

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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**STATE OF MAINE
ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTEENTH LEGISLATURE
SECOND REGULAR SESSION
JOURNAL OF THE SENATE**

In Senate Chamber
Monday
January 12, 1998

Senate Called to Order by President Mark W. Lawrence of
York County.

Prayer by Senator William B. O'Gara of Cumberland County.

SENATOR WILLIAM B. O'GARA: A very short message to the God each of us prays to. For the Senators and staff assembled, we pray for guidance, cooperation and patience. To the hundreds, yes, even thousands of Maine men and women, boys and girls, who have given and are giving of their time, their prayers and their hard work to bring us out of this devastating storm, we offer our heartfelt thanks and praise and ask that You watch over them. And to those who still suffer from the hardship wreaked upon them by this storm, we offer our prayers and our promise that we will do whatever we can, as Legislators, to help them and our great state to recover as soon as possible. It is in their behalf we offer this prayer. Amen.

Pledge of Allegiance led by Senator R. Leo Kieffer of
Aroostook.

Doctor of the Day, Laurel M. Colemon, M.D., Manchester.

Reading of the Journal of Thursday, January 8, 1998.

Off Record Remarks

Out of order and under suspension of the Rules, the Senate considered the following:

PAPERS FROM THE HOUSE

House Papers

Bill "An Act to Protect and Maintain Opportunities for Students by Funding Jobs for Maine Graduates" H.P. 1406 L.D. 1970

Comes from the House, **REFERRED** to the Committee on **APPROPRIATIONS AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS** and ordered printed.

REFERRED to the Committee on **APPROPRIATIONS AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS** and ordered printed, in concurrence.

Bill "An Act to Provide Representation for Chiropractors on the Board of the Maine Health Data Organization" H.P. 1407 L.D. 1971

Comes from the House, **REFERRED** to the Committee on **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES** and ordered printed.

On motion by Senator **RAND** of Cumberland, **TABLED** until Later in Today's Session, pending **REFERENCE**.

**Pursuant to Public Law
Department of Environmental Protection**

The **Department of Environmental Protection** pursuant to Public Law 1997, chapter 512 asked leave to report that the accompanying Bill "An Act to Implement the Recommendations of the Interagency Committee on Outdoor Trash Burning" H.P. 1408 L.D. 1972

Be **REFERRED** to the Committee on **NATURAL RESOURCES** and ordered printed pursuant to Joint Rule 218.

Comes from the House, Report **READ** and **ACCEPTED** and the Bill **REFERRED** to the Committee on **NATURAL RESOURCES** and ordered printed pursuant to Joint Rule 218.

Report **READ** and **ACCEPTED**, in concurrence.

REFERRED to the Committee on **NATURAL RESOURCES** and ordered printed pursuant to Joint Rule 218, in concurrence.

Senate at Ease

Senate called to order by the President.

Off Record Remarks

Senator **NUTTING** of Androscoggin was granted unanimous consent to address the Senate off the Record.

Off Record Remarks

Senate at Ease

Senate called to order by the President.

THE PRESIDENT: We're very lucky to have David Flanagan and Bob Briggs from Central Maine Power and Bangor-Hydro Power, respectively. I'll ask each one of them to come up and update you on where we're at regarding the situation with power in their areas. And then we will simply open it up and allow some questions, if you have them, regarding specific situations.

DAVID FLANNIGAN: Good morning. Let me start out by saying it is a privilege for me to appear here. When I started out my career many, many, years ago I started working for the Senate as a clerk and I never imagined I would ever have the opportunity to address you from this podium. And I certainly never imagined it would be on the occasion of the worst catastrophe in the natural history of our state, at least so far as the infrastructure of our state is concerned. Let me give you just a few statistics to portray the scope of what has happened here.

