

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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ONE HUNDRED THIRTY-FIRST LEGISLATURE
SECOND REGULAR SESSION
25th Legislative Day
Thursday, March 14, 2024

The House met according to adjournment and was called to order by the Speaker.

Prayer by Honorable James E. Thorne, Carmel.
National Anthem by Erynne Edwards, North Berwick.
Pledge of Allegiance.

Medical Provider of the Day, Jodie Hermann, DO, Bowdoinham.

Under suspension of the rules, members were allowed to remove their jackets.

The Journal of yesterday was read and approved.

The following items were taken up out of order by unanimous consent:

PETITIONS, BILLS AND RESOLVES REQUIRING REFERENCE

Bill "An Act Regarding Offshore Wind Terminals Located in Coastal Sand Dune Systems"

(H.P. 1456) (L.D. 2266)

Sponsored by Representative RUNTE of York. (GOVERNOR'S BILL)

Committee on **ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES** suggested and ordered printed.

REFERRED to the Committee on **ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES** and ordered printed.

Sent for concurrence.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

Refer to the Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services Pursuant to Resolve

Representative PERRY for the **Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services** on Bill "An Act to Implement the Recommendations of the Commission Regarding Foreign-trained Physicians Living in Maine to Support International Medical Graduates in Securing Employment"

(H.P. 1457) (L.D. 2267)

Reporting that it be **REFERRED** to the Committee on **HEALTH COVERAGE, INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES** pursuant to Resolve 2023, chapter 93, section 8.

The Report was **READ** and **ACCEPTED**.

The Bill was **REFERRED** to the Committee on **HEALTH COVERAGE, INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES** and sent for concurrence.

Refer to the Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services Pursuant to Resolve

Representative PERRY for the **Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services** on Bill "An Act to Implement the Recommendations of the Commission Regarding Foreign-trained Physicians Living in Maine to Establish a Sponsorship Program for International Medical Graduates"

(H.P. 1458) (L.D. 2268)

Reporting that it be **REFERRED** to the Committee on **HEALTH COVERAGE, INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES** pursuant to Resolve 2023, chapter 93, section 8.

The Report was **READ** and **ACCEPTED**.

The Bill was **REFERRED** to the Committee on **HEALTH COVERAGE, INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES** and sent for concurrence.

Refer to the Committee on Judiciary Pursuant to Resolve

Representative MOONEN for the **Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary** on Bill "An Act to Automatically Seal Criminal History Record Information for Class D and Class E Crimes Relating to Marijuana Possession and Cultivation"

(H.P. 1459) (L.D. 2269)

Reporting that it be **REFERRED** to the Committee on **JUDICIARY** pursuant to Resolve 2023, chapter 103, section 7.

The Report was **READ** and **ACCEPTED**.

The Bill was **REFERRED** to the Committee on **JUDICIARY** and sent for concurrence.

By unanimous consent, all matters having been acted upon were **ORDERED SENT FORTHWITH**.

SENATE PAPERS

The following Joint Resolution: (S.P. 983)

JOINT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING MARCH 10, 2024 TO MARCH 16, 2024

AS MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS AWARENESS WEEK

WHEREAS, multiple sclerosis is a neurological disease of the central nervous system affecting more than 2,800,000 people worldwide; and

WHEREAS, the National Multiple Sclerosis Society estimates that nearly 1,000,000 people in the United States are living with multiple sclerosis, finds that the highest prevalence rates in the United States are found in the New England region and reports that the disease generally strikes people between the ages of 20 and 50 and that the cause and course of the often debilitating symptoms of multiple sclerosis remain unknown with no cure currently existing; and

WHEREAS, the National Multiple Sclerosis Society has been committed for more than 78 years to a world free of multiple sclerosis, and the society raises public knowledge about and insight into the disease; and

WHEREAS, since its inception, the National Multiple Sclerosis Society has been at the forefront of multiple sclerosis research, pursuing prevention, treatments and a cure, with more than \$1.2 billion invested in groundbreaking research; and

WHEREAS, the National Multiple Sclerosis Society partners with the health care community to promote access to comprehensive, high-quality health care and has launched the careers of 120 multiple sclerosis specialists, providing care to more than 100,000 people with multiple sclerosis and greatly improving the treatment and support of people with multiple sclerosis; and

WHEREAS, the National Multiple Sclerosis Society provides multiple sclerosis patients access to MS Navigators, who are dedicated partners who address individual challenges and concerns, ensuring personalized and effective support for every patient affected by multiple sclerosis; and

WHEREAS, stopping the progress of multiple sclerosis, restoring what has been lost and ending multiple sclerosis forever is the mission of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society and one that all should support; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That We, the Members of the One Hundred and Thirty-first Legislature now assembled in the Second Regular Session, on behalf of the people we represent, take this opportunity to recognize March 10, 2024 to March 16, 2024 as Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week and encourage all Maine citizens to learn more about multiple sclerosis and what they can do to support people with multiple sclerosis and their families; and be it further

RESOLVED: That we recognize the critical importance of advancing research to find the cause and cure of multiple sclerosis and express our appreciation for the dedication that the Greater New England Chapter of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society has shown toward creating a world free of multiple sclerosis; and be it further

RESOLVED: That suitable copies of this resolution, duly authenticated by the Secretary of State, be transmitted to the Greater New England Chapter of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society.

Came from the Senate, **READ** and **ADOPTED**.
READ and **ADOPTED** in concurrence.

The following Joint Order: (S.P. 985)

ORDERED, the House concurring, that Bill, "An Act Establishing Concurrent Jurisdiction with the Federal Courts in Certain Juvenile Matters," S.P. 923, L.D. 2171, and all its accompanying papers, be recalled from the Governor's desk to the Senate.

Came from the Senate, **READ** and **PASSED**.
READ and **PASSED** in concurrence.

On motion of Speaker TALBOT ROSS of Portland, the House **RECONSIDERED** its action whereby **JOINT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING MARCH 10, 2024 TO MARCH 16, 2024 AS MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS AWARENESS WEEK** (S.P. 983)

Was **ADOPTED**.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from York, Representative Sargent.

Representative **SARGENT**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise in support of this Resolution. I'm happy to say that I believe I am the only Member of this Chamber that is afflicted by MS, although our good friend, Lois, was as well. I speak for the one million Americans who are afflicted by this disease that has a cause and a progression that is poorly understood, and for which there is no cure.

I've had MS probably for over 20 years and for a great deal of that time, my symptoms were largely manageable and were not progressing. I believe all of you have seen over the last year what happens, perhaps, to individuals at a certain point as my symptoms have progressed. The pandemic was very difficult for people with diseases like MS, and many people saw their symptoms worsen. I'm a very privileged woman. I have means, I have access to the very best doctors perhaps in the world, but many of my fellow citizens in Maine, in rural areas, who suffer from this disease do not have that kind of access. And I stress to my Fellow Members the importance of research, the importance of making certain that, as part of our health care system, people are able to access the best kind of care so that they can continue living their lives. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Subsequently, the Joint Resolution was **ADOPTED** in concurrence.

