

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
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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
August 7, 2024
Approved October 17, 2024**

CALL TO ORDER

President Jackson called the August 7, 2024 meeting of the 131st Legislative Council to order at 1:16 p.m. in the Legislative Council Chamber.

ROLL CALL

Senators: President Jackson, Senator Vitelli, Senator Daughtry, and Senator Keim

Representatives: Speaker Talbot Ross (via Zoom), Representative Terry, Representative Cloutier, Representative Faulkingham Representative Arata

Absent: Senator Stewart

Legislative Officers: Suzanne Gresser, Executive Director of the Legislative Council
Darek Grant, Secretary of the Senate
Edward Charbonneau, Revisor of Statutes
Nik Rende, Director, Office of Legislative Information Technology

President Jackson convened the meeting at 1:16 p.m. with a quorum of members present.

SUMMARY OF AUGUST 7, 2024 MEETING OF LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Motion: That the Meeting Summary for April 30, 2024, be accepted and placed on file. Motion by Representative Terry. Second by Representative Cloutier. **Motion passed unanimously (9-0-0-1, with Senator Stewart absent).**

President Jackson announced his intention to take items out of order, and hearing no objection, moved to Reports from Council Committees and New Business Item #1.

REPORTS FROM COUNCIL COMMITTEES

State House Facilities Committee

Senator Daughtry reported that the State House Facilities Committee met earlier today, August 7th, to consider the following items:

1. Update on Cross Office Building Security Screening; Proposal for State House Security Screening Area. Elaine Clark, Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, and Tyler Barter from Oak Point Associates, the architect/contractor for the Cross Security Screening Project, presented an update to the committee on the Cross Security Screening project. Part of this plan includes establishing a security screening area at the West entrance of the State House in the space where the former State House Café is located. At the conclusion of the presentation, the committee voted unanimously to recommend to the Legislative Council approval of using the space to establish a State House Security Screening area. This recommendation is included under new business later in today's agenda.
2. Proposal for Wabanaki Veterans Memorial in Capitol Park. Sarah Sherman, the Director of Strategic Partnerships from the Bureau of Veterans Services, presented on behalf of the Wabanaki Veterans Memorial Committee, a proposal to create a Wabanaki Veterans Memorial to be located in Capitol Park. The committee asked Director Gresser to research additional information and reach out to the Maine Historic Preservation Commission. The committee also expressed their intent to view the space in Capitol Park that is proposed to be the site of the memorial. The chair announced her intent to take up the issue again, with the benefit of the additional information, at a future meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Item #1: Proposal for State House Security Screening area

President Jackson invited Elaine Clark, Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, and Tyler Barter from Oak Point Associates, the architect/contractor for the Cross Security Screening Project, to provide to the full Legislative Council a presentation similar to the presentation earlier provided to the State House Facilities Committee.

Deputy Commissioner Clark explained that, in 2021, a security study of the Cross State Office Building was conducted at the request of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, and noted that at that same time the Legislature had expressed interest in hardening security in the Cross Building. Following the conclusion of the security study, Oak Point Associates was selected through a competitive process as the project's architect, and in 2023, the Legislature authorized the issuance of Maine Governmental Facilities bonds to be used for capital repairs and improvements to state-owned facilities, of which \$7 million has been allocated for the Cross State Office Building Security Project. Bonds for the project were issued in February of 2024, and the project is underway. In order to ensure seamless flow between the Cross Building and the State House, and to avoid the necessity of individuals moving between the two buildings requiring security screening more than once, Deputy Commissioner Clark explained that the architects had developed a proposal for which DAFS is seeking Legislative Council approval. Under this proposal, the State House Café space would be repurposed as a State House Security screening area, and the entrance and exit lanes into and out of the State House would be modified. Tyler Barter presented a visual presentation of the plans for both the Cross Office Building Security Screening Center and the potential State House Security Screening Center. Members of the Council asked questions and received information regarding the proposed plans.

