

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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ONE HUNDRED THIRTY-FIRST LEGISLATURE  
SECOND REGULAR SESSION  
42nd Legislative Day  
Friday, May 10, 2024

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

Prayer by Rabbi Carolyn Braun, Temple Beth El, Portland; Reverend Jeffrey McIlwain, North Star AME Zion Church, Newington, NH; and Dawud A. Ummah, Portland.

National Anthem by Nathan Henderson, Rumford.  
Pledge of Allegiance.

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

The Journal of Wednesday, April 17, 2024 was read and approved.

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

**ORDERS**

On motion of Representative CARLOW of Buxton, the following Joint Resolution: (H.P. 1488) (Cosponsored by Representatives: ABDI of Lewiston, ADAMS of Lebanon, ALBERT of Madawaska, ANDREWS of Paris, ANKELES of Brunswick, ARATA of New Gloucester, ARDELL of Monticello, ARFORD of Brunswick, BABIN of Fort Fairfield, BAGSHAW of Windham, BECK of South Portland, BELL of Yarmouth, BLIER of Buxton, BOYER of Poland, BOYLE of Gorham, BRADSTREET of Vassalboro, BRENNAN of Portland, BRIDGEO of Augusta, CAMPBELL of Orrington, CARMICHAEL of Greenbush, CLOUTIER of Lewiston, CLUCHEY of Bowdoinham, COLLAMORE of Pittsfield, COLLINGS of Portland, COPELAND of Saco, COSTAIN of Plymouth, CRAFTS of Newcastle, CRAVEN of Lewiston, CRAY of Palmyra, CROCKETT of Portland, CYRWAY of Albion, DANA of the Passamaquoddy Tribe, DAVIS of East Machias, DHALAC of South Portland, DILL of Old Town, DODGE of Belfast, DOUDERA of Camden, DRINKWATER of Milford, DUCHARME of Madison, DUNPHY of Embden, EATON of Deer Isle, FAULKINGHAM of Winter Harbor, FAY of Raymond, FOSTER of Dexter, FREDERICKS of Sanford, GALLETTA of Durham, GATTINE of Westbrook, GEIGER of Rockland, GERE of Kennebunkport, GIFFORD of Lincoln, GOLEK of Harpswell, GRAHAM of North Yarmouth, GRAMLICH of Old Orchard Beach, GREENWOOD of Wales, GRIFFIN of Levant, GUERRETTE of Caribou, HAGGAN of Hampden, HALL of Wilton, HASENFUS of Readfield, HENDERSON of Rumford, HEPLER of Woolwich, HOBBS of Wells, HYMES of Waldo, JACKSON of Oxford, JAVNER of Chester, KESSLER of South Portland, KUHN of Falmouth, LAJOIE of Lewiston, LANDRY of Farmington, LANIGAN of Sanford, LaROCHELLE of Augusta, LAVIGNE of Berwick, LEE of Auburn, LEMELIN of Chelsea, LIBBY of Auburn, LOOKNER of Portland, LYMAN of Livermore Falls, MADIGAN of Waterville, MALON of Biddeford, MASON of Lisbon, MASTRACCIO of Sanford, MATHIESON of Kittery, MATLACK of St. George, MEYER of Eliot, MILLETT of Cape Elizabeth, MILLIKEN of Blue Hill, MONTELL of Gardiner, MOONEN of Portland, MORIARTY of Cumberland, MORRIS of Turner, MURPHY of Scarborough, NESS of Fryeburg, NEWMAN of Belgrade, NUTTING of Oakland, O'CONNELL of

Brewer, O'NEIL of Saco, OSHER of Orono, PARRY of Arundel, PAUL of Winterport, PERKINS of Dover-Foxcroft, PERRY of Calais, PERRY of Bangor, PLUECKER of Warren, POIRIER of Skowhegan, POLEWARCZYK of Wiscasset, POMERLEAU of Standish, PRINGLE of Windham, QUINT of Hodgdon, RANA of Bangor, RIELLY of Westbrook, RISEMAN of Harrison, ROBERTS of South Berwick, ROEDER of Bangor, RUDNICKI of Fairfield, RUNTE of York, RUSSELL of Verona Island, SACHS of Freeport, SALISBURY of Westbrook, SAMPSON of Alfred, SARGENT of York, SAYRE of Kennebunk, SCHMERSAL-BURGESS of Mexico, SHAGOURY of Hollowell, SHAW of Auburn, SHEEHAN of Biddeford, SIMMONS of Waldoboro, SINCLAIR of Bath, SKOLD of Portland, SMITH of Palermo, SOBOLESKI of Phillips, STOVER of Boothbay, STROUT of Harrington, SUPICA of Bangor, SWALLOW of Houlton, Speaker TALBOT ROSS of Portland, TERRY of Gorham, THERIAULT of Fort Kent, THORNE of Carmel, UNDERWOOD of Presque Isle, WALKER of Naples, WARREN of Scarborough, WHITE of Waterville, WHITE of Guilford, WOOD of Greene, WOODSOME of Waterboro, WORTH of Ellsworth, ZAGER of Portland, ZEIGLER of Montville, Senators: BAILEY of York, BALDACCI of Penobscot, BEEBE-CENTER of Knox, BENNETT of Oxford, BLACK of Franklin, BRAKEY of Androscoggin, BRENNER of Cumberland, CARNEY of Cumberland, CHIPMAN of Cumberland, CURRY of Waldo, DAUGHTRY of Cumberland, DUSON of Cumberland, FARRIN of Somerset, GROHOSKI of Hancock, GUERIN of Penobscot, HARRINGTON of York, HICKMAN of Kennebec, INGWERSEN of York, President JACKSON of Aroostook, KEIM of Oxford, LaFOUNTAIN of Kennebec, LAWRENCE of York, LIBBY of Cumberland, LYFORD of Penobscot, MOORE of Washington, NANGLE of Cumberland, PIERCE of Cumberland, POULIOT of Kennebec, RAFFERTY of York, RENEY of Lincoln, ROTUNDO of Androscoggin, STEWART of Aroostook, TIMBERLAKE of Androscoggin, TIPPING of Penobscot, VITELLI of Sagadahoc)