COMMUNICATIONS

The Following Communication: (H.C. 446)

STATE OF MAINE

**ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-FIRST LEGISLATURE
COMMITTEE ON STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

March 13, 2024

The Honorable Troy Jackson

President of the Senate

The Honorable Rachel Talbot Ross

Speaker of the House of Representatives

State House

Augusta, ME 04333

Dear President Jackson and Speaker Talbot Ross:

Please accept this letter as the report of the Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government on its review and evaluation of the Office of the State Treasurer under the State Government Evaluation Act, Title 3 Maine Revised Statutes, chapter 35. The committee unanimously finds that the Office of the State Treasurer is operating within its statutory authority.

Sincerely,

S/Senator Tim Nangle

Senate Chair

S/Representative Holly Stover

House Chair

READ and **ORDERED PLACED ON FILE**.

The Following Communication: (H.C. 447)

STATE OF MAINE

**ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-FIRST LEGISLATURE
COMMITTEE ON STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

March 13, 2024

The Honorable Troy Jackson

President of the Senate

The Honorable Rachel Talbot Ross

Speaker of the House of Representatives

State House

Augusta, ME 04333

Dear President Jackson and Speaker Talbot Ross:

Please accept this letter as the report of the Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government on its review and evaluation of the Maine Municipal Bond Bank under the State Government Evaluation Act, Title 3 Maine Revised Statutes, chapter 35. The committee unanimously finds that the Maine Municipal Bond Bank is operating within its statutory authority.

Sincerely,
S/Senator Tim Nangle
Senate Chair
S/Representative Holly Stover
House Chair

READ and ORDERED PLACED ON FILE.

The Following Communication: (H.C. 449)

**STATE OF MAINE
ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-FIRST LEGISLATURE
COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AND LEGAL AFFAIRS**

March 13, 2024

The Honorable Troy D. Jackson
President of the Senate
The Honorable Rachel Talbot Ross
Speaker of the House of Representatives
131st Legislature
State House
Augusta, ME 04333

Dear President Jackson and Speaker Talbot Ross:
Please accept this letter as the report of the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs from its review and evaluation of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services with regard to the enforcement of the law relating to the manufacture, importation, storage, transportation and sale of all liquor and the laws relating to licensing and the collection of taxes on malt liquor and wine and the State Liquor and Lottery Commission under the State Government Evaluation Act, Title 3 Maine Revised Statutes, chapter 35.

The committee has reviewed the report submitted by the Bureau of Alcoholic Beverages and Lottery Operations, which included information related to the Liquor and Lottery Commission, and finds that the entities are operating within their statutory authority.

S/Sen. Craig Hickman
Senate Chair
S/Rep. Laura D. Supica
House Chair

READ and ORDERED PLACED ON FILE.

The Following Communication: (H.C. 448)

**STATE OF MAINE
CLERK'S OFFICE
2 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0002**

March 14, 2024

Honorable Rachel Talbot Ross
Speaker of the House
2 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Speaker Talbot Ross:
Pursuant to Joint Rule 310, the following Joint Standing Committees have voted unanimously to report the following bills out "Ought Not to Pass:"

- Health and Human Services
L.D. 307 An Act to Lower the State's Health Care Costs
- L.D. 878 An Act to Improve Child Welfare
- Inland Fisheries and Wildlife
L.D. 977 Resolve, to Study the Gasoline Tax Allocations for Nonhighway Recreational Vehicles and Make Recommendations for Changes

Sincerely,
S/Robert B. Hunt
Clerk of the House

READ and with accompanying papers ORDERED PLACED ON FILE.

By unanimous consent, all matters having been acted upon were **ORDERED SENT FORTHWITH.**

ORDERS

On motion of Representative CRAVEN of Lewiston, the following Joint Resolution: (H.P. 1455) (Cosponsored by Representative: TERRY of Gorham)

**JOINT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING
THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS
BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND IRELAND**

WHEREAS, on October 7, 1924, Ireland formally opened diplomatic relations with the United States when Ambassador Timothy Smiddy presented his credentials to President Calvin Coolidge; and

WHEREAS, after the Irish people's long and painful struggle for independence, the United States was one of the first nations to recognize the fledgling Irish state, and when Ambassador Smiddy emerged from the White House, he became Ireland's first ambassador to any country in the world; and

WHEREAS, while 1924 marked the beginning of formal diplomatic relations, the deep Irish-American connection dates back centuries, and today nearly one in 10 Americans identify as being of Irish ancestry; and

WHEREAS, Irish immigrants helped build the America we know today, from the skyscrapers of Manhattan and the transcontinental railroad to our modern political system; and

WHEREAS, Irish-Americans have made an enormous contribution to public debate and politics in America, from their local communities to the White House, and more than 20 American presidents have claimed some Irish ancestry; and

WHEREAS, the influence of Irish people in America extends well beyond the Oval Office and the United States Capitol to every state of the nation, and there are a significant number of state Legislators within the American Irish State Legislators Caucus; and

WHEREAS, since Timothy Smiddy's momentous audience in the Oval Office 100 years ago, 18 Irish ambassadors have presented credentials to American presidents, and over this time, Ireland's relations with the United States have evolved significantly; and

WHEREAS, from an impoverished and internationally isolated state, scarred by years of conflict, Ireland has transformed over the past century into the economically prosperous and culturally vibrant peaceful nation of today, and this transformation is due in part to the support of friends in the United States, from the crucial role America played in brokering peace in Northern Ireland, culminating with the 1998 Good Friday Agreement, to the substantial American economic investment in Ireland; and

WHEREAS, there are almost 1,000 American companies in Ireland employing over 200,000 people, and approximately 100,000 people are employed in every state in the United States by over 650 Irish-owned companies, and Ireland is now the 9th largest source of foreign direct investment in the United States; and

WHEREAS, the diplomatic relationship between the United States and Ireland is a shining example of how ancestral ties, historical connections, cultural affinities and shared values can create a foundation for enduring partnership and mutual prosperity, and Irish-American state Legislators across the United States are playing a vitally important role in fostering this partnership and ensuring that it continues and flourishes for another century to come; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That We, the Members of the One Hundred and Thirty-first Legislature now assembled in the Second Regular Session, on behalf of the people we represent, take this opportunity to recognize the 100th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the United States and Ireland; and be it further

RESOLVED: That a suitable copy of this resolution, duly authenticated by the Secretary of State, be transmitted to the American Irish State Legislators Caucus.

READ.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Lewiston, Representative Craven.

Representative **CRAVEN**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, Men and Women of the House, as an Irish-born American, it is with great pride that I address this Body today to celebrate the 100th anniversary of a continued diplomacy between Ireland and the United States.

According to the governments of the U.S. and Ireland, relations are based on common ancestral ties and shared values. The two countries share exchanges in areas of education, research and development and economic exchange. The Irish were some of the first settlers in the 13 colonies and played an important role in winning the war of independence. They exerted their own influence in the U.S. mostly through Democratic Party politics.

Ireland, as you know, was occupied and colonized from the 1600s until the 1900s. During the 1800s, the Great Potato Famine happened throughout the country. Millions died of hunger and they were not able to pay their rents and families were evicted and died in the fields. They were discriminated against in their own country; their land, their cottages were taken away from them. Any available food was sold and exported while people died of hunger. More than 1.5 million people immigrated to the United States between 1845 and 1855. These immigrants faced numerous challenges, including bias and poverty, as they tried to assemble into the American society. I suppose it begs the question, what has changed in the last hundred years for immigrants escaping poverty, political persecution and starvation? But then, who wants the poor starving people who don't even speak their language to arrive on their shores? Still, Irish-Americans progressed from staggering challenges and holding office as the highest levels in the United States. Some U.S. presidents claiming Irish ancestry are Jackson, Polk, Kennedy, Johnson, Reagan, Bush, Obama and many more. There are over 40 million Americans claiming Irish heritage in the U.S.