We have 575,000 customers in Central Maine Power's territory, 575,000. Of those, fully, 275,000 people were out of power on Wednesday morning. That's far worse than hurricane Gloria or hurricane Bob. You'd have to go back to the hurricane of 1938 or the forest fire in 1947 for other events of similar magnitude of destruction. Not only did we lose all of those customers, we lost over 17 sections of transmission line, the very backbone of our system for bringing bulk power in from our power plants and from Canada and from NEEPOOL. Moreover, we have lost over 1,000 miles of distribution lines out of a 14,000 mile system. And finally, and this is very critical when you're talking with your constituents, we've lost over 500 poles. Those utility poles are the bottleneck because no matter how efficient you are, it takes a specialized kind of equipment to erect them and it takes time to put them in. I had the occasion to fly over Vassalboro, China, Albion and Unity yesterday and I saw a sight that amazed me. I know Bob's going to tell you about one that's worse, but I saw a mile of distribution line along the main road snapped off and knocked over. But what really discouraged me was, it was all open field. I had visualized that the destruction would all be where there was heavily forested areas with limbs falling down. But this mile of line, of 3 phase line, had gone down just from ice loading beyond what had ever been calculated by a utility or engineers for that purpose. I think it's fair to say that throughout much of the State of Maine, from the New Hampshire border to the Canadian border, there has been massive warlike destruction. On my own road out here in Manchester, the Pond Road, in the four miles up to 202, there was like a barricade, a log barricade, along the road. We had at least five sections of line, not only down but twisted around with broken trees and broken poles in a way that we could tell it was going to take thousands of man-hours just in that one area in order to restore the electric service, which I hope will happen some day.

We mobilized to respond in a like manner. We knew the storm was coming. We knew from the reports in Quebec that it was going to be devastating and we did advance planning. We also reserved pre-positioned crews, got additional supplies of nuts and bolts and just the basic material in, and put together our leadership team for storm management. I'm very privileged to have here with me, in the rear of the chamber, in the camel sport coat, Sarah Burns who is the Chief Operating Officer of our transmission and distribution company, and who is responsible for overall storm management. This is her only break, coming over to the Legislature this morning. She'll be back at it in about an hour, since last Tuesday.

The messages I would like to convey to you and through you to your constituents, are these: First of all, we recognize the urgent priority of winter restoration. We know perfectly well that electricity is a necessity of life in the middle of a Maine winter. And while we are trying to use all of our resources and all those who are bringing in efficiently, nonetheless, we are sparing no expense to get the whole system restored just as quickly as possible. Secondly, we have recognized that this is a disaster far beyond our ability to cope and we have been coordinating closely

with Governor Angus King, General Earl Adams and General Bill Libby at FEMA and we have been keeping Chairman Tom Welch of the PUC fully advised. In fact, Tom has spent one full day at CMP and another out in the fields with Bob Briggs. Additionally, we have gotten, and this is very important, we've gotten good coordination with Ed Dinon and Peter Whitney over at Bell Atlantic. We now have telephone company people around the clock and our company coordinating their crews with ours. Remember I mentioned those broken poles. You need a special kind of digger truck in order to rebuild the poles. Bell Atlantic has freed up for our use 25 such trucks. That's an enormous help along with the bucket trucks to help put in those poles. And it's sort of like the cavalry coming to help. Likewise, the National Guard has made available all kinds of specialized crews, people cutting with chain saws, just getting debris out of the way, but also people taking their HumVs, and track vehicles, and all that stuff up to the top of mountains to rebuild our transmission towers and refill their generators, so we can keep communicating with our crews. Other people with search lights so we can have tree cutting crews working around the clock through their powerful forces of illumination.

But most importantly, we have amassed an army of highly skilled teams from other utilities, and it is like an army. They've been coming in convoys. I'm sure some of you have seen them. You know, 10 or 12 or 20 line trucks coming in from out of state, at a time. We have crews from New England Electric in Westborough, Massachusetts, Boston Edison, Narragansett down in Road Island, Granite State over in New Hampshire and we, just this morning, got some 50 crews in from General Public Utilities in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. As I was driving over here this morning, just as I was coming out by the old Holiday Inn, in came at least 10 trucks. They were a light blue and white from Baltimore Gas and Electric. I talked to one of the GPU crews who said it had taken them 18 hours to get up here, and to those Baltimore crews it had to be even longer. At last count we had over 200 out-of-state line crews here supplementing our own forces, which are about 110 crews. Today, with the Baltimore and the GPU people arriving, it will be a total of another 166.