**JOINT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING**

**THE HONORABLE H. SAWIN MILLETT, JR.  
FOR HIS PUBLIC SERVICE TO THE STATE**

WHEREAS, the Honorable H. Sawin Millett, Jr., who represents House District 81, which includes Norway, Sweden, Waterford, Albany Township, Greenwood, South Oxford, Stoneham, Stow, Mason Township and Locke Mills, is retiring from his service to the Maine State Legislature; and

WHEREAS, Representative Millett is currently serving his 9th term in Maine's House of Representatives and has served as the Republican lead on both the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs and the Government Oversight Committee and has also served on the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs; and

WHEREAS, Representative Millett was first elected to the Maine House of Representatives in 1968, serving in the 104th and 105th Legislatures, and went on to serve from the 121st Legislature to the 124th Legislature as well as from the 129th Legislature to the 131st Legislature; and

WHEREAS, his varied career includes service as a teacher, coach, principal, assistant school superintendent, farmer, municipal officer and state commissioner, including service as Commissioner of Education; Associate Commissioner of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services; and Commissioner of Administrative and Financial Services. He has served under Governors Longley, Brennan, McKernan, King and LePage; 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 Honorable H. Sawin Millett, Jr. for his decades of public service to the State and extend to him our appreciation for his dedication, expertise and judgment and congratulate him on his retirement from the Maine State Legislature.

**READ.**

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

Representative **CARLOW**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I am reminded often of the men and women of extraordinary talent and skill who have occupied these seats and these desks before me. I am therefore also bound to think of those who will come to succeed all of us in the years and centuries which lie ahead. We are caretakers of the institution, and that is a sacred obligation that transcends any party or profession, any race or religion, and any creed or culture. And when duty calls, Maine people of varied means, skill and background have always picked up the mantle of change and have done their part to carry out the mission, vision and purpose of democratic self-government. But yet, in the history of the House, there are but an elite few whose legacy and devotion are simply in a class of their own. So honorably have they discharged their oath and duty to the peoples of this land that they, in their wisdom and statesmanship, inspired the lot of us to unfasten ourselves and contemplate not only the mission of the institution, but also its place in the moral universe.

And I'm humbled, but profoundly wistful to come to the Floor today to pay tribute to a gentleman and friend whose whole life has been devoted to the public service. Madam Speaker, to that end, I want to read a passage entered upon the Journal of the House dated June 24, 1971: "I do not take on a challenge without having every intention of completing that challenge. I took this job on, and I will give you something to work with and I will do so with every possible source of energy that I have." Those words were said on the Floor more than a half-century ago by our colleague and Dean, Representative Sawin Millett. To my friend from Waterford, well done. You have fulfilled the promise you made as a young man, and in doing that, you have left a legacy that will stand the test of time. A legacy that is a testament not only to him, but also to the strength of freedom, the power of service and the indomitability of the Maine people.

Beyond his formidable intellect, legislative acumen and tireless exertions on behalf of the people of the 81st District, there exists one crowning quality; his sincere humility and kindness, his refusal to forget what it means to be a good legislator, a good neighbor and a good, good man. Thank you, Sawin, for your true friendship, your cosmic humor and, most of all, your lifetime of service to the State of Maine. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

Representative **BRADSTREET**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. And I want to thank the Good Representative from Buxton for expressing a lot of the sentiments that I also feel. He has engendered a deep respect from all who've ever come to know him and work with him, and that's certainly worthy of emulation and I kind of look up to him as a model for how I should comport myself as well. I appreciate his institutional knowledge and his wise counsel. It's something that we really can't replace, but we have to try. We owe him a deep debt of gratitude, and thank him for his service and wish him well. It's

been an honor to serve with the Representative from Waterford, Representative Sawin Millett. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

Representative **ARATA**: Thank you, Madam Speaker, and Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. Having spent many, many hours in a very small room with the Representative from Waterford, I have firsthand experience of his integrity, his patience, his stamina, his grace under pressure. And I just wanted to express what a privilege it is to have spent so much time with a man who was respected by staff, lobbyists, Chief Executives and legislators from both parties. And I wanted to express my appreciation for all that I have learned from the Good Representative from Waterford. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Orrington, Representative Campbell.

Representative **CAMPBELL**: Thank you, Madam Speaker, Men and Women of the House. It's an honor to rise and recognize the most honorable, the most credible, the most intelligent, the most humble person I've ever known.