Shortly after the Irish won their own independence in 1922 and set up their government, they sought diplomatic relations with the U.S. and it was established in 1924. The most recent outstanding outcome from this relationship was negotiated by our very own Senator George Mitchell, when he brokered the Good Friday Accord in Northern Ireland, which ended the fighting there. We're delighted that this year, we are celebrating our 100th anniversary of our formal diplomatic relationships.

Madam Speaker, I want to wish everybody a happy St. Patrick's Day, which is on Sunday the 17th, and all are welcome to the St. Patrick's Day Parade in Portland starting at noontime. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Gorham, Representative Terry.

Representative **TERRY**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. It is with great honor and pride that I stand here today to recognize the remarkable achievements and enduring partnership between the United States and Ireland. It turns out that Mainers and the Irish people share more than a great love of agriculture, aquaculture and beer. We share a deep connection rooted in our shared history, culture and values.

As a proud Irish-American myself, I'm profoundly grateful to my ancestors for all that they went through to forge a good life in this country, and grateful for the Irish communities that settled here in Maine. Remembering and honoring what they went through is extremely meaningful to me and to the many Irish-Americans throughout the State. That is why I'm proud to be part of Maine's American-Irish Legislators Caucus and proud to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the diplomatic relations between our two nations.

Today, we pay tribute to the deep-rooted connections that have shaped our shared history. In 1924, Ireland officially opened diplomatic relations with the United States, making a significant milestone in their journey towards independence. Ambassador Timothy Smiddy; his presentation of credentials to President Calvin Coolidge not only solidified the historic moment, but also made him Ireland's first ambassador to any country in the world. However, the American-Irish connection predates this formal establishment. For centuries, Irish immigrants have played an integral role in shaping our American landscape. Their contributions can be seen all over our cities, the construction of the transcontinental railroad, and the very foundation of our modern political system. Over 20 American presidents have proudly claimed Irish history, demonstrating the profound influence of the Irish people in America. Not limited to the Oval Office or the American United States Capitol, the impact of Irish individuals extends to every state in the nation. The American-Irish State Legislators Caucus stands as a testament to the significant number of state legislators who continue to carry the torch of Irish heritage and to contribute to the vibrant tapestry of our nation.

The evolution of Ireland over the past century is nothing short of remarkable. From an impoverished country and conflicted state, Irish has emerged as an economically prosperous and culturally vibrant nation. From brokering peace in Northern Ireland, with the many thanks to Maine Senator George Mitchell, to substantial economic investment, the United States has been a steadfast ally in Ireland's journey towards peace and prosperity. The United States and Ireland serve as a shining example of how ancestral ties, historical connections, cultural affinities and shared values can foster enduring partnerships and mutual prosperity. Irish-American state legislators across the United States play a vital role in nurturing and ensuring the continuation and flourishing of this partnership for another century to come.

And on behalf of the 131st Legislature, I extend our deepest appreciation and recognition for the 100th anniversary of the diplomatic relations between the U.S. and Ireland. May this milestone serve as a reminder of the unwavering bond between our nations and inspire future generations to carry forward the legacy of friendship and cooperation. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Freeport, Representative Sachs.

Representative **SACHS**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise this morning to note on this day, when we recognize connections and close ties between the United States and Ireland, that this diplomacy and connection takes many forms. I note today we are joined by Mr. Niall Breen, who is a naturalized U.S. citizen and a proud resident of Freeport, and he so embodies both of these things. He's a long-time State employee and an Army veteran, but one of the main reasons he's here with us today, Madam Speaker, is because Niall plays handball. In fact, he plays handball very well. Mr. Breen has twice won the Irish National Championship and is the winner of six All-Army medals. And now, Mr. Breen has been asked to participate in the World Handball Championships this year in Dublin, Ireland, competing for the World Masters Title, representing the great State of Maine. No other state can claim this distinct honor, and I'd like to take a few minutes to let him know that we send with him our best wishes and how we proud we are as he brings; I'm manifesting that he will bring home that International Championship trophy to our State. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Subsequently, the Joint Resolution was **ADOPTED** and sent for concurrence.

On motion of Representative LAJOIE of Lewiston, the following House Order: (H.O. 45)

ORDERED, that Representative Richard T. Bradstreet of Vassalboro be excused Mar 5, 6 and 7 for personal reasons.

AND BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that Representative W. Edward Crockett of Portland be excused Feb 29 for health reasons.

AND BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that Representative Lori K. Gramlich of Old Orchard Beach be excused Mar 5, 6 and 7 for health reasons.

AND BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that Representative David G. Haggan of Hampden be excused Feb 13, 15, 27, 28 and Mar 5 for personal reasons.

AND BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that Representative Caldwell Jackson of Oxford be excused Mar 5, 6 and 7 for health reasons.

AND BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that Representative Marc G. Malon II of Biddeford be excused Feb 29 for health reasons.

AND BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that Representative Kristi Michele Mathieson of Kittery be excused Feb 27 and 28 for health reasons.

AND BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that Representative Kevin J. M. O'Connell of Brewer be excused Mar 6 for personal reasons.

AND BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that Representative Chad Richard Perkins of Dover-Foxcroft be excused Mar 6 for health reasons.

READ and PASSED.

SPECIAL SENTIMENT CALENDAR

In accordance with House Rule 519 and Joint Rule 213, the following items:

Recognizing:

the Honorable James F. Dill, of Old Town, who has received the University of Maine Alumni Association 2024 Alumni Career Award, the association's highest honor, for his twenty years of service on his local school board, for his twelve years of service as both a State Representative and a State Senator in the Maine Legislature and for his work as an entomologist leading the University of Maine Cooperative Extension Diagnostic and Research Laboratory in investigating ways to reduce the incidences of Lyme disease and other vector-borne diseases. We extend our congratulations and best wishes;

(SLS 1557)

On **OBJECTION** of Representative CROCKETT of Portland, was **REMOVED** from the Special Sentiment Calendar.

READ.

Subsequently, this Expression of Legislative Sentiment was **PASSED** in concurrence.

Recognizing:

Peter Mallow, of Liberty, on his retirement from the Maine State Archives after over 23 years of public service. We extend our congratulations and best wishes;

(SLS 1564)

On **OBJECTION** of Representative ZEIGLER of Montville, was **REMOVED** from the Special Sentiment Calendar.

READ.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Montville, Representative Zeigler.

Representative **ZEIGLER**: Madam Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House, Peter Mallow has been an Archives Imaging Specialist in Maine State Archives since 2000. Mr. Mallow has trained at the International Center of Photography in New York City and has received Phase I Cultural Heritage Specialist training. During his time with the Maine State Archives, Mr. Mallow became an expert on range of scan-back and flatbed scanners when he was in charge of capturing high-resolution images of rare archival materials without damage to the materials themselves. He also processed images to provide maximum quality and online resolution or for the purpose of reproduction. Some of his works include images hanging in the President of the Senate's office and as well in the office of the Speaker of the House. In conversation with Mr. Mallow, I learned of his impressive résumé before he started working for the State of Maine. We were lucky to have a person of his ability working for us.