On top of these line crews there are also aerial tree trimming crews in force here as well. Right now we'll see these trucks out on the roads too, there are over 250 aerial tree trimming crews. You know Asplin and Lucas, but they're coming from as far away as Nova Scotia and West Virginia to help out. I know a question you'll get a million times because we get it. This state is full of qualified loggers and people who work in pulp and paper all the time, why can't they help? And the answer is, it's the aerial capability we need most. The National Guard, Cianbro and other contractors are helping us on the ground with skidders and front-end loaders. But what we really need is people who can get up and over the lines. Get the branches off the lines and trim or cut back the branches overhead that are the biggest most destructive problem. And furthermore, we need crews who are qualified under OSHA regulations to work around live wires. That's a terrible constraint that we have.

Well, here are the results so far. I've been using a war analogy and it's a pitched battle. We're still losing in some places. It's been two steps forward, one step back. Last night at 9:00 o'clock we lost a section, a good strong section, into Kingfield and lost 3,000 people even this late into the event. But overall we've gone from 275,000 down to, as of our conference call at 6:30 this morning, down to 165,000, so we're making real progress. Moreover, all but about four of the transmission sections that have customers on them are back on line. And of

those 500 poles that I talked about having snapped off, we already have 200 reset. So that's real progress. We're making progress in every district, from York up to the Penobscot River where Bob's forces take over. We were helped in that tremendously by the unexpected amount of sunshine we had on Saturday, and especially on Sunday, which we had not counted on. But really, it's been strategy, leadership and the massive application of skilled workers and specialized equipment that have done the job.

At Central Maine Power our only priority is restoration. Everybody at the company is working on this. People who are in finance are helping serve food. People who are in claims are working on laundry for these crews that are up here for several days. We have other people in accounting that are helping get the search lights so we can work overnight. Everybody is working on this. Everything else is shut down. The meter readers are out bird-dogging for the line crews. Our nonessential computer functions are shut down so that all the computer capacity that we have can be used on inventory and work orders. We're just making as big an effort as we can. Our priority for restoration, of course, is hospitals, shelters, nursing homes, police and fire departments. Then, the next priority, the one we worked on over the week-end was the three phase system, the skeleton of the electric system. Now, we're working still on some of the three phase but more on the smaller circuits. And then finally, we'll get to individual houses. The next few days are critical. There's still a long, long way to go and after we get those major circuits back on, I can assure all of you, and you all know this State very well, it's going to be a long mop-up operation in rural areas. Camp roads, many of which are still blocked off, but we're doing everything we can.

I have a few basic messages that, if you can share with your constituents we'd be very grateful. First, there are some scams out there, I'm embarrassed to say. There are people taking advantage of the situation, going around and alleging to home owners, they have to use their services as electricians or as woodcutters, and we won't come and hook you up unless you've done that. It's not true. You, of course, may want to hire somebody to come and clean up the wood in your yard, and you may have some internal electrical problems, but we will come. We will clear the trees off the wires to the pole and then the service drop from the pole to your house, at no charge. Nobody needs to pay for that. And if it's not safe to hook up, we'll tell you that too. So, people shouldn't fall for these kinds of schemes. Secondly, the message that so many people have given and was illustrated by the tragedies this week-end, if you are going to use generators then make sure to read the instructions. Make sure there's adequate ventilation, because tragedy is the recourse. Third, with respect to generators, if you see people working on the lines in your neighborhoods, please turn them off. A problem we have is back-feeding, where you're feeding electricity out into the grid and it can adversely affect the people working on the lines in the vicinity. So, if people could keep that in mind. And an ironic message, if you could ask people to unplug their major appliances. Leave a light on so you can tell when the electricity is back. When it first comes back it's going to be fragile and unstable and the more load on the system in your neighborhood, the harder it's going to be to keep the electricity going.

Two other things, this is a hard one to say. Governor King's done a good diplomatic job of saying it but let me repeat it. These line crews are real professionals. They're here to concentrate on the job. So many Maine people want to encourage them and cheer them on. You could do that with a

wave and beep your horn. But every time they have to stop and answer a question, once it's great, twice it's okay, 500 times, it's cutting into the time that they have available in daylight to do the most work they can. So, if you could let them concentrate on the job and ask your constituents to.

And finally, I know it's in the ads and I know it's pounded into the mind of everybody in this state, but it is true that no line is safe to touch. Because of all the ice and freezing, even when a line looks like it's been dead for two or three days, the current can arc over through the cut-out and keep that line energized. And even the ice in the immediate area around it can become energized. So please, ask people to stay away from those downed lines, which are everywhere.