As you can read down through here, our good friend, Sawin Millett, has served in many capacities, under many, many Chief Executives. And as I entered this Body in 1993, he was the Commissioner of Administrative and Financial Services. So, as Commissioner, of course, everybody understands that the Commissioner presents the budget on behalf of the Chief Executive and back then, unlike the \$10 billion budgets we have, it was a budget that the prior Legislature approved for \$3.125 billion. So, it was a \$4.125 billion budget. So, my first contact with the Good Representative was as I watched him before the Appropriations Committee, presenting that \$4.125 billion budget. Wow, was he being beat up. It was the most incredible presentation; of course, on behalf of the Chief Executive; and our good friend Sawin just sat there and made his presentation. And although it being an increase of about 25% over the previous budget, he navigated, negotiated and, through zero-based budgeting, brought that budget back to \$3.125 billion.

He's a man that is so humble that he walks through the halls, and you wouldn't really know that this man is the most experienced person probably this Legislature will ever have. So, I appreciate the opportunity to speak before you and recognize the Honorable Sawin Millett.

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

Representative **THORNE**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise to give a couple anecdotal stories about the Good Representative Sawin Millett. In our off-time, which we had a lot of off-time and downtime recently, I'd go over by his desk and listen to stories about in this very room; cigars, cigarettes, spittoons and other stories that I can't mention that the Good, Honorable Representative Millett shared with me.

Now, my father-in-law is 77 years old and Sawin was his high school schoolteacher, and that baffled me; how that could be? Because Sawin's not that old, he's just a pup. In Maine, there's the adage, it's a good thing about living in a small town, if you don't know what you're up to, don't worry, everyone else does. And Representative Millett keeps his pulse even now on the town of Carmel, despite all he has on his plates. He'll come over and ask me about somebody that lives there or something that happened or how is this person or are they still involved in the community, and just today, came over and talked to me about the now-late Representative Russell Treadwell, who just recently passed away.

So, Madam Speaker, I just wanted to let you know that despite all the things he has on his plate with Appropriations and other things in his life, he still takes the time to acknowledge the little things in life, and we are honored to have him in our presence. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Fort Kent, Representative Theriault.

Representative **THERIAULT**: Thank you, Madam Speaker, and Members of the House. I wanted to rise and just thank Representative Millett for his service to the State. He's been a solid foundation for me as a first-term legislator. I've had the honor of sitting next to him. He's been a rock, he's been a mentor, he's been my House *pepe*, if you want to call him that; somebody that I can look up to and certainly ask questions about the process. And, you know, my hope is that when the next generation of legislators take their oath, they look back at somebody like the Representative from Waterford and what he's done for our State in different capacities and use him as an example of what it means to be humble and what it means to be respectful of constituents, but also to just honor the Body that we all are very fortunate to serve. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Bangor, Representative Perry.

Representative **PERRY**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House, I wanted to rise to concur with every word I've heard so far today honoring Sawin Millett. I don't think the people of Maine fully understand what they have had in Sawin the last number of decades and just what we will lose as an institution, as a State, with his retirement. And I don't think words can thank Sawin enough for his service to the people of the State of Maine.

I've spent my entire career listening to every word Sawin says to learn. I think back to a story in the Tax Committee, maybe 20 years ago. Things are done differently nowadays and to hear some of the experience from prior, when Sawin talked about it being June 30th and going to the post office here in Augusta to empty the State's post office box looking for checks to balance the State budget, to finish the fiscal year in balance.

I mean, people have no idea the experience that many people in this building have, that they bring to the job, and no one greater than Sawin. And so, I just want to thank you for your service and all the opportunity I've had over the years to learn from you, Sawin, and best of luck in retirement.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Dexter, Representative Foster.

Representative **FOSTER**: Thank you, Madam Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. When I was young, my father told me when a man extends his hand to you, reach out and give him a good measure and notice what you get back in return. When I first met Representative Millett here in Augusta, I did that and I got a fair measure in return, and I think some of you will say the same. And I will say this about Representative Millett's time here serving our State, the State of Maine has received a very favorable return from him through all of these years and is much the better for it. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Oakland, Representative Nutting.

Representative **NUTTING**: Thank you, Madam Speaker, Men and Women of the House. I rise to echo all of the good things you've heard about Representative Millett. I served four years in the little room that was mentioned with Representative Millett as the Republican Lead in the Appropriations Committee. The wealth of knowledge that he had on all of those budget figures that, frankly, overwhelmed me and many of the other Members of the House, is legend. One of the rules here in the

House is that you can't use props, so, I'm going to show you where Sawin, although he kept 90% of the figures in his head, the rest of it was on a piece of paper in his breast pocket in his jacket. If he didn't know the answer, somehow or other, it was on that one piece of paper in his pocket. But I can't show you that because that would be a prop.

Sawin, if you look at the list of Chief Executives that he's served under that the Clerk just read, it just gives you an idea of his service to the State of Maine. Sawin, I thank you for your service, I thank you for your education and I wish you well in your retirement. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Raymond, Representative Fay.

Representative **FAY**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise today because I want to thank the Representative from Waterford for being a good teacher. I have had the privilege of serving with him on two Committees during my legislative service and I just really wanted to express how grateful I am to him for leading by example, with grace, patience and wisdom. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Boothbay, Representative Stover.