Subsequently, this Expression of Legislative Sentiment was **PASSED** in concurrence.

Recognizing:

Emerson Morris, of Charlotte, who has earned the distinction of being named Salutatorian of the 2024 graduating class of Washington Academy. We extend our congratulations and best wishes;

(HLS 877)

Presented by Representative DAVIS of East Machias. Cosponsored by Senator MOORE of Washington.

On **OBJECTION** of Representative DAVIS of East Machias, was **REMOVED** from the Special Sentiment Calendar.

READ.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from East Machias, Representative Davis.

Representative DAVIS: Thank you, Madam Speaker, and Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. This young girl has really achieved quite a bit. She's a senior at Washington Academy. Some of the things that she has done; she actually was the President of the National Honor Society, Co-President of Student Council, a varsity soccer player, and actually winning the Defensive Player of the Year. And she was commended to the National Merit Scholar and also the Cohen Leadership Program at UMaine.

I know the young girl fairly well, and her family. She loves the outdoors, she likes to hike and she does a lot with her family, she's a family person. She likes to hunt, too. In fact, she got herself a deer a couple years ago and she helped her grandfather get one too. And she was part of a youth leadership council and there's one of them students from each of the states and when she graduates, she wants to become a nurse. So, I just want to wish Emerson the best of luck in her future. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Subsequently, this Expression of Legislative Sentiment was PASSED and sent for concurrence.

Recognizing:

Dakoda Davis, of East Machias, who has earned the distinction of being named Valedictorian of the 2024 graduating class of Washington Academy. We extend our congratulations and best wishes;

(HLS 878)

Presented by Representative DAVIS of East Machias. Cosponsored by Senator MOORE of Washington.

On **OBJECTION** of Representative DAVIS of East Machias, was **REMOVED** from the Special Sentiment Calendar.

READ.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from East Machias, Representative Davis.

Representative DAVIS: Thank you, Madam Speaker, and Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. Dakoda Davis has achieved quite a bit at Washington Academy. He's a National Merit Scholarship program finalist. He is in the student body government, Student Council, cross-country and track. He's pretty fast. He actually can blow out a candle and still have time left to read a whole chapter in a book. He's also Cohen Leadership Program on the University of Maine campus and an honor that the two students chosen out of the whole school body. Dakoda serves as Washington Academy ambassador and will be going to Orono when he graduates as an engineer.

Dakoda shot a bull moose in Allagash when he was 12 years old and he; in 2019, he was in the seventh grade, he came up here in front of Inland Fishery and testified for turkey youth hunting. And because he said to me, he said Gramps, he said, how come we don't have a turkey youth day? And I said, well, let's see if we can get a bill in and you can testify, and it passed. And that's amazing for a seventh-grade student.

But I just want to share a few other things. As I grew older, I thought the best part of my life was over. And I held Dakoda for the first time and realized it was the best part of my life just to begin. I adore him, his smile, I admire his heart, but most of all, I love that he's my grandson. That's no brag, that's just a fact. Thank you.

Subsequently, this Expression of Legislative Sentiment was PASSED and sent for concurrence.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

Divided Reports

Majority Report of the Committee on **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES** reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on Bill "An Act to Require the Reporting of Alpha-gal Syndrome to the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention" (EMERGENCY)

(S.P. 893) (L.D. 2100)

Signed:

Senators:

BALDACCI of Penobscot
INGWERSEN of York
MOORE of Washington

Representatives:

MEYER of Eliot
CRAVEN of Lewiston
GRAHAM of North Yarmouth
JAVNER of Chester
LEMELIN of Chelsea
SHAGOURY of Hallowell
ZAGER of Portland

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-574)** on same Bill.

Signed:

Representatives:

FREDERICKS of Sanford
GRIFFIN of Levant
MADIGAN of Waterville

Came from the Senate with the Majority **OUGHT NOT TO PASS** Report **READ** and **ACCEPTED**.

READ.

Representative MEYER of Eliot moved that the House **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report.

Representative DILL of Old Town **REQUESTED** a roll call on the motion to **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report.

More than one-fifth of the members present expressed a desire for a roll call which was ordered.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Old Town, Representative Dill.

Representative DILL: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, Colleagues of the House, I just wanted to rise and talk about this bill briefly.

Alpha-gal is a syndrome that is associated with the lone star tick. Now, the lone star tick in the State of Maine is not endemic; we do not have any known populations of it, but we do occasionally get the syndrome. And what it is, it makes a person that's been bitten by the tick have an allergic reaction to the saliva of the tick and therefore becomes allergic to red meat and any mammalian product. Now, the issue is we really don't have a handle in the U.S. on how many cases there are. It's estimated somewhere between 10 and 40,000 cases across the U.S. But it's also found in other places in the world. So, being found in other places in the world, that would also indicate to you that there are other ticks that this may be associated with. Now, at the university, we test ticks here in the State of Maine for about eight disease organisms at the moment, including one of the most recent ones, which was last year, we added Powassan to the panel. And Powassan is a pretty nasty disease in that about 25% of the people that get it die, and another 30-plus percent of the people that survive have lifelong neurological problems. And so, we are now getting a handle on it.

All this is asking for is to report this syndrome to CDC. Now, it's been pointed out that it's allergists who are probably going to have to report this; they're not used to doing it, and it's a burden on them. And my contention is, if it's a burden on them, we have a very serious problem. Because hopefully we only have a few cases a year. If, all of a sudden, it becomes a burden on these allergists to report because there are so many cases, this means that there are certainly other ticks that are associated with the syndrome. And by reporting it to the CDC, we can go out and try to find out what other ticks it may be associated with. Right at the moment, we're working with other universities, with the University of Maine, to try to develop a test for the tick to let us know if it does carry the enzyme that causes this. Not how people that get bitten by the lone star, just like other things, do not get the allergic reaction. So, I would request that you vote against the Ought Not to Pass motion. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Chester, Representative Javner.

Representative **JAVNER**: Thank you, Madam Speaker, Men and Women of the House. I rise in support of the motion before us. I will agree absolutely that this is a very serious condition. I look forward to the test that has been just suggested that is happening and the education and the research that is being done at the university, that will be wonderful.

I am simply going to read a portion of the testimony brought to us by the CDC. The Maine CDC agrees that provider education around Alpha-gal syndrome, a potentially serious allergic response, is important. However, from the public health perspective, the CDC opposes this bill. They already do extensive education about ticks and tick-borne diseases, both to the public and health care providers, and information about Alpha-gal syndrome is included as part of that ongoing education. This public health outreach is more likely to result in increased awareness than requiring reporting of the allergy.

I request that you follow my light and, yes, it will be green.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Eliot, Representative Meyer.

Representative **MEYER**: Thank you, Madam Speaker, Women and Men of the House. LD 2100 requires the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention to add Alpha-gal syndrome, also known as Alpha-gal allergy, to the list of diseases and conditions requiring reporting to the Department. There is very little evidence of any more than a handful of cases in Maine of this allergy to red meat that appears to manifest after a lone star tick bite. There is little evidence that this tick is in Maine. Its very rare presence is thought to be brought by travelers.