There are so many people who have been helping out in this effort, that I cannot begin to thank them all. But I want you to know that we're entirely grateful for the efforts of so many Maine people, to help us out in, what is truly, a once in a lifetime crisis. Thank you very much.

BOB BRIGGS: Thank you. I'm pleased to be here. We have, obviously, an extraordinary effort going on. I just wish that we could bottle up the combination of energy and ingenuity, and combine that with the talents of our people and be able to utilize it 365 days a year in non-crisis situations. It is incredible what people can do when they put their minds to it and they know things have to be done. I don't want to be repetitive of the messages that David just gave you.

Our company is about one-fifth the size of Central Maine Power, and almost all of the statistics, if you simply divide them by 5, are applicable to us as well. One statistic that isn't at this present time, is that we could use, at this stage, more off-contract assistance from other line crews and so forth. Unfortunately, most of them come from the south and it's like a sponge, they don't get beyond the Central Maine Power system. But nonetheless, we have our own resources, and I won't tell you what they are because otherwise they'll have them. At one point in time we had 50% of our system out which would be, say, 50,000 or 60,000 customers. Now I'm pleased to say, as of this morning about the time I left, we're down to perhaps, maybe 25% of our customers without power. I would say, we're under 20,000 now. It's amazing that I'm here to report to you, that I'm happy to report, that we only have 20,000 people out of service. On any other occasion, I would have said that, in and of itself, is a disaster. Nonetheless, the repair work has been going along very well. However, what that means is, we've restored, basically, the transmission feeders that go around the system and that brings large numbers of customers back onto the system, really, all at once. But now, the really hard work is ahead of us which is to clear all the rest of the customers. So it will be slower going from here on.

The one incident that we had that really is unique that, I think, in it's order of magnitude and it's implications for our system and the people who live in the down east area is that we lost the major transmission line that carries bulk power supply to Washington County. This line has been in service for many years. It's routinely maintained. It's not a maintenance problem. It's a 115,000 volt transmission line which we call line 66. It runs from Veazie to Washington County. It has a branch that goes off to Ellsworth. Sometime Friday night, somewhere beyond Deblois, so therefore the Ellsworth branch was able to stay in service, we knew there was a problem down there. Saturday morning when we were able to fly the line, we discovered that about 10 miles of it were on the ground. Mostly, in the Great

Heath, if you're aware of it, down there, the blueberry barrens, which is a point that David made too. It's surprising to note that the wide open areas seem to be more affected, with respect to the icing and the impact of the icing. It's kind of interesting to note. We had a person on the ground at that site yesterday, kind of investigating to see if he could discover what the cause of the line going down was. What he discovered was on one of the smaller wires, that's the static wire and is probably applicable to all 3 conductors and 2 static wires that go with this structure, that the static wire which might be a half inch in diameter was iced up around it to a diameter of about 4 inches. And this is all in a wide open area, if you've ever been down in the Great Heath, in the Deblois area. It's a sickening sight to see 10 miles of it on the ground.

In any event, optimistically, it will take a month to rebuild it. Fortunately, the resources are available to do that and they're being mobilized as we speak. In the meantime, we have to provide for temporary generation to be brought on-line to support the load in the area. That includes the wood-fired plant which is now owned by INDEC, in Jonesboro, a 25 megawatt plant that's being brought back on service as we speak. That plant, although it was at one time regularly operating, has never been called upon to simply, by itself, carry the whole load in the area for an extended period of time. So, other generation will have to be brought on-line to help back it up. That includes our existing diesel powered generators in Eastport plus a total of about 10 megawatts of temporary portable generation that's being brought on-line now. We've also explored the possibility of having a Navy ship tie up at Eastport. As it turns out, that's probably not our best alternative for resolving this problem, but I want to tell you that public resources and, in this case, Senator Snow's office has been very quick to respond to attempt to help us out with that. Yesterday, the Governor, General Adams, and I and others, flew over that area and inspected down there and, particularly inspected the power line. I'm sure that General Adams would verify the fact that it's truly an awesome sight.