Representative **STOVER**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise today to honor my mentor, my friend, Sawin Millett. When I first came to State Government, somewhat 31 years ago, Sawin was working for Chief Executive McKernan and I was sent to a cohort of State employees who were sent to the Maine Leadership Academy. And at that Academy, we were assigned a mentor and, as a young professional, I drew the right name because they assigned me to Sawin Millett, who not only taught me then, but later, we both worked in the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services, where we both worked in the Commissioner's office and through some very hairy times of the downsizing of the Augusta Mental Health Institute and Pineland. And it was under his direction and his financial brilliance that we were able to do things that seemed impossible. And over my career, Sawin has been steadfast, someone who I've always admired greatly and look to for guidance and wisdom and I just wanted to stand today and tell him how much I have appreciated every bit. So, thank you, Sawin.

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

Representative **DUCHARME**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would echo all of the sentiments that have been articulated here today. I first met Representative Millett in 1972, when I went through the doors of Caravel Junior High School as an eighth grader. Representative Millett taught me the difference between a trapezoid and a parallelogram. He taught me what the substitution principle was in geometry, and a whole lot of things like that. Throughout the course of my life, I had occasion to run into him from time to time, and it always amazed me that no matter where I ran into him, whether it happened to be here in the State House or at a restaurant or at a Walmart or whatever, he always knew who I was. After all of the students that he had, all of the people that he's dealt with in the Legislature, he always knew my name. And I was just totally impressed by that.

Fast-forward to 2020, I was elected to this Body and, as we all do, you put down what your Committee assignments wanted to be and so forth and so on, and I knew everybody in the world wanted to be on Appropriations, and so, I said, well, I'm going to do a different Committee because everybody's going to want to do Appropriations, so, I won't do that. There was an opening on Appropriations after the first term and

somebody reached out and asked me to be on Appropriations. And I've had the honor since January of 2021 of basically sitting at the feet of the master, to try and learn and understand how the State budget works. And I'm here to tell you today that if I live to be 150, I still won't know as much as that man knows about where every penny is for State government.

The other thing that I would say is as we go out through our lives and we interact with people, a lot of people use the term for us, Honorable. And I've got to tell you, there's a lot of people that have passed through these doors that I don't know that I would necessarily feel that way about, but I'll tell you, the entire State of Maine should understand that the honorific in front of H. Sawin Millett, Jr., meaning Honorable, truly describes that man. He is a man that you can trust, he's a man of integrity, he's a man that; and I don't say this about many people; he's a man that the State of Maine should revere. And I want to just thank him for his confidence in me and hope that somebody I can live up to that confidence. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Waterville, Representative Madigan.

Representative **MADIGAN**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would just like to take a moment to agree with all my good colleagues and honor the Good Representative from Waterford. But what I haven't heard anyone thank the Good Representative from Waterford yet for is the term blippy. So, I've been sitting here going, who's going to mention the blippy? And for those of us that have been through multiple budget hearings, we have you to thank for that, Representative Millett, the Good Representative from Waterford. So, that will live on and that's a little bit institutional knowledge, so, thank you very much.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Winter Harbor, Representative Faulkingham.

Representative **FAULKINGHAM**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, before six years ago, I had never met Sawin Millett, but immediately I knew he was a man with much experience and deserved respect, but he's so much more than that. He's kind, intelligent, diplomatic, man of God, but most of all, he's humble. And the amount that anybody can take from this man, just being in his presence for a few moments is unbelievable.

I just wanted to share also a little bit of trivia about Sawin Millett. As you may notice how I enunciate his name, I have a Chief of Staff who knows everything about everybody and we were talking about the Representative one day and he said is, his name's actually Sa-win, not Saw-win as everybody pronounces. So, I asked him that one day and he said, yeah, that's how it's pronounced, and I'm like, why don't you tell everybody that? And I guess he's just heard it so long that he doesn't bother, but I think it's fitting that on his last day here in the Legislature, I should let everybody know that it's Sa-win Millett, not Saw-win Millett.

And Madam Speaker, this is a day that I've dreaded, honestly, to come this soon. So much so that I didn't ask, I begged him to run for another term, probably 15 or 20 times. But he thinks it's time to hang it up, and this is going to be a huge loss not just to myself, not just to legislative Republicans, but truly a big loss to the Legislature and the State of Maine to lose this wealth of knowledge that's sitting behind me. And I can proudly say that I love this man and he does deserve to be revered and I hope that he enjoys his retirement. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Waterford, Representative Millett, who wishes to address the House on the record.

Representative **MILLETT**: Thank you, Madam Speaker, and thank you to everyone who has spoken, and I just am humbled and I'm very much aware that we are using a lot of our precious time and I do not want to extend this. But I can tell you from the bottom of my heart that serving in, basically, this Chamber for much of my adult life and being in the building in my Executive positions, has been the most character-building and learning experience of anything that I've ever been through, even though my career was that of a teacher, as Representative Ducharme mentioned. And I always thought teaching is a noble profession. It's a two-way street; it really works only if the teacher, the learners and the skeptics can all talk the same language, can listen to each other, understand what's being said, discuss it and not lose their sense of humor, their sense of perspective and the trust in that working relationship. So, I've found all of my years here in Augusta and here in this building to be tremendously valuable.

I can tell you stories about my first days here, but we don't have time for that. I can just say to you that I am very proud of us as an institution. I will always see this as one of the most important places in which we can engage in public service. It's the highest stage of policymaking and decision-making that we, as citizens of Maine, have the opportunity when our electorate gives us the trust and respect to send us here. And we are to give that back to them. And I would just like to give it back to each and every one of you. It's been an honor to serve with you. I can't say enough about all of you who have spoken and all of the people that I've worked with in my years in State government.