The timing and manner of disease reporting; that is, directing health care professionals to report cases of any disease with the potential for widespread public health impact; is based on frequency and severity of occurrences of a disease in Maine. Alpha-gal does not even come close to rising to such a level as to require reporting. It is not an infectious disease; it is an allergy. There is no public health intervention for this allergy, only education in avoiding tick bites. Even in light of the rarity of this condition, as my colleague, the Representative from Chester, indicated, Maine CDC has and will continue to educate the public and providers through outreach and dedicated education. Maine CDC's disease surveillance epidemiology program already provides extensively through press releases, social media, data and surveillance reports, in addition to publications by infectious disease epidemiologists on the program's web page. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Carmel, Representative Thorne.

Representative **THORNE**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, babesiosis; a lot of people are saying, what's he talking about; anaplasmosis; sounds like something off Star Trek. In 2018, I became very ill. I had severe headaches for five days at home. I thought I had some version of the flu. Like most guys, I said I'll just get through it and shake it off and it'll just pass. I ended up with bed sweats, I ended up with chills and shivers. My wife finally made me go to the emergency room. Went to the emergency room, got tested, couldn't find anything, gave me something, sent me home. Two days later, after the symptoms were still prevalent, I went to another emergency room at St. Joseph's in Bangor. They admitted me, probably because they found out I had good coverage. But for four days; four days, I stayed at St. Joseph's Health Care on an IV drip of steroids and an IV drip of antibiotics. I was quarantined in a room. Anybody who came into the room had to have footies on, a gown, full mask, full head. My wife came in to see me for four days that way, not knowing what I had. I left the hospital after four days of that and my wife said, you know what, you've had a heart attack and two stents; this was scarier because we didn't know what we had.

I was released, I got a letter in the mail days later from the Mayo Clinic out in Rochester, Minnesota. I couldn't read the medical speak. I took it to my doctor, I said, what's it mean? He says, you have babesiosis. I said, what is babesiosis? He said, it's a tickborne illness; virus. At that time, there were thousands of cases in Maine of Lyme disease, a lot less, a couple hundred, of anaplasmosis, and less than a hundred cases of babesiosis. They never tested me for babesiosis, it wasn't in the battery of tests because it wasn't prevalent enough. A lot of people suffer through their illness and disease. My son-in-law, who was here yesterday, Sheriff's Deputy Detective at Cumberland County, had Lyme disease. They took his gun away, they took him off his job. He had Lyme disease. He got bit by a tick, didn't know it. It incapacitated him and he's still recovering from it.

Madam Speaker, the Good Representative from Old Town was just recognized for his work as an entomologist. This is his wheelhouse. If he recommends it, I support it. Madam Speaker, I cannot vote for the motion on the Floor and I'll be voting no. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: A roll call has been ordered. The pending question before the House is Acceptance of the Majority Ought Not to Pass Report. All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

ROLL CALL NO. 405

YEA - Adams, Andrews, Ankeles, Arata, Ardell, Arford, Bagshaw, Bell, Bradstreet, Carlow, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, Craven, Crockett, Dhalac, Dodge, Doudera, Faulkingham, Fay, Gattine, Geiger, Gere, Graham, Gramlich, Haggan, Hepler, Hobbs, Hymes, Javner, Kessler, Kuhn, Lanigan, LaRochelle, Lee, Lemelin, Libby, Lyman, Malon, Mason, Mastraccio, Mathieson, Matlack, Meyer, Moonen, Morris, Murphy, Nutting, O'Neil, Osher, Paul, Perkins, Perry A, Pluecker, Polewarczyk, Pringle, Rielly, Roberts, Roeder, Sachs, Salisbury, Sargent, Sayre, Schmersal-Burgess, Shagoury, Sheehan, Simmons, Skold, Smith, Stover, Supica, Swallow, Terry, White B, White J, Zager, Madam Speaker.

NAY - Abdi, Babin, Beck, Blier, Boyer, Bridgeo, Campbell, Collamore, Collings, Costain, Cray, Cyrway, Davis, Dill, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Dunphy, Eaton, Foster, Fredericks, Gifford, Greenwood, Griffin, Guerrette, Hall, Hasenfus, Henderson, Jauch, Lajoie, Landry, Lavigne, Lookner, Madigan, Millett H, Millett R, Milliken, Moriarty, Ness, O'Connell, Parry,

Poirier, Pomerleau, Quint, Rana, Rudnicki, Runte, Russell, Shaw, Sinclair, Soboleski, Strout, Theriault, Thorne, Underwood, Walker, Warren, Williams, Worth, Zeigler.

ABSENT - Albert, Boyle, Brennan, Carmichael, Galletta, Golek, Jackson, Montell, Newman, Perry J, Riseman, Sampson, Wood, Woodsome.

Yes, 78; No, 59; Absent, 14; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

78 having voted in the affirmative and 59 voted in the negative, with 14 being absent, and accordingly the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report was **ACCEPTED** in concurrence.

Majority Report of the Committee on **JUDICIARY** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-566)** on Bill "An Act Regarding Disclosure of Flood Risk by Sellers of Real Estate"

(S.P. 863) (L.D. 2035)

Signed:

Senators:

CARNEY of Cumberland
BAILEY of York

Representatives:

MOONEN of Portland
KUHN of Falmouth
LEE of Auburn
MORIARTY of Cumberland
SHEEHAN of Biddeford

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on same Bill.

Signed:

Senator:

BRAKEY of Androscoggin

Representatives:

ANDREWS of Paris
HAGGAN of Hampden
HENDERSON of Rumford
POIRIER of Skowhegan

Came from the Senate with the Majority **OUGHT TO PASS AS AMENDED** Report **READ** and **ACCEPTED** and the Bill **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED AS AMENDED BY COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" (S-566)**.

READ.

Representative MOONEN of Portland moved that the House **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended** Report.

Representative POIRIER of Skowhegan **REQUESTED** a roll call on the motion to **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended** Report.

More than one-fifth of the members present expressed a desire for a roll call which was ordered.

The **SPEAKER**: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Turner, Representative Morris.

Representative **MORRIS**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise in opposition to the pending motion. This legislation is simply not needed.

There's already a requirement under Maine law that anybody who is working with a Realtor, the Realtor must disclose all known material defects to any buyers or customers that come before them. The existence of flood insurance is required, as is any issues with water entering the property, mold, all the things that would happen if there was a flood. So, these are all things that are already required to be disclosed. Adding this is just adding another burden, another place for us to go find and look when the information may not be readily available. The

flood maps in some of these cases are over 20 years old and it may not be as reliable.

Additionally, there is a requirement if anyone has a buyer, has an agent, that agent is also required to find this information and help their buyer, and any buyer that is buying a house that is getting a mortgage, the mortgage company will require them to bring their evidence of insurance to the closing and if during the process of getting the insurance they find that it may be in a floodplain, they will make that buyer buy flood insurance.

So, this is a law that is really not needed. There's already enough protections out there. In addition, any professional that does not disclose this; and the standard is whether we knew or should have known using reasonable care and diligence; if that is not done, certainly the client can come after the Realtor through the Department of Professional and Financial Regulation and file a complaint against the Realtor's license, as well as any potential future litigation. So, this is just something that I would just again say, this is not needed, it is being done and it's not really clear how the rules are going to be written and adopted to cover this. I would encourage this Body to reject this motion and let the system work as it has been working. Thank you.

The **SPEAKER**: The Chair recognizes the Representative from New Gloucester, Representative Arata.