Motion: That, upon the unanimous recommendation of the State House Facilities Committee, the Legislative Council approve the establishment of a State House Security Area in the space formerly used as the State House Café. Motion by

Representative Terry. Second by Senator Vitelli. **Motion passed unanimously (9-0-0-1, with Senator Stewart recorded as absent).**

OLD BUSINESS

Item #1: Council Actions Taken by Ballot

Legislative Council Decisions:

Motion: That the Legislative Council authorizes the funding for and approves nonconforming elements pursuant to Joint Rule 353 of the legislative study included in LD 1827, “Resolve, to Establish the Blue-Ribbon Commission to Make Recommendations on the Continuum of Long-term Care Options.” Further, the Legislative Council authorizes an amendment to LD 1827 to:

- Require the executive director of the long-term care ombudsman program to chair the commission and to select a co-chair from among the other members of the commission;
- Require the long-term care ombudsman program to provide staffing services to the commission;
- Increase costs to the Legislature associated with this study to \$4000, which includes \$1650 for Legislator per diem and expenses and \$2350 for staffing, with the remaining staffing costs of \$5150 to be raised by outside funding;
- Provide allocations for a portion of the costs related to staffing for payment to the ombudsman program;
- Require the commission to seek outside funding to fund a portion of the costs of the study; and
- Prohibit the commission from meeting unless adequate funding is obtained.

Motion by: President Jackson
Date: May 9, 2024
Vote: 9-0-0-1 Passed (With Senator Daughtry recorded as absent)

Motion: That the Legislative Council authorizes the funding for and approves the nonconforming elements pursuant to Joint Rule 353 of the legislative study included in LD 2077, “Resolve, to Study the Role of Natural Gas in an Equitable Clean Energy Transition for Maine.” Further, the Legislative Council authorizes an amendment to LD 2077 to require the University of Maine Cooperative Extension, Bureau of Labor Education to provide necessary staffing services to the commission, and adds the director of the Bureau of Labor Education as a member of the commission and designates the director of the Bureau of Labor Education as the chair of the commission.

Motion by: President Jackson
Date: May 9, 2024
Vote: 6-0-0-4 Passed (With Senator Stewart, Senator Keim, Representative Faulkingham, and Representative Arata recorded as voting against)

Item #2: Funding of annual dues for the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) and the Council of State Governments (CSG) for State fiscal years 2024 and 2025

Director Gresser drew the members’ attention to the materials in their packets regarding the annual dues for NCSL and CSG, and reminded the members that, at their meeting on December 21, 2023, the Council had requested that she identify specific funds that might be used to pay the amounts of the annual NCSL and CSG dues in excess of the amounts budgeted for that purpose. Director Gresser reported that there are balances in the amount of \$95,853 remaining from funds provided for the

Apportionment Commission in the 130th Legislature, and that the remaining amount of \$68,317 is available from balances in the Citizen Trade Policy Commission account.

Motion: That the Legislative Council authorizes the transfer of \$74,419 from unspent balances in legislative accounts to allow dues requested by the Council of State Governments and by the National Conference of State Legislatures for fiscal year 2024 to be paid in full. Motion by Speaker Talbot Ross. Second by Senator Vitelli.
Motion passed unanimously (8-0-0-2, with Senator Stewart and Rep. Faulkingham recorded as absent).

Motion: That the Legislative Council authorizes the transfer of \$89,751 from unspent balances in legislative accounts to allow dues requested by the Council of State Governments and by the National Conference of State Legislatures for fiscal year 2025 to be paid in full. Motion by Speaker Talbot Ross. Second by Senator Vitelli.
Motion passed unanimously (8-0-0-2, with Senator Stewart and Rep. Faulkingham recorded as absent).

President Jackson suggested that the 131st Legislative Council consider transmitting a memorandum to the 132nd Legislative Council that recommends that the next Legislative Council give full consideration to increasing the amount in the Commission on Interstate Cooperation account (the account from which the annual dues for NCSL and CSG are paid) to the amount of actual dues invoiced by NCSL and CSG for the most recent fiscal year available, plus the \$10,000 provided to the Commission on Uniform State Laws. The members asked Director Gresser to develop a draft memorandum for the Council's review at the next meeting.

REPORTS FROM COUNCIL OFFICE DIRECTORS

Fiscal Report

Director Gresser drew the Council's attention to the fiscal report prepared by Christopher Nolan, Director of the Office of Fiscal and Program Review, which was included in the agenda packet.

Studies Report

Director Gresser drew the Council's attention to the studies report prepared by Danielle Fox, Director of the Office of Policy and Legal Analysis, which was included in the agenda packet.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REMARKS

With no other business to consider or further announcements, the Legislative Council meeting was adjourned at 3:02 p.m.