I want to put in a word for the ladies of this group. When I came here 55 years ago this month, there were 14 women in this Body; not a single one in the other Body. And they were treated, I think, with deference, with respect and I hope that that continues. We've grown from 14 to 68, and each and every one of you should be proud of not just joining this club, but being a key part of it. I trust that you will continue not only to work on your numbers, but on your leadership skills.

And I will always remember each and every one of you and I just can't thank you enough for this tremendous honor. Thank you.

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On motion of Speaker TALBOT ROSS of Portland, the following Joint Resolution: (H.P. 1484) (Cosponsored by Representative: DANA of the Passamaquoddy Tribe)

**JOINT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MAINE ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE UNITED STATES COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS REPORT ON FEDERAL AND STATE SERVICES AND THE MAINE INDIAN**

WHEREAS, in December 1974, the Maine Advisory Committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights published a report entitled "Federal and State Services and the Maine Indian"; and

WHEREAS, in the report, the committee found that Maine Indians were being denied services provided to other Indians by various federal agencies, that Indians in the State were entitled to these services and that their continued denial constituted invidious discrimination against Indians in the State; and

WHEREAS, the committee also found that 1/2 of the Indians in the State were not receiving state services because they lived off-reservation and recommended that the State

develop an integrated program of services for members of the Passamaquoddy Tribe, Penobscot Nation, Mi'kmaq Nation and Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians regardless of their residency on-reservation or off-reservation; and

WHEREAS, the committee found that both state and federal services had been withheld from a people whose need for assistance was tragically evident, and that withholding was the result of long-standing assumptions, policies and practices of discrimination against the Indian population of the State; and

WHEREAS, in addition to its investigation of the denial of specific Indian services, the committee reviewed the various state and federal programs for which Maine Indians were generally eligible as citizens and found that Indians had seldom been included in the planning or decision-making processes that affected their lives; and

WHEREAS, the committee expressed the overriding concern that every state and federal entity that may possibly have an impact on Indian people in the State should have Indian representation and structural input in the development and provision of services and that there should be expansion of social services from both state and federal levels to allow Maine Indians to enjoy full and equal citizenship under the Constitution of Maine and the United States Constitution; and

WHEREAS, among many policy recommendations, the committee recommended that, as a matter of basic principle, both State and Federal Governments reexamine their policies toward Indians in the State and elsewhere and affirm the inherent right of Indian self-determination and tribal sovereignty; and

WHEREAS, the committee pledged to work diligently at the federal, state and local levels to further the recommendations of the report and called upon all citizens of the State to join them; and

WHEREAS, then-Governor of Maine Kenneth Curtis wrote as a foreword to the report that it was the intention of his administration to "continue to work to guarantee that the Indians of Maine have equal access to the quality of life to which all Maine people aspire, but until that access is fully opened and free of obstructions, there is no question that the 'trail of tears' will go on and its specter will haunt us, and Maine and the nation will have failed to fulfill their just obligations to the Indians of this state"; and

WHEREAS, this report joins a legacy of advancement of the sovereignty and self-determination of Wabanaki Indian nations, tribes and bands in the State, who have endured systemic discrimination and racism by this State and other governmental entities, by recognizing present inequities in light of their historical roots and by issuing recommendations to repair these inequities in future policy and legislation; 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 accomplishment of the Maine Advisory Committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights report entitled "Federal and State Services and the Maine Indian," honor the commission's commitment to long-standing principles of equity and justice in the State and recognize that there is still much work to do to accomplish the committee's recommendations and create a fair and just partnership with the Wabanaki Indian nations, tribes and bands who live in the State and have existed in the State since time immemorial.

**READ and ADOPTED.**

Sent for concurrence.

**SPECIAL SENTIMENT CALENDAR**

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

**Recognizing:**

Charles Shay, of Bretteville-l'Orgueilleuse, France, on the celebration of his 100th birthday on June 27, 2024. We extend our congratulations and best wishes;

(HLS 1075)

Presented by Speaker TALBOT ROSS of Portland.

Cosponsored by President JACKSON of Aroostook.

On **OBJECTION** of Representative ROEDER of Bangor, was **REMOVED** from the Special Sentiment Calendar.

**READ.**

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Bangor, Representative Roeder.

Representative **ROEDER**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, the Good Representative from Carmel never fails to remind us to honor our veterans and their service, so, I'm taking a page from his book to honor an exceptional veteran in celebration of his upcoming 100th birthday.

Today, we honor Penobscot elder Charles Shay. Charles Norman Shay is a decorated combat veteran, who landed at Omaha Beach on D-Day during the first wave of the attack on June 6, 1944. Shay, a combat medic, was three weeks shy of his 20th birthday, and yet, showed valor beyond his years as he braved enemy fire to rescue his fellow soldiers from drowning. For his bravery on D-Day, Shay earned a Silver Star. He continued serving as a medic, but was later captured as a Prisoner of War, was liberated, and later awarded four Bronze Battle Stars. Shay continued to serve his country as a medic in Austria, Japan, North Korea, Germany, earning even more decorations for service and later, took a position with the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna.

Shay returned to the Penobscot Nation to live in 2003, but sadly lost his wife, Lily, soon after. He remained on Indian Island until 2018, when he moved to France, near to the Beaches of Normandy. Today on Omaha Beach, there's a monument to Charles Shay that pays tribute to he and the 175 Native American soldiers who landed there on D-Day. The sculpture is a turtle and it faces west, in the direction of the Dawn Land, in the direction of the Penobscot Nation. When speaking of Normandy and his fallen comrades, Shay said of his survival, "my mother's prayers must've guided me. My heart breaks for those women who prayed for the brave sons but never welcomed their sons home again. I can never forget the men who never had a chance to experience life as it was meant to be, but instead, were destined to depart this life in a far-off land."