In any event, that's about all I can offer that is any different from what David had to offer. We are all appreciative of everybody's assistance and, in our case, I can report that we've had no injuries among our work force or among the contract work force, which is amazing when you look at what they're doing. For example, if you were to see one of the aerial trucks, that David was talking about, attempting with a hydraulic saw to cut, maybe, a 2 inch thick limb or tree that's bent right over the lines and is encased in ice. The minute they touch that with the saw, it snaps back and it's unbelievable that someone, at this point in time, hasn't been decapitated by that effect. That's also why we need skilled people to do it and why, those of us with wood stoves, should not be tempted to get our chain saws out and try to assist. In any event, that's all I have. I'd be pleased to respond to questions and, otherwise get back to it.

THE PRESIDENT: Are there questions for either David or Bob? If not, thank you both very much for taking the time to come talk to us. We also have General Adams here and Commissioner Waldron to talk about what's going on for emergency response. Before we get into that, I just want to read to you an announcement that came out from the Department of Human Services that may be relative to your constituents seeking assistance. Kevin KinCannon announced today that the State has authorized a special storm related food assistance program to make sure Maine families have adequate food supplies. The program is in effect for all counties in the State with the exception

of Aroostook County. The normal standards for general assistance will be relaxed during this period for special food assistance. The special food benefit program is for applicants without power for at least 24 hours, who are without cash, assets or insurance to allow them to immediately provide for their own emergency food. Food stamp recipients who have lost food due to spoilage, etc., are directed to go to their local Department of Human Services office for food stamp replacement. Maine people who are not receiving food stamps are directed to go to their Town Office where they can apply for the special food benefit. The special food benefit is \$50 per household with the discretion given to the town for increases in the special benefit. People who are unable to contact their municipal offices in their own town should contact the nearest town office which is open. All municipalities have been requested to provide the special food benefit for people from their surrounding area. People with questions regarding the food stamps or the special food benefit should call the Department of Human Services, and I'll read these numbers to you twice so you'll have them. It's 287-1306 or 287-2546. We'll have copies of this press release made and distributed to the members.

I'd like to ask General Adams and Commissioner Waldron to come up to inform us on what's being done, as far as emergency response.

GENERAL ADAMS: (Due to technical difficulties, some of General Adam's remarks were not recorded.) We came to work last Wednesday morning and we haven't left yet. We hope we're over the hump but it's been a very hectic period of time. Once the Governor signs the Emergency Declaration, Wednesday or Thursday noon, that of course gives us a lot of flexibility and a lot of authority to operate. The authority that you folks have given to the Executive Branch, to do things and eliminate any obstacles that might be in the way to providing assistance. When we talk about that system, just a quick couple of comments, the way the system is supposed to work and it's been working pretty well, is the people with local problems go to their local emergency management folks. If they can't solve it, go to the County emergency management folks, and if they can't solve it, they come to us. It's been working very well. The folks out there at the local level and the County level have just done an outstanding job. There are a lot of things, of course, they can't do. A lot of things they can't provide. That's why we're here, to try to get that additional resource when they need it. The last couple of nights, we've had about 117 shelters open in the State of Maine, there are 18 more available to be opened. Each of the last two nights, there have been about 2,800 people in those shelters. We figure there's been about a third of a change over. As people have gotten power back, they've moved out of the shelters and back to their homes. However, other people, particularly with the cold weather that came in yesterday and last night, have abandoned their homes and moved into the shelters. We figure tonight is going to be somewhat similar.

One of our largest requests, of course, has been for generators. Obviously, with the loss of regular power, generators are the source. We knew immediately, once we were in touch with Dave Flanagan and Bob Briggs and realized how extensive this situation was, that we did not have sufficient resources within our National Guard structure in the State to satisfy those needs. We initially went to New Hampshire. They were ready to give us assistance when they started getting hit with their own emergency situations down there. Not quite as bad, however, there were emergency situations they had to deal with. So, we

