

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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SEN. MARK W. LAWRENCE
CHAIR

REP. G. STEVEN ROWE
VICE-CHAIR



119th MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

SEN. CHELLIE PINGREE
SEN. JANE A. AMERO
SEN. ANNE M. RAND
SEN. RICHARD A. BENNETT
REP. MICHAEL V. SAXL
REP. THOMAS W. MURPHY, JR.
REP. DAVID C. SHIAH
REP. RICHARD H. CAMPBELL

SARAH C. TUBBESING
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

MEETING SUMMARY
APRIL 18, 2000
APPROVED JUNE 28, 2000

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

Senators: Senate President Lawrence, Sen. Pingree,
Absent: Sen. Amero, Sen. Rand, Sen. Bennett

Representatives: Speaker Rowe, Rep. Saxl, Rep. Murphy, and
Rep. Campbell
Absent: Rep. Shiah

Legislative Officers: Joy O'Brien, Secretary of the Senate
Joseph Mayo, Clerk of the House
Sally Tubbesing, Executive Director,
Legislative Council
David Boulter, Director, Office of Policy
and Legal Analysis
James Clair, Director, Office of Fiscal
and Program Review
Paul Mayotte, Director, Legislative
Information Services
Suzanne Gresser, Principal Attorney, Office
Of the Revisor

NEW BUSINESS

Item #1: Proposed Studies

Discussion of Funding Available

The Chair, Senate President Lawrence, opened the discussion by asking the total cost of the proposed studies. Sally Tubbesing responded that, as proposed, they totaled \$290,000. Representative Murphy then asked whether money had been included in the Legislature's budget for Committee studies; and Senate President Lawrence replied that \$150,000 had been earmarked for interim committee work. Representative Saxl clarified that these funds had been included to support committees' general oversight function and that it was important to reserve the resources for this purpose. He went on to inquire whether some of the proposed studies could be funded from external sources. The Chair, Senate President Lawrence, stated that the fundamental question is how much the Council wants to devote to studies. Representative Murphy agreed, noting that the decision of how many studies to approve needed also to take into account the availability of staff. Representative Saxl asked Ms. Tubbesing how many studies had been funded in 1998, following the 2nd Regular Session of the 118th Legislature; and Ms. Tubbesing responded that 18 studies had been approved at a total cost of approximately \$75,000.

Structure and Organization of Study Commissions

Representative Saxl asked whether the Council was going to attempt to establish a consistent structure for all of the studies if approved, including the number of authorized meetings and number of legislative members. Senate President Lawrence added that the Council should also examine whether these commissions are authorized to report out legislation. Sally Tubbesing pointed out that several of the bills proposing legislation did not have emergency preambles so that the study committees would not even begin work until late August or September and suggested that the Council might want to consider this issue as well.

Discussion of Funding Level

Senator Pingree proposed that the Council allocate \$140,000 for interim studies. Representative Campbell clarified that these funds would come out of the \$1 million that has been set aside for the Table at the present time; and Representative Murphy reiterated his interest in taking advantage of the opportunity to tie some of the studies to the work of the Joint Standing Committees. Speaker Rowe expressed support for Representative Saxl's earlier comment that it is important not to tie committees to too many specific tasks that could divert their attention from the "big picture" – their

oversight responsibilities. Senate President Lawrence asked Jim Clair how much was available for the Table; and Mr. Clair responded that if the Majority Report is enacted, the projected balance would be approximately \$8 million. Representative Saxl suggested that the Council allocate up to \$100,000 for studies, and further, that the Council agree on a target number of studies that it wanted to support.

Following general discussion, Council members proceeded to consider proposed studies. The Council agreed to meet again to complete its work on April 26. The Summary of its actions on studies is attached to that Meeting Summary.

ADJOURNMENT

The Council meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m., on the motion of Representative Saxl (second by Senator Pingree).