Charles Shay and the other Native soldiers who served did so despite being treated like second-class citizens back home. They served with honor, with dedication and with bravery. So, from the people of Maine and from the people of a grateful nation, we say happy birthday to Mr. Shay, and *woliwon*. Thank you.

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

**Recognizing:**

Julia Gagnon, of Cumberland. Ms. Gagnon is a college senior at the University of Southern Maine and has recently been a contestant on the popular "American Idol" television show. Her extraordinary singing has captivated viewers across Maine and the nation, and following elimination rounds she qualified to compete among the top 7 remaining artists from around the country. No other performer from Maine has advanced so far in the 22-year history of the program. We extend our congratulations and best wishes;

(HLS 1085)

Presented by Representative MORIARTY of Cumberland.  
Cosponsored by Senator PIERCE of Cumberland.

On **OBJECTION** of Representative MORIARTY of Cumberland, was **REMOVED** from the Special Sentiment Calendar.

**READ.**

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Cumberland, Representative Moriarty.

Representative **MORIARTY**: Thank you, Madam Speaker, and good afternoon, fellow Colleagues of the House. You don't have to have been a big television watcher over the past one and a half months to know that something very big was taking place in the entertainment world, and more importantly, something that involved a Maine resident. A young woman from Cumberland, Julia Gagnon, was a late auditioner for a spot in the current season of the *American Idol* singing competition. She was, however, readily welcomed by the judges to join the artists who had already been selected and she took her place among the best in the country.

There is not enough time to describe each step of Julia's rise to exceptional excellence. In performing the works of singing stars as legendary as Aretha Franklin and Judy Garland, Julia thrilled Americans with her range, her interpretive skills and her energy. The body language of the judges and the fans was unmistakable. They and we were overwhelmed by the power and excellence of Julia's performances. After Julia departed the competition on Sunday evening, her social media posts the following morning were pure class and inspiration. Hopefully, at some point soon, we will have the opportunity to welcome her home to Maine. In the meantime, her parents have been with us this morning, but possibly may have left. I hope nevertheless that you will join me and enthusiastically celebrate the amazing achievements of their daughter, Julia. Thank you.

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

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

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**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

The following matter, in the consideration of which the House was engaged at the time of adjournment Thursday, April 18, 2024, had preference in the Orders of the Day and continued with such preference until disposed of as provided by House Rule 502.

Expression of Legislative Sentiment Recognizing Anna Oliver, of Hodgdon

(SLS 1291)

- In Senate, **READ** and **PASSED**.  
TABLED - January 11, 2024 (Till Later Today) by Representative QUINT of Hodgdon.  
PENDING - **PASSAGE**.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Hodgdon, Representative Quint.

Representative **QUINT**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. It is my honor to acknowledge Anna Oliver. She is a beautiful young lady that I have had the privilege of watching grow up as a neighbor and work hard to attain this achievement. I have often seen her jogging down the road and was amazed at her commitment to training. Her father hit the 2,000 mark and her brother hit the 1,000 mark, so, she has come from a family of sports fans there. But what is even more important than this sporting accolade; and yes, there are things even more important than sports in my eyes; is that she is truly a kind and generous person. I look forward to seeing what the future holds for her. Congratulations, Anna; we are all so very proud of you.

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

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**COMMUNICATIONS**

The Following Communication: (H.C. 497)

**STATE OF MAINE**  
**OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**  
**1 STATE HOUSE STATION**  
**AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0001**

April 23, 2024

The 131st Legislature of the State of Maine  
State House  
Augusta, Maine

Dear Honorable Members of the 131st Legislature:

By the authority vested in me by Article IV, Part Third, Section 2 of the Constitution of the State of Maine, I am hereby vetoing L.D. 525, *An Act to Enact the Agricultural Employees Concerted Activity Protection Act*.

L.D. 525 would create a new legal framework governing labor-management relations in Maine's agricultural sector. The bill would authorize agricultural workers to engage in certain concerted activity, and create a new regulatory structure for complaints, hearings, and enforcement by the Maine Labor Relations Board. This is complex legislation with cross references to federal law, including the National Labor Relations Act.

Farming is a cornerstone of rural Maine, our economy, and our way of life. Farming delivers fresh, homegrown, and nutritious food, grown by people we often know and trust, to our tables, and it preserves open space and conserves the scenic beauty that makes Maine special. Unfortunately, farmers are now facing a multitude of serious threats to their livelihood ranging from the severe weather that is likely to become worse as the effects of climate change intensify, to PFAS contamination, to inflation, to price pressures, and so much more. These serious challenges are taking a terrible toll, with Maine having lost more than 1,100 farms since 2012, including 564 farms accounting for 82,567 acres of farmland since 2017.

Against this background, I cannot subject our farmers to a complicated new set of labor laws that will require a lawyer just to understand. Now is not the time to impose a new regulatory burden on our agricultural sector, and particularly not family-owned farms that are not well positioned to know and understand their obligations under a new such law.

In states where agriculture is dominated by large factory farms and corporate interests, it is important that workers receive the protections of strong labor laws. But that bears no resemblance to the agricultural sector in Maine, where small businesses struggle to find reliable help and therefore generally treat their workers very well in order to retain them.