went to Massachusetts. Massachusetts responded immediately, loaded three huge trucks up with generators. We called for one immediately and about noon time yesterday, we called for the other two and they were delivered last evening. Most of those generators are out, primarily they are out to the shelters that do not have power. We've been encouraging the communities to consolidate their shelters so that we don't put a generator here, to take care of 15 people, and a generator 5 miles away to take care of 15 people, when they could consolidate and use one generator and leave some more resources available for others. And again, that has been working pretty well. We have distributed hundreds of cots to these shelters. An interesting side story there, I think it was two or three nights ago we ran out of cots. We, simply, just did not have enough cots in the State of Maine that we could get our hands on to satisfy the need. Particularly in the night time up at Camp Keys. In our supply system we had some of these big huge rolls of double bubble wrap and we sent those 250 foot rolls out to some of the shelters that were short of cots. They cut them into 6 foot sections, and the reports that we got back were rather encouraging that it kept the people from being on, at least, a hard floor until we could get more cots to them, which we did round up. The last couple of days there have been a lot of requests for water buffaloes, the water trailers, to get portable water out to these shelters or municipalities that need them. Two local incidences here, Gardiner and Monmouth both lost their water systems because of the loss of electricity and could not operate them. We got generators to those folks and those took big generators, to handle those situations but got them back on-line. Of course, the generators come. We've got generators out there all the way from 120 kilowatts down to 5 kilowatt generators, depending on the need of the particular situation that we are trying to take care of. Unfortunately, we cannot take care of all situations. Basically, our support must go to public agencies. We've had a lot of private individuals call. In fact, there was a rumor that was put over some of the news media, not the news media's fault, but the fact that FEMA had hundreds of free generators to give away, please call this number. And we got the calls. But obviously, we couldn't satisfy the need. Another problem that always comes up in emergencies like this are the dairy farmers out there that have 100 or 200 head of cattle or cows that must be milked and they lose their power. They can't milk the cows. That becomes a serious situation. Here again, we cannot help in that situation. We can try to direct them as to where they might be able to get assistance. But again, the resource for some Maine people, what we have found out, is that this farmer's got a generator. He milks his cows. He moves the generator to help his neighbor out, and that has worked pretty well. Our National Guard troops, it was fortunate in a way that this weekend, Saturday and Sunday, we had a scheduled assembly. Most of our troops were in. We had about 2,500 troops available this weekend. We worked extremely closely with David Flanagan's folks and Bob Brigg's folks to form teams that could go out. And also, in conjunction with John Melrose's folks, the Department of Transportation. My agency, John's agency and the power companies working together to clear the road of the debris, making sure that if we get a snow storm that Commissioner Melrose's folks can get through. And at the same time, clearing away for the repair crews from CMP and Bangor-Hydro, to get the power restored more quickly in those situations. That has worked out very well. As of midnight last night, we are keeping 450 National Guard troops on duty. That figure is based on the request that we got from the two major power companies and the other request that we had

for assistance. We can bump that up or cut it down, depending on what happens. I think the key thing over at our Emergency Management Operations Center over there is the fact that we've got the representatives over there from the State agencies that are involved. The Department of Transportation, State Police, the Red Cross is over there. Janet Waldron's folks have been available when they've been needed. All the State government, I think, has come together very well to deal with this situation.

A couple of quick pieces of information on what will happen from this point. In order to get a federal declaration of disaster that will make all the federal assistance that's out there available, plus 75% of the funding to recover from this disaster, that becomes available when we meet a threshold of roughly \$1 per person in the State of Maine. Obviously, \$1.2 million, \$1.3 million. We got our first report in this morning from Androscoggin County. They reported in at \$813,000 damage, preliminary estimate. So obviously, there's not going to be any question that by the end of the day today we feel we will have reached the threshold. Jeff Bean, the Regional Director of FEMA from Boston arrived in our office about two hours ago because he knows that we're going to be requesting this. Sometime tomorrow, we shall be prepared for Governor King to sign the request to President Clinton for the declaration. That will be immediately faxed out and we assume within about 24 hours we'll have a turn around on that and that will free up these federal assets. Federal teams will come in to help out in processing all the paper work of all the requests for assistance that are going to be needed. Another question you may get from a lot of your constituents, particularly in the light of this disaster that we're dealing with now, most of the impact has been on individual families. We have not experienced the washed out bridges and washed out roads that we have in many of our disasters. But in lieu of that we've had this effect on the individual families. There is a program out there for them. Obviously, the first thing they should do is go to their insurance companies and see what is covered under their insurance policies. Then what is not covered falls into the category of unmet needs. When that happens, they can go to the SBA, the Small Business Administration, and request a loan. The Small Business Administration will set up offices throughout the State to process these requests for loans, low interest loans that would be available. If they do not qualify for that source of help then the next step is the Individual Family Assistance Program, which is a federal program where grants, and I emphasize the word "grants," are available up to \$13,000 per individual, per household, for assistance from the federal government. The federal government, the FEMA region and our folks will be establishing offices throughout the affected area, just as rapidly as we get the Presidential Declaration. We will publicize phone numbers, phone banks, where these offices will be set up so individuals can make contact and request this assistance. I think the State of Maine has responded very well to this emergency.