Representative **ARATA**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker and Ladies and Gentlemen of the House, although I am a licensed Realtor; I'm not practicing right now; I'm not really that concerned as far as for the Realtors. I'm more concerned about this bill with regard to the sellers, some of whom may be seniors and have difficulty finding this information regarding flood zoning and also, they might own their property outright and not have a mortgage and not have been required to buy flood insurance. And so, this bill would cause them to be breaking the law and also may give buyers a more relaxed sense as far as their due diligence is concerned and may cause them not to look into the property as deeply as they should. So, I urge you to vote Ought Not to Pass. Thank you.

The **SPEAKER**: The Chair recognizes the Representative from North Yarmouth, Representative Graham.

Representative **GRAHAM**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I stand in support of the pending motion.

I tend not to bring what I live personally, but 30 years ago, I bought a great piece of land with my husband and my kids to build a house in North Yarmouth. It was near the Royal River. The seller failed to tell us that we were building in a floodplain zone. So, we were building, we figured it out halfway through building our house. We didn't know what to do, 'til we figured out that we had to make sure all our utilities were not in the basement, but on ground level. We continue to be in a floodplain zone, we pay flood insurance, but the seller did not tell us this. And the way he got out of it, when we talked to him about it, was he promised to pave our driveway.

This is real, this is happening to people and I think it's important that we safeguard individuals who want to live in areas where they're floodplain and with climate change, it's getting larger and larger. Thank goodness we have a really good sump pump. So, I stand in strong support of this to help those people who want to live in these areas, who want to build homes in these areas, and not to be taken by a seller who fails to disclose it.

The **SPEAKER**: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Sanford, Representative Lanigan.

Representative **LANIGAN**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Although I'm not a practicing real estate agent right now, 20 years ago, I did hold my license in New Hampshire and in

Florida. And one of the things that we were taught in real estate class was *caveat emptor*. It's a Latin term for 'let the buyer beware.' It is the buyer's responsibility in any transaction to make sure that they have all the knowledge of what they're purchasing and it's not the burden of the seller, and I think this bill is cumbersome and not needed and just another layer to make it harder for the seller and property transactions, like the Good Representative from New Gloucester stated, especially with our seniors. I don't even know where they would go find this information. So, I'd ask you to vote down this pending motion. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Buxton, Representative Blier.

Representative **BLIER**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I didn't intend to rise on this particular issue, but I guess I want to ask the question to the people here; whose responsibility is it to know if your property's in a flood zone? Is it the seller or the buyer? If the seller doesn't know and the buyer doesn't know, the buyer buys this piece of property, it's now the seller's fault for not notifying this is in a flood zone. The responsibility should lie on the buyer. You have the right to do your due diligence. If you don't do your due diligence, it's not somebody else's fault, it's your own. So, I vote this Ought Not to Pass. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Fryeburg, Representative Ness.

Representative **NESS**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I just would like to point out in reviewing the amendment, I noticed in the summary that the amendment is a Minority Report and just wasn't sure if there could be some clarification on that. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Member has posed a question through the Chair to any Member who would like to respond. The Chair recognizes the Representative from Portland, Representative Moonen.

Representative **MOONEN**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. What is posted online is an error. The amendment is the Majority Amendment, which is why the motion before us is Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A". That was to answer the question; I also rise in support of the motion before us.

Floods are one of the most common types of natural disasters in the United States, increasingly common. Maine has seen this, both on the coast and on the inland part of the State, in recent months. It's caused lots of damage, lots of devastation to many Mainers across our State. Homeowners' insurance and similar policies typically do not cover flood damage, which is why a separate flood insurance policy needs to be considered by people who are worried about this, and particularly those who live in flood maps. The flood maps are created and released by the federal government, FEMA specifically. They are updated regularly, they are available online, they are in digital format, they are not hard to access, especially for real estate agents who know what they're doing.

Some buyers may be required to have flood insurance because they are pursuing federally-backed financing for the home that they're purchasing. They may also be required to have flood insurance if they are purchasing a home that has previously received federal disaster assistance for flooding. But there are others who are not required to have it and the majority of the Committee felt that it was not that big a deal to have this disclosed to potential buyers so they can be informed about the property that they're purchasing and they can make an informed decision about whether or not they wish to purchase flood insurance. Thirty-five states already require this disclosure. As

you know if you've ever pursued purchasing a property, there's lots of things that are disclosed when you do that; adding one more is not that big of a burden, especially when 35 states already require it.

Finally, I would just point out this applies to all property, so, business owners would benefit from this as well. If they are purchasing property for their business, they also should get to know if the business they are considering purchasing is on a flood map and then make an informed decision about whether or not they want flood insurance for their business. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair is pleased to recognize the Representative from Skowhegan, Representative Poirier.

Representative **POIRIER**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker and Ladies and Gentlemen of the House, the true point here is that real estate professionals strive for 100% transparency and they're bound to that. There's conflicting data to determine whether or not a parcel of real estate is in a flood zone or not. The only real way to determine that is to hire a professional survey company. Depending on current FEMA flood maps, they can be unreliable, as many maps in Maine are not currently digitized yet and some of the older maps are dating back to 2002, which may not reflect the state of flooding, especially with the current situations that we had with flooding in recent storms. As the Good Representative from Turner did state, real estate agreements already have a section dedicated to flood disclosure. This bill places the burden on the sellers and Realtors when, in reality, the company or financing bank the purchaser is using is required to check into the flood status on that property. In fact, there's law now that they have to continue monitoring that as flood maps can change.

The current laws and practices are working. The banks are doing their due diligence to know whether or not that person buying the property needs to have that insurance, and they will require it. This shifts the burden over to the seller and the real estate person, neither of whom are experts in this. So, you're going to be looking at two separate surveys being done, which is going to cost the consumer more money in the end because it will add to the sales price or closing price and such. So, this is really an unnecessary bill, an unnecessary burden when we're already looking at issues people are facing trying to gain housing. So, I would request that everybody follow my light and please vote nay on the pending motion. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Dover-Foxcroft, Representative Perkins.

Representative **PERKINS**: Thank you, Madam Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. I wasn't going to speak on this, either, but; I'm not a real estate agent nor a real estate expert, so, whenever I look forward to the day to come and I see bills like this come before us, I ask someone who is, and that's my wife, who's a broker. And her opinion when I consulted with her last night was not only is this unnecessary for reasons that we've heard from other speakers today, but this is extremely onerous. Just to point out one example for everybody's consideration, there's a requirement in this bill that during the disclosure period of the sale, you would have to disclose any payments that were paid out previously for flood damage and the date, and any remediation and the date and amount. So, if you owned a house for 50 years or 55 years and had to sell the house, you would have to provide the payments and dates for the last 55 years. So, if you had a flood the first year you owned a house and then 55 years later, when, to sell that house, you would be required under this Statute to provide the date and the payment when you went to sell that house, according to this bill. And that, to me, just seems onerous. I mean, I keep pretty good

records, but I don't think I have a record for every payment that I've made out or received in the last, you know, 30 years, Madam Speaker. So, I would ask the Members not to support this bill.

The **SPEAKER**: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Camden, Representative Doudera.

Representative **DOUDERA**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. In my 20-plus years of my career as a Realtor, I've represented scores of buyers and sellers of property in my district and beyond. These two groups have much in common, but for a Realtor, they require a different approach. For me, my main job with helping sellers is to get them the best price for their home, but it's also to help them present an honest accounting of their home's features; the lovely view of the mountains, the self-closing cabinets; as well as any shortcomings or issues that their property may have. When working with buyers, a Realtor is often dealing with people who don't live in a community and who often come from outside the State itself. Our job with buyers is to educate them; how a hot water boiler works, what's possible in a shoreland zone, what mud season means. In this time of climate change, of rising seas and increasingly bad storms, we also need to educate around the risks of flooding.