For these reasons, I return L.D. 525 unsigned and vetoed, and I urge the Legislature to sustain this veto.

Sincerely,  
S/Janet T. Mills  
Governor

**READ and ORDERED PLACED ON FILE.**

The accompanying item An Act to Enact the Agricultural Employees Concerted Activity Protection Act

(H.P. 330) (L.D. 525)  
(C. "A" H-934)

After reconsideration, the House proceeded to vote on the question, 'Shall this Bill become a law notwithstanding the objections of the Governor?' A roll call was taken.

The SPEAKER: The pending question before the House is 'Shall this Bill become a law notwithstanding the objections of the Governor?' All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

**ROLL CALL NO. 554V**

YEA - Abdi, Ankeles, Arford, Beck, Bell, Brennan, Bridgeo, Cloutier, Collings, Copeland, Crafts, Craven, Crockett, Dhalac, Dodge, Doudera, Eaton, Geiger, Graham, Gramlich, Hasenfus, Hepler, Kessler, Kuhn, LaRochelle, Lee, Lookner, Madigan, Matlack, Milliken, Montell, Moriarty, Murphy, O'Connell, Osher, Perry J, Pluecker, Rielly, Riseman, Roeder, Russell, Sachs, Salisbury, Sayre, Shagoury, Shaw, Sinclair, Terry, Warren, White B, Zager, Zeigler, Madam Speaker.

NAY - Adams, Albert, Andrews, Arata, Ardell, Bagshaw, Blier, Boyer, Bradstreet, Campbell, Carlow, Carmichael, Costain, Cray, Cyrway, Davis, Dill, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Dunphy, Faulkingham, Fay, Foster, Galletta, Gifford, Greenwood, Griffin, Guerrette, Haggan, Hall, Henderson, Hymes, Jackson, Javner, Landry, Lavigne, Libby, Lyman, Mason, Meyer, Millett H, Morris, Ness, Newman, Nutting, Parry, Paul, Perkins, Poirier, Polewarczyk, Pomerleau, Pringle, Quint, Rudnicki, Sampson, Schmursal-Burgess, Simmons, Smith, Soboleski, Stover, Strout, Swallow, Theriault, Thome, Underwood, White J, Wood.

ABSENT - Babin, Boyle, Cluchey, Collamore, Fredericks, Gattine, Gere, Golek, Hobbs, Lajoie, Lanigan, Lemelin, Malon, Mastraccio, Mathieson, Millett R, Moonen, O'Neil, Perry A, Rana, Roberts, Runte, Sargent, Sheehan, Skold, Supica, Walker, Woodsome, Worth.

Yes, 53; No, 67; Absent, 29; Vacant, 2; Excused, 0.

53 having voted in the affirmative and 67 voted in the negative, 2 vacancies with 29 being absent, and accordingly the Veto was **SUSTAINED**.

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The Following Communication: (H.C. 498)

**STATE OF MAINE  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
1 STATE HOUSE STATION  
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0001**

April 23, 2024

The 131st Legislature of the State of Maine  
State House  
Augusta, Maine

Dear Honorable Members of the 131st Legislature:

By the authority vested in me by Article IV, Part Third, Section 2 of the Constitution of the State of Maine, I am hereby vetoing L.D. 2273, *An Act to Establish a State Minimum Hourly Wage for Agricultural Workers*.

I am deeply disappointed that I have to take this step but believe the Legislature's changes to the bill leave me no choice.

Last year, the Legislature enacted L.D. 398, legislation that would have applied certain wage requirements to agricultural workers. That bill was substantially amended during the final hours of the legislative session, giving rise to justifiable confusion among farmers about its scope and impact. Despite my strong support for a farmworker minimum wage, I vetoed the bill and issued an Executive Order convening a committee with representation from a broad spectrum of stakeholders, pledging to introduce new legislation that was developed through a clear process in order to implement a minimum wage.

That Committee met multiple times over a period of four months, and determined that, in fact, nearly all farms in Maine already pay their workers at least the state minimum wage, but it also produced a series of recommendations that ultimately contributed to L.D. 2273, which I introduced earlier this year.

As introduced, L.D. 2273 was simple and straightforward. It established for the first time in Maine a state minimum hourly wage for agricultural workers in a form that is easy to understand and implement. It did so separately from other minimum wage provisions, ensuring that the Legislature recognizes and considers the unique nature of the farm sector in Maine when contemplating future statutory changes.

While the legislation did not entirely achieve everyone's aims, it took into account a diverse set of perspectives and appropriately balanced the need to establish a minimum wage for farm workers with the unique and diverse challenges of running a farm in Maine. It even garnered the support of farming organizations that opposed last year's bill. If the Legislature had sent me the bill I introduced, I would have been pleased to sign it into law, but unfortunately, that is not what happened. Instead, during the legislative process, the Labor and Housing Committee amended the bill to allow for privately initiated litigation over alleged violations. In other words, if someone believed their employer was violating labor law, they could obtain a private lawyer and sue their employer, in this case a farm owner.

I believe, and agree it is important, that workers should have the right to pursue recourse for alleged labor violations. That is why my bill, as originally drafted, entrusted that enforcement responsibility to the Maine Department of Labor, an approach that rightly provides individuals who allege labor violations with the ability to ask the Department to investigate and then take action where appropriate.

