

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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CHAIR

REP. RACHEL TALBOT ROSS
VICE-CHAIR

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
SUZANNE M. GRESSER



131ST MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

SEN. ELOISE A. VITELLI
SEN. MATTHEA DAUGHTRY
SEN. HAROLD "TREY" STEWART III
SEN. LISA KEIM
REP. MAUREEN F. TERRY
REP. KRISTEN CLOUTIER
REP. BILLY BOB FAULKINGHAM
REP. AMY ARATA

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
MEETING SUMMARY
December 21, 2023
Approved January 9, 2024**

CALL TO ORDER

President Jackson called the December 21, 2023 meeting of the 131st Legislative Council to order at 1:15 p.m. in the Legislative Council Chamber.

ROLL CALL

Senators: President Jackson, Senator Vitelli, and Senator Stewart (arrived late, via Zoom)

Representatives: Speaker Talbot Ross, Representative Terry, Representative Cloutier, Representative Faulkingham, and Representative Arata

Absent: Senator Daughtry and Senator Keim

Legislative Officers: Suzanne Gresser, Executive Director of the Legislative Council
Darek Grant, Secretary of the Senate
Michelle Dunphy, Assistant Clerk of the House
Edward Charbonneau, Revisor of Statutes
Danielle Fox, Director, Office of Policy and Legal Analysis
Christopher Nolan, Director, Office of Fiscal and Program Review
Nik Rende, Director, Office of Legislative Information Technology

President Jackson convened the meeting at 1:15 p.m. with a quorum of members present.

SUMMARIES OF NOVEMBER 9, 2023 & NOVEMBER 16, 2023 MEETINGS OF LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Motion: That the Meeting Summaries for November 9, 2023 and November 16, 2023 be accepted and placed on file. Motion by Senator Vitelli. Second by Representative Terry.

Motion passed unanimously (7-0-0-3, with Senator Daughtry, Senator Stewart and Senator Keim absent).

REPORTS FROM COUNCIL OFFICE DIRECTORS

Fiscal Report

Christopher Nolan, Director of the Office of Fiscal and Program Review, presented the fiscal report found in the agenda packet.

Legislative Studies Report

Danielle Fox, Director of the Office of Policy and Legal Analysis, presented the legislative studies report found in the agenda packet.

REPORTS FROM COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Personnel Committee

President Jackson reported that the Personnel Committee met earlier today, Thursday, December 21, 2023, to consider the following matters:

1. Step Increases for the Secretary of the Senate and Clerk of the House

The committee voted to approve step increases for both the Secretary of the Senate and the Clerk of the House.

2. Step Increases for Eligible Constitutional Officers and State Auditor

The committee reviewed and approved step increases for the 3 eligible Officers.

3. Step Increases for Eligible Nonpartisan Office Directors

The committee voted to approve step increases for Danielle Fox, Director, Office of Policy and Legal Analysis; Christopher Nolan, Director, Office of Fiscal and Program Review; and Jessica Lundgren, Director, Law and Legislative Reference Library.

4. Collective Bargaining

Executive Director Gresser provided the committee with an update on the status of collective bargaining.

OLD BUSINESS

Item #1: Council Actions Taken by Ballot

Legislative Council Decisions:

Motion: **That, in accordance Public Law 2023, chapter 410, because a majority of the appointments have been made to the Task Force to Evaluate the Impact of Facility Fees on Patients, in**

the event there remain pending appointments 30 days after the effective date of the law, the Legislative Council authorizes the Task Force to Convene.

Motion by: Speaker Talbot Ross
Date: December 4, 2023
Vote: 7-0-0-3 Passed (with Senator Harold Stewart, Senator Lisa Keim, and Representative Billy Bob Faulkingham recorded as absent)

Motion: That, in accordance with Joint Rule 353(7), the Legislative Council extends to December 15, 2023, the reporting deadline of the Task Force on Accessibility to Appropriate Communication Methods for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Patients.

Motion by: Speaker Talbot Ross
Date: December 6, 2023
Vote: 7-0-0-3 Passed (with Senator Harold Stewart, Senator Lisa Keim, and Representative Billy Bob Faulkingham recorded as absent)

Motion: That, in accordance with Joint Rule 353(7), the Legislative Council extends to December 15, 2023, the reporting deadline of the Task Force to Evaluate the Impact of Facility Fees on Patients.

Motion by: Speaker Talbot Ross
Date: December 14, 2023
Vote: 7-0-0-3 Passed (with Senator Matthea Daughtry, Senator Lisa Keim, and Representative Billy Bob Faulkingham recorded as absent)

Requests for Introduction of Legislation:

LR 2973 An Act to Address Mass Shootings and Gun Violence in Maine

Submitted by: President Troy Jackson
Date: November 20, 2023
Vote: 6-1-0-3 Passed (with Senator Lisa Keim recorded as opposed, and Senator Harold Stewart and Representative Billy Bob Faulkingham, and Representative Amy Arata recorded as absent)

LR 2985 An Act to Strengthen Public Safety, Health, and Well-being

Submitted by: Speaker Rachel Talbot Ross
Date: November 20, 2023
Vote: 6-1-0-3 Passed (with Senator Lisa Keim recorded as opposed, and Senator Matthea Daughtry, Senator Harold Stewart, and Representative Billy Bob Faulkingham recorded as absent)

Item #2: Acceptance of the Annual Report of the Loring Development Authority of Maine

The Loring Development Authority of Maine submitted its annual report for acceptance by the Legislative Council.