I think, as Dave Flanagan, probably when he started out, told you it's the worst that his company has experienced. In my time, it's the worst that I've seen that the State has had to deal with. I think with the support of a lot of you folks and the Maine citizens, we've responded to this thing pretty well. It's been tough but we're getting there, and I can't help but relate the story that was on TV a couple of nights ago. Back when we had TV over there, and we were lucky, we had it for a little while but I don't know what channel it was but they were interviewing a gentleman, somewhere in the State of Maine and he was standing in front of the camera with a can of beans. He said, "You know, you really

know, you've got an emergency in the State of Maine when you don't have water to flush the toilet and all you've got to eat is a can of beans." I think that just exemplified the Maine spirit and the Maine attitude. And we have seen this so much in the last 4 or 5 days, where people have called in and offered assistance to their neighbors that needed help. If we had to say no, they understood that and it's just been a great example of people working together. As we visited shelters the last few days, particularly you see these older people, but being so appreciative of not just state government but local and county government responding to their needs and meeting their needs. When they couldn't do it, for the capability of the State to step in and help out. I think the system has worked quite well and I thank you for the support that you have given to this effort. We're going to continue, of course, for as long as it takes, to continue to provide the necessary support to your constituents out there. Thank you again for the opportunity to come and brief you on what we've been doing.

COMMISSIONER WALDRON: President Lawrence and Honorable members of the Senate. Thank you very much for the opportunity to address you and give you a sense of where we are with the State operations and facilities. I guess I get to bring the good news here, in the sense that, all the State offices with some exception are up and running, and State employees are back at work. There are a few exceptions, as I said. Over on the AMHI campus we have the Cedar building which is out still over there. In Hallowell there are several buildings down there, the Human Rights Commission, the State Auditors Office and then, Hayden House has been without power and we've relocated the Uplift Program, which was housed there, over to AMHI. I would say that the last number of days have certainly been a drill from many perspectives and there has been a lot of juggling. And, as General Adams and others before indicated, a tremendous amount of cooperation between agencies and, certainly, individuals brings out the best in everyone. I personally would like to thank your leadership, Joy and Sally in terms of the coordination with the Legislature as we have sorted through where we are with the State facilities. The regional offices are open for operation. I talked with Commissioner Landry this morning and she indicated, just within the first hour of the call centers being up for the Department of Labor, they'd received over 700 phone calls into the Unemployment Service. So I guess that shows the pent-up demand for services out there. Our correctional facilities and mental health facilities are back on-line. We do have some problems down east and we provided some backup generation. The DOL office in Machias is still down at this point. The Motor Vehicle offices are open with the exception of the Augusta branch location down here and Secretary Gwadosky has realigned services out of that office so that people can do their registrations across the way and driver license renewals in Topsham area. The other areas that concern us during this whole course of events are things like network services and computer operations. At this point the wide area network and our systems are about 80% up. We have some problems in Waterville, Fairfield and Ellsworth and we've sent out technicians to those particular areas. The phones are 100% connected into our State offices at this point, I'm told, so that, I think, is good news. The critical functions, in terms of accounts and payroll, again, a dedicated team came in and worked over the weekend to make sure that the State payroll would go out on a timely basis. And again, we're not expecting any disruptions due to peoples work, in terms of third party payment checks,

either AFDC, Medicaid or various other kinds of distributions. The mail, we figure this morning about 100% of the backed up mail for the State will be delivered. So if you haven't got the letter that you're waiting for, well, it may just not be coming. As far as I can tell at this point, there is no significant damage to State buildings. We did do a lot of running and juggling and draining of pipes and providing backup generators and I do want to say thank you, from my department's perspective, to General Adams for the coordination with FEMA to CMP, Bangor-Hydro and Bell Atlantic. The other agency which obviously has been working is Commissioner Melrose and the Department of Transportation. For them I think this started a week ago. So his crews have really been pulling the long haul and John can better give you the status of the roads. But, as I understand where it is, the main highways are in good shape with less than a dozen closed at this point and there are some roads, obviously, that are still problematic but most are passable at this point. I guess, on his behalf as well as, certainly, our behalf we really want to thank the municipal and local officials. I know John's people have been working very closely with all the municipal crews and the firemen at the local level. So again, from top down, this has been a real coordinated effort on behalf of everyone and I think that sort of summarizes where we are. We're in very good shape from the State system's point of view. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Are there questions for either General Adams or Commissioner Waldron? The Chair recognizes the Senator from Waldo, Senator Longley.