Current law does not explicitly require sellers to inform buyers of flood risk. Sellers are already required to disclose any known defects, that's true. But, Madam Speaker, I spoke with a number of Realtors in my community and all of them admitted that whether a property is in an area of special flood hazard would not be something they would think of as a defect. If a roof leaks, if an attic is spotted with mold, if a basement fills with water, those are the kinds of situations that we recognize as material defects.

The measure before us clarifies that sellers of real property must notify buyers whether the property is in an area of special flood hazard, mapped on the effective flood insurance rate map at the time of the required disclosure. The information that we just heard about regarding receipts for bills, that is no longer a part of the measure before us. Will this bill create another hoop for sellers and seller agents, who are the ones who are required to fill out the disclosure; does it create another hoop for them to jump through? Yes, it does. Believe me, nobody likes having to fill out more paperwork. Nobody likes having to chase down information when their seller is not forthcoming. But, Madam Speaker, this bill pertains to the other people that we help; the buyers of property, who may not be savvy enough to find out on their own about flood hazards. Adding this information to the disclosure sparks a conversation. It sparks inquiry. I believe we ought to give buyers of Maine property all the tools that they need to make as informed a decision about a property as possible, not just because they're making what might be the biggest investment in their lives, but because it's the right thing to do.

Ultimately, disclosure is better for everyone, Madam Speaker; the buyer, the seller and the Realtor. And so, I urge my colleagues to support this pending motion. Thank you.

The **SPEAKER**: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Madison, Representative Ducharme.

Representative **DUCHARME**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Just; I rose to clarify a little bit what the Representative from Skowhegan spoke of. I spent 20 years as a mortgage lender, both in the commercial side and on the residential side. A number of years ago, I don't remember exactly how many, they instituted the process whereby every time flood maps are updated, the banks have to go back into their mortgages and find out which properties are listed on the floodplain. Once that map is updated, they then have to reach out to those mortgage

owners, the borrowers, and say, oh, by the way, your property is now listed in the floodplain and you have to go buy insurance, flood insurance. They may not have had to have it before, but the floodplain map changed, and so, they now have to do that. And if the borrower says, I cannot afford to go buy flood insurance on my property, the bank is then required; and required by law under pain of federal penalties; to go out to the National Flood Insurance Program, purchase that flood insurance and then back-charge that customer on their mortgage, adding to the mortgage length and term.

So, before we do these kinds of things, let's just remember there are a whole lot of protections out there for people with respect to flood insurance. We need to remember that flood insurance is not available for properties along the coast, within the floodplain of the coast. Remember that. There's a whole reason why it's costly to have a property surveyed with respect to whether or not the flood insurance program applies.

The **SPEAKER**: The Member will defer. The Member needs to direct all of his comments directly to the Chair, please.

The Chair reminded Representative **DUCHARME** of Madison to address his comments toward the Speaker.

The **SPEAKER**: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Madison, Representative Ducharme.

Representative **DUCHARME**: Thank you. My apologies, Madam Speaker.

Just to close it out, just remember this is being monitored on a regular basis by all banks that have mortgages. And I would say, just in terms of the penalties, I remember 15 years ago, the federal government came through and there was a big notification that went out to all community banks, all banks in the State of Maine, that said, we're coming through and we're going to monitor all your flood insurance stuff. There was a local bank in the State of Maine that got fined \$600,000 for errors. Not for not having the right flood insurance, \$600,000 for just having some errors in documentation with respect to flood insurance. There's plenty of protection out there. Thank you.

The **SPEAKER**: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Guilford, Representative White.

Representative **WHITE**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have no ties to any real estate, I have no intention on becoming a real estate broker at any time in my life. But I have purchased and sold real estate, and the house that I live in now was built on a piece of property that I purchased 23 years ago. When I purchased that, I purchased it from a widow who was at the end of her life and suffering from a terminal disease, and I'm sure thankful that there were no further burdens placed upon her or I during that transition. This all boils down to a dollar sign. And I intentionally bought a run-down old farm that I had the ability to do my own research and look at the flood maps and make sure that it wasn't in the floodplain without paying anyone or having this woman that was selling me her home to spend a bunch of money, and I purchased it at a very affordable price, knowing that in the future, I would tear down that home and build a new house.

You know, every time we pass something like this that's redundant, we're adding a dollar sign. And, you know, as people have noticed my family here today, I had the ability to raise my family on this piece of property because I could afford it at the time. And adding more burden to young families trying to get into a home is just uncalled for. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Pittsfield, Representative Collamore.

Representative **COLLAMORE**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. May I pose a question through the Chair?

The SPEAKER: The Member may proceed.

Representative **COLLAMORE**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, we just heard from a speaker on the other side of the aisle that the buyer may not be savvy enough to know how to look for this, but if that's the case, how do we know the buyer is savvy enough to get this information if they're selling it without using a Realtor and what protects them?

The SPEAKER: The Member has posed a question through the Chair to any Member who wishes to respond.

Seeing none, a roll call has been ordered. The pending question before the House is Acceptance of the Majority Ought to Pass as Amended Report. All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

ROLL CALL NO. 406

YEA - Abdi, Ankeles, Arford, Beck, Bell, Bridgeo, Carlow, Cloutier, Cluchey, Collings, Copeland, Crafts, Craven, Crockett, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Eaton, Fay, Gattine, Geiger, Gere, Graham, Gramlich, Hasenus, Hepler, Hobbs, Jauch, Kessler, Kuhn, Lajoie, Landry, LaRochelle, Lavigne, Lee, Lookner, Madigan, Malon, Mastraccio, Mathieson, Matlack, Meyer, Millett R, Milliken, Moonen, Moriarty, Murphy, O'Connell, O'Neil, Osher, Perry A, Pluecker, Pringle, Rana, Rielly, Roberts, Roeder, Runte, Russell, Sachs, Salisbury, Sargent, Sayre, Shagoury, Shaw, Sheehan, Sinclair, Skold, Stover, Supica, Terry, Warren, White B, Williams, Worth, Zager, Zeigler, Madam Speaker.

NAY - Adams, Andrews, Arata, Ardell, Babin, Bagshaw, Blier, Boyer, Bradstreet, Campbell, Collamore, Costain, Cray, Cyrway, Davis, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Dunphy, Faulkingham, Foster, Fredericks, Gifford, Greenwood, Griffin, Guerrette, Haggan, Henderson, Hymes, Javner, Lanigan, Lemelin, Libby, Lyman, Mason, Millett H, Morris, Ness, Nutting, Parry, Paul, Perkins, Poirier, Polewarczyk, Pomerleau, Quint, Rudnicki, Schmersal-Burgess, Simmons, Smith, Soboleski, Strout, Swallow, Theriault, Thorne, Underwood, Walker, White J.

ABSENT - Albert, Boyle, Brennan, Carmichael, Galletta, Golek, Hall, Jackson, Montell, Newman, Perry J, Riseman, Sampson, Wood, Woodsome.