Motion: That the Legislative Council accepts the Annual Report of the Loring Development Authority of Maine and will place it on file. Motion by Speaker Talbot Ross. Second by Representative Arata. **Motion passed unanimously (8-0-0-2)** with Senator Daughtry and Senator Keim absent.

NEW BUSINESS

Item #1: Funding of dues shortfalls for the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) and the Council of State Governments (CSG) in State fiscal years 2024

The Council discussed funding the dues shortfalls for NCSL and CSG in State fiscal years 2024, and expressed interest in hearing additional information regarding funding from the Executive Director on the issue. **Motion:** That the Legislative Council table the proposed funding of the dues shortfalls for NCSL and CSG in State fiscal years 2024. Motion by Representative Terry. Second by Speaker Talbot Ross. **Motion passed unanimously (8-0-0-2, with Senator Daughtry and Senator Keim absent).**

Item #2: Request to authorize transfer of funds from the Reserve Fund for State House Preservation & Maintenance to the Blaine House Renovation & Repairs Fund

Elaine Clark, Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, presented Commissioner Kirsten Figueroa's request to the Legislative Council to transfer \$100,000 from the Reserve Fund for State House Preservation & Maintenance to the Blaine House Renovation & Repairs Fund, and described to the Council the types of projects for which the requested funds would be used. **Motion:** That the Legislative Council authorize the transfer of \$100,000 in fiscal year 2024 from the State House Preservation & Maintenance Fund to the Blaine House Renovation & Repairs Fund to address one-time needs at the Blaine House. Motion by President Jackson. Second by Speaker Talbot Ross. **Motion passed unanimously (8-0-0-2, with Senator Daughtry and Senator Keim absent).**

Item #3: Request from the Maine District of the National Speech and Debate Association to hold the 2024 Dale Denno Memorial NSDA Qualifying Tournament in the State House

The Council reviewed the request from the Maine District of the National Speech and Debate Association to hold the annual High School Debate Qualifying Tournament in the State House in January. **Motion:** That the Legislative Council

authorize the District of the National Speech and Debate Association to hold the 2024 Dale Denno Memorial NSDA Qualifying Tournament in the State House on Saturday, January 27, 2024. Motion by Senator Vitelli. Second by Representative Terry. **Motion passed unanimously (8-0-0-2, with Senator Daughtry and Senator Keim absent).**

Item #4: Request from the YMCA Youth and Government Program to Hold the 2024 Youth and Government Program in the State House Complex

The Council reviewed the request from the YMCA Youth and Government Program to Hold the 2024 Youth and Government Program in the State House Complex over the Veterans Day weekend in 2024. **Motion:** That the Legislative Council authorize the YMCA Youth and Government Program to Hold the 2024 Youth and Government Program in the State House Complex on November 8-10, 2024. Motion by Representative Terry. Second by Representative Cloutier. **Motion passed unanimously (8-0-0-2, with Senator Daughtry and Senator Keim absent).**

Item #5: Request to Commission Portraits of Former United States Senators Olympia Snowe and William Cohen

The Council reviewed the request from former Senate President Kevin Raye for the Council to authorize the commissioning of official portraits of former U.S. Senators Olympia Snowe and William Cohen for display in the State House. Speaker Talbot Ross inquired about the making of decisions about whose portraits are commissioned and hung in the State House. Executive Director Gresser responded that the Legislative Council Policy on the Maine State House Portrait Collection outlines both how portraits are commissioned and how determinations about placement in the State House are made. Speaker Talbot Ross expressed interest in involving the Secretary of State, and suggested that the Maine State Museum, which holds title to the portraits, forward a list of the contents of the State House Portrait Collection to both the Secretary of State and the State House Facilities Committee. **Motion:** That the request to commission portraits of former U.S. Senators Olympia Snowe and William Cohen be referred to the State House Facilities Committee Meeting for review and recommendation to the full Legislative Council; and further, that the Maine State Museum be requested to forward to both the State House Facilities Committee and the Maine Secretary of State a list of the holdings in the Maine State House Portrait Collection; and further, that the State House Facilities Committee review those portions of the Legislative Council Policy on the Maine State House Portrait Collection that outline how portraits are commissioned and decisions are made regarding which portraits are hung in the State House. Motion by Speaker Talbot Ross. Second by Representative Terry. **Motion passed unanimously (8-0-0-2, with Senator Daughtry and Senator Keim absent).**

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REMARKS

President Jackson suggested moving the January Legislative Council meeting, originally scheduled for January 18, 2024, in order to take up after-deadline bill requests. President Jackson suggested meeting instead on Tuesday, January 9, 2024 at 1:00 pm, or following the legislative session, whichever occurs later. The other members of the Legislative Council concurred with the President's suggestion.

With no other business to consider or further announcements, the Legislative Council meeting was adjourned at 2:46 p.m.