Senator **LONGLEY:** Thank you. General Adams, my question is, in speaking with town officials this morning, one concern they wanted me to relay to you and the Guard who are attending to road cleanup is, with the oncoming storm, the City Managers and Selectmen are really worried about putting the plow people out on Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday, or whenever the snows come, given the wires on the road. You probably are but if you're not, could you please high-prioritize the importance of getting those wires off so that the plow people can go through safely, request number one. And maybe even more importantly, I'd just like to thank you for all the work you and everyone have been doing to help get us cleared up. We appreciate it. So, if you'll remember that request that we high-prioritize the wires so that the snow plows, when they come out Tuesday or Wednesday don't have major mishaps.

GENERAL ADAMS: Of course, that is a priority. I think that I may have mentioned the way we set this up using the Central Maine issue as an example. Over at their headquarters office, here in Augusta, there's a National Guard representative over there and a representative from Commissioner Melrose's office, DOT, over there. Together, DOT and CMP established the priority of the roads that they need to clear, both from the DOT perspective and, of course, CMP's priority for restoration of power. We are working very closely with them. As that priority comes down and, in some cases, areas have been eliminated, as far as the priority of DOT and CMP, then we have told our National Guard troops, "You contact the municipal officials and you go to work for them." I'll personally follow up and make sure that the area you're talking about, Senator, can be addressed as soon as we can get some troops down there to help out. And again, I mentioned the Governor's Emergency Proclamation and the power that gives us. We started to run out of chain saws yesterday, either because we didn't have enough or started to

have some fail. We simply went out, broke all the laws you folks made and we bought some more immediately in order to address that need. That was after we'd exhausted the resources of the Forestry Bureau. So again, I think the system is working. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes the Senator from Kennebec, Senator Treat.

Senator **TREAT:** Thank you Mr. President. I also wanted to thank General Adams. I know that I probably was a pain in the neck calling up FEMA about 3 or 4 times over the last couple of days, trying to get generators for our water supply. I think, you may have personally intervened and I really appreciate your doing that. I think it's prevented a very serious public safety problem. I also had a question though, and that is, I have been going around to my communities and there is a difference between them, I would say. I don't want to publicly say anything bad about any of them, but I do think that there's one or two that have been less effective, in terms of going out and finding out if there's any elderly shut-ins out on the back roads. I have a concern, especially with the cold temperatures that there may be a couple of my towns where the people out on the back roads haven't been showing up at the shelters. I'm just wondering what is the protocol and, sort of, the way that I should be getting some kind of help if the towns themselves aren't really doing this work? Is there someone else I could be talking to to make sure that there's people going out and knocking on doors just to make sure that people aren't there?

GENERAL ADAMS: I think you're aware Governor King has stressed the neighborliness of this whole situation for neighbors to check on neighbors. But in direct answer to your question, as these priorities have gone down, or as our National Guard troops have been out in areas clearing roads, we have encouraged them, and they have done so, is to go to houses, knock on the door, see if everybody's all right. If there's a problem, to get it back into the system. There has been a lot of that, particularly yesterday as the colder weather was coming in, and that is continuing today, again, as the priority, some of the priority tasks are taken care of, and again, as an additional mission, encouraging our people to do that. If you have a specific area, if you'd let me know, we'd try to get some concentration in that area.

THE PRESIDENT: Other questions? If not, thank you very much to General Adams and Commissioner Waldron.

Off Record Remarks

Senator **TREAT** of Kennebec was granted unanimous consent to address the Senate off the Record.

Off Record Remarks

On motion by Senator **RAND** of Cumberland, **ADJOURNED** until Thursday, January 15, 1998, at 3:00 in the afternoon.