. Callahan concluded by saying that this report was not intended to sway people one way or the other.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

The Chairman asked for a motion to accept the minutes of the October 21st meeting. Rep. Garsoe questioned the last paragraph on page 5 pertaining to the letter from Hon. Larry Simpson. The Council agreed to table the matter until the recording of that meeting could be checked.

MOTION

The motion was made, seconded and carried to accept the minutes of the September 30th meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

The Council took up at this time Item #2 under New Business.

#2 - Suggestion on Amendments. Rep. Donald Burns forwarded to the Council a suggestion that the L.D. number be included on the right hand side in addition to the amendment number. Rep. Martin advised that the House would be implementing this practice as it would be helpful for location purposes.

#3 - Post-secondary Vocation Education. Sen. Katz forwarded a suggestion that the Joint Standing Committee on Education appoint a select committee consisting of a member appointed by the Speaker, one by the President, one by the Board of Education, one by the Maine Advisory Council on Vocational Education, one by the Post-secondary Education Commission and 3 public members from business industry and/or labor. Rep. Martin explained that this is a result of a request by

the State Board of Education and has the approval of the Joint Standing Committee on Education. The Council agreed to table this matter until the next Council meeting.

#4 - Request for a Health Care Subcommittee Study. Sen. Pierce explained that this request goes back to a bill he sponsored for the contract students. He stated that in debate they questioned whether or not they had a handle on what health care needs in Maine were and what would happen in the future. It is the committee's hope to be able to follow up on this matter. Sen. Pierce stated that the committee thought they would form an informal subcommittee of 12 members, 4 from Appropriation, 4 from Health and Institutional Services and 4 from Education so they could meet with all groups interested, such as MCD, HSA, and Maine Medical. Ron Duprez would be available at times as a resource and staff person to coordinate putting the data together. It is the intent of the committee to have a meeting after the session begins for educational purposes for the members of the committee. Sen. Pierce added that there would be no extra staff or funds required for this meeting. Through discussion it was learned that the members of the subcommittee would be selected by the two chairmen. Rep. Martin stated there should be some involvement on the part of the permanent staff upstairs. Helen Ginder offered the services of Bob Clark for this subcommittee, which Sen. Pierce welcomed.

MOTION

The Council moved to approve the request for another meeting for the Health Care Subcommittee Study.

#5 - The Senate Majority Leader's Internship Program. Rep. Martin presented an item from Sen. Speers for the next Council meeting pertaining to an internship program with various political science departments throughout the State. "The Senate Majority Leader's Internship Program for the Second Regular Session of the 108th Maine State Legislature" is an informational handbook prepared by the Maine State Majority Leader's Office.

STAFF REPORTS

Legislative Staff Coordinator - Helen Ginder advised the Council that interviews should be set up to replace Dwight Ely. She also presented to the Council the resignations of Tom Downing and Diana Scully. Rep. Tierney advised that Tom Downing had been with that office from the very beginning.

MOTION

Rep. Tierney moved that a letter be forwarded to the couple, accepting their resignations and thanking them for their service and to wish them the best.

The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

Mrs. Ginder advised that candidates are ready for interviewing for Dwight Ely's position. She added that it was hoped the Council could set up a date for interviewing within the next week or two. Rep. Martin advised that three members of the Council would be available to sit with her and William Garside on these interviews.

Helen Ginder distributed copies of a report prepared by her staff entitled "The Uniform Property Tax: Repeal or Continuance?" She advised the Council of printing costs of \$1.40 per copy and asked what to do about incoming requests. Rep. Martin advised on the importance of having this report available to the public. He suggested mailing a copy of the report to each legislator and then have an additional 200 on hand for the public. Mrs. Ginder then asked if her office should have copies of Dr. Callahan's report printed, stating that the cost would be about \$1.35 a copy. Rep. Martin advised that this report should be sent to every superintendent and town manager in the State, with a supply on hand for public distribution.

The Council was informed by Mrs. Ginder of their problem in meeting the reporting deadline. She advised that her office received some study orders quite late and that it would be impossible to have 50 reports completed in the time allowed.

MOTION

Rep. Palmer moved that the extension of deadlines be adjusted to December 15th, with reports generating bills handled first.

Sen. Sewall seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

The Council recessed at 12:00 noon and reconvened for the purpose of advance screening of second regular session legislation. David Silsby provided a list of all bill requests submitted to date and indicated that drafting could begin on all legislation which could be approved for introduction at this time. The Chairman explained the ground rules to be considered in approving legislation and the Council agreed on the rules and procedures. The Council considered 181 requests at this meeting, accepting 33 requests for drafting and provisionally rejecting 148. At the conclusion of the screening session the Director of Legislative Research was asked to prepare notice of the action taken by the Council. A second screening session was planned for November 21, 1977 in order to provide time to prepare a revised list following the November 10th deadline or cloture date for the session.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved and seconded that the meeting adjourn. The next Council meeting was set for 9 a.m., November 21st. The motion carried.