Yes, 79; No, 57; Absent, 15; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

79 having voted in the affirmative and 57 voted in the negative, with 15 being absent, and accordingly the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended Report was ACCEPTED.**

The Bill was **READ ONCE. Committee Amendment "A" (S-566) was READ** by the Clerk and **ADOPTED.**

Under suspension of the rules the Bill was given its **SECOND READING WITHOUT REFERENCE** to the Committee on **Bills in the Second Reading.**

Under further suspension of the rules the Bill was **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-566)** in concurrence.

Majority Report of the Committee on **STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-560)** on Bill "An Act to Support Municipalities by Repealing the Law Limiting the Municipal Property Tax Levy" (EMERGENCY)

(S.P. 895) (L.D. 2102)

Signed:

Senators:

NANGLE of Cumberland
BALDACCI of Penobscot

Representatives:

STOVER of Boothbay
ABDI of Lewiston
COPELAND of Saco
DHALAC of South Portland
RISEMAN of Harrison
SINCLAIR of Bath

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on same Bill.

Signed:

Senator:

LYFORD of Penobscot

Representatives:

ADAMS of Lebanon
GREENWOOD of Wales
POMERLEAU of Standish
UNDERWOOD of Presque Isle

Came from the Senate with the Majority **OUGHT TO PASS AS AMENDED** Report **READ** and **ACCEPTED** and the Bill **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED AS AMENDED BY COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" (S-560).**

READ.

On motion of Representative TERRY of Gorham, **TABLED** pending **ACCEPTANCE** of either Report and later today assigned.

CONSENT CALENDAR

First Day

In accordance with House Rule 519, the following items appeared on the Consent Calendar for the First Day:

(S.P. 966) (L.D. 2244) Bill "An Act to Implement the Recommendations of the Department of the Secretary of State, Bureau of Motor Vehicles' Motor Vehicle Dealer Display Area and Licensing Requirements Working Group" Committee on **INNOVATION, DEVELOPMENT, ECONOMIC ADVANCEMENT AND BUSINESS** reporting **Ought to Pass**

(S.P. 696) (L.D. 1751) Bill "An Act to Maximize Federal Funding in Support of Emergency Medical Services" Committee on **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-573)**

Under suspension of the rules, Second Day Consent Calendar notification was given.

There being no objection, the Senate Papers were **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED** or **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED as Amended** in concurrence.

ENACTORS

Acts

An Act to Provide for Medical and Vessel Breakdown License Exceptions for Commercial Menhaden License Holders (S.P. 853) (L.D. 2025)

Was reported by the Committee on **Engrossed Bills** as truly and strictly engrossed, **PASSED TO BE ENACTED**, signed by the Speaker and sent to the Senate.

The following items were taken up out of order by unanimous consent:

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

The following matter, in the consideration of which the House was engaged at the time of adjournment yesterday, had preference in the Orders of the Day and continued with such preference until disposed of as provided by House Rule 502.

An Act to Restrict Noncompete Clauses (H.P. 951) (L.D. 1496) (C. "A" H-768)

TABLED - March 5, 2024 (Till Later Today) by Representative ROEDER of Bangor.

PENDING - **PASSAGE TO BE ENACTED.**

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Vassalboro, Representative Bradstreet.

Representative **BRADSTREET**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. You know, this bill has caused quite a bit of controversy among many parties, and I know there's been efforts at compromising. And regrettably, those efforts have failed. I think, you know, a little more effort, maybe something would've come out of that that we could all agree to, but that's not the case. So, I will still be opposing the bill, the motion, and I ask for a Roll Call.

The same Representative **REQUESTED** a roll call on **PASSAGE TO BE ENACTED.**

More than one-fifth of the members present expressed a desire for a roll call which was ordered.

The SPEAKER: A roll call has been ordered. The pending question before the House is Passage to be Enacted. All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

ROLL CALL NO. 407

YEA - Abdi, Ankeles, Arford, Beck, Bell, Bridgeo, Carlow, Cloutier, Cluchey, Collings, Copeland, Crafts, Craven, Crockett, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Eaton, Fay, Gattine, Geiger, Gere, Graham, Gramlich, Hasenus, Hepler, Hobbs, Jauch, Kessler, Kuhn, Lajoie, Landry, LaRochelle, Lavigne, Lee, Lookner, Madigan, Malon, Mastraccio, Mathieson, Matlack, Meyer, Millett R, Milliken, Moonen, Moriarty, Murphy, O'Connell, O'Neil, Osher, Perry A, Pluecker, Poirier, Pringle, Rana, Rielly, Roberts, Roeder, Runte, Russell, Sachs, Salisbury, Sargent, Sayre, Shagoury, Shaw, Sheehan, Sinclair, Skold, Stover, Terry, Warren, White B, Williams, Worth, Zager, Zeigler, Madam Speaker.

NAY - Adams, Andrews, Arata, Ardell, Babin, Bagshaw, Blier, Boyer, Bradstreet, Campbell, Collamore, Costain, Cray, Cyrway, Davis, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Dunphy, Faulkingham, Foster, Fredericks, Gifford, Greenwood, Griffin, Guerrette, Haggan, Henderson, Hymes, Javner, Lanigan, Lemelin, Libby, Lyman, Mason, Millett H, Morris, Ness, Nutting, Parry, Paul, Perkins, Polewarczyk, Pomerleau, Quint, Rudnicki, Schmersal-Burgess, Simmons, Smith, Soboleski, Strout, Swallow, Theriault, Thorne, Underwood, Walker, White J.

ABSENT - Albert, Boyle, Brennan, Carmichael, Galletta, Golek, Hall, Jackson, Montell, Newman, Perry J, Riseman, Sampson, Supica, Wood, Woodsome.

Yes, 79; No, 56; Absent, 16; Vacant, 0; Excused, 0.

79 having voted in the affirmative and 56 voted in the negative, with 16 being absent, and accordingly the Bill was **PASSED TO BE ENACTED**, signed by the Speaker and sent to the Senate.

By unanimous consent, all matters having been acted upon were **ORDERED SENT FORTHWITH.**

SENATE PAPERS

The following Joint Order: (S.P. 988)

ORDERED, the House concurring, that when the Senate and House adjourn, they do so until Tuesday, March 19, 2024, at 10:00 in the morning, or until the call of the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House, respectively.

Came from the Senate, **READ** and **PASSED.**

READ and **PASSED** in concurrence.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Pittsfield, Representative Collamore.

Representative **COLLAMORE**: Thank you Madam Speaker, I would like permission to speak on the record.

The SPEAKER: The Representative has requested unanimous consent to address the House on the record. Hearing no objection, the Member may proceed.

Representative **COLLAMORE**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. First of all, I'd like to wish everybody a happy Pi Day; I hope you're able to celebrate. I'd also like to take a moment, Madam Speaker, to wish the University of Maine women's basketball team good luck in their playoff game tomorrow against UVM. And I'd also like to wish UMaine's men's hockey team good luck in their playoff game against UNH on Saturday. Both games are at home because we've done so well in both seasons. Go blue!

By unanimous consent, all matters having been acted upon were **ORDERED SENT FORTHWITH.**

On motion of Representative COSTAIN of Plymouth, the House adjourned at 12:20 p.m., until 10:00 a.m., Tuesday, March 19, 2024, or until the call of the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate, respectively, pursuant to the Joint Order (S.P. 988) and in honor and lasting tribute to Carole Green of Plymouth.