Lawmakers took issue with this in two primary ways, arguing: 1) that authorizing private litigation was never raised as an issue in the months-long stakeholder process, and 2) that workers in all other sectors of the economy can pursue a private right of action and, thus, the bill as originally drafted created an unfair distinction.

First, I believe it is incorrect to conclude that a private right of action is not an issue for a farmer simply because it was not raised during the committee meetings. In fact, one can also reach the opposite conclusion – that it was never raised because farmers never believed it would become an issue – which is what I believe happened. This is buttressed by the fact that the Maine Potato Board withdrew its support when faced with this proposed change.

Second, the latter criticism does not reflect the fact that farms are already considered a unique sector of the economy because of the very different challenges they face that other employers do not, like short and ever-changing growing and harvest seasons, and other unpredictable variables like severe weather that can make or break a season and the viability of a farm.



These challenges often require demands of workers that are not similar to those in other industries. As a result, it is appropriate for us to consider how we best uphold workers' rights while also considering the unique challenges facing farms.

Knowing that my original bill provided an adequate enforcement remedy, I did not – and still do not – believe it is appropriate to authorize a private right of action carte blanche, particularly in the case of farms, because I am deeply concerned that doing so would result in litigation that would simply sap farmers of financial resources and cause them to fail.

That prospect is unacceptable at a time when there are fewer farms in Maine than at any period in the past 25 years. In fact, according to a recent Federal survey, Maine has lost more than 1,100 farms since 2012, including 564 farms accounting for 82,567 acres of farmland since 2017. Further, the agricultural sector in Maine bears no resemblance to what exists in many other states where corporate factory-farms dominate the industry. Here in Maine, 96 percent of farms are family-owned, 9 percent have sales greater than \$100,000 annually, and as recently as 2017, the average net income per farm was just \$16,958. These are our friends and our neighbors. And I should add that only two other states in New England – Connecticut and Massachusetts – have instituted state minimum wages for farmworkers.

My office informed the Labor and Housing Committee of my concerns and offered compromise language that would allow employees to seek a right-to-sue letter from the Department of Labor. Unfortunately, that offer was not accepted, and the bill was amended by the Committee against my objections and then enacted into law.

I do not take the decision to veto this bill lightly. I do not want to veto this bill. But the Legislature's actions leave me little choice. I do not believe Maine farmers should face the prospect of privately initiated lawsuits, which would almost certainly lead to losing more farms in the long run.

While I am pleased to know – as the stakeholder committee confirmed – that nearly all farmworkers in Maine are paid at least the state minimum wage, I remain strongly supportive of establishing a clean state minimum wage for agricultural workers, as I proposed in my original bill.

For now, I have to return L.D. 2273 unsigned and vetoed, and I urge the Legislature to sustain this veto.

Sincerely,  
S/Janet T. Mills  
Governor

**READ and ORDERED PLACED ON FILE.**

The accompanying item An Act to Establish a State Minimum Hourly Wage for Agricultural Workers

(H.P. 1462) (L.D. 2273)  
(C. "A" H-922)

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Milford, Representative Drinkwater.

Representative **DRINKWATER**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, as a freshman in the 129th, during orientation, outgoing Senate President Thibodeau gave us a very compelling speech. He talked about when you're sworn in, you stop becoming a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, and you become a Representative of the people of the State of Maine. He challenged us to put aside our differences and work to improve the lives of Mainers.

During the work session for LD 2273, we Republicans agreed that farm employees deserve to earn minimum wage, that employers should keep good records, because that protects employees and employers. Where we disagreed was the State minimum wage for seasonal workers. We felt that mandating State minimum wage for seasonal workers would disenfranchise three groups of people; the young, the elderly and the handicapped; and I was thinking of the high-functioning autistic young people that like to rake blueberries.

Let's use the blueberry rakers for an example. If one can't rake five boxes of berries an hour, the employer will be losing money. Remember, the employer is required to pay the minimum wage of \$14.15 an hour for this year, Social Security taxes, Workmen's Comp and unemployment tax. Blueberry farmers are not price setters, they are price takers. They won't know if they've made money until after the harvest, when all employees are paid, taxes are paid and all bills are paid. Tell the bank you can't guarantee payments, because you don't know if you're going to make a profit until 60 days after harvest. Take that business plan to a bank and ask for a loan.

It became clear that a private right of action was something the majority party wanted. Current law allows for the Department of Labor to be the arbitrator for violations. We put forth a compromise: we would agree with the private right of action, if the majority party would compromise on a minimum wage for pieceworkers. The Chief Executive in her veto letter states, and I'm going to quote here, "LD 2273 was simple and straightforward. It established for the first time in Maine a State minimum hourly wage for agricultural workers in a form that is easy to understand and implement. It did so separately from other minimum wage provisions, ensuring that the Legislature recognizes and considers the unique nature of the farm sector in Maine when contemplating further statutory changes." The Labor Committee had an opportunity to have a unanimous Ought to Pass bill, ensuring that LD 2273 would be veto-proof. I can only speculate that the majority party had no desire to compromise.

Madam Speaker, since the 129th, you have put in bills to fix this. Sadly, to report to you that it has not worked so far. We came close, but we couldn't get across the finish line and for that, Madam Speaker, I apologize, but we tried. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Presque Isle, Representative Underwood.

Representative **UNDERWOOD**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. If there was a bill that would be referred to the office of bad ideas, this is the one. No.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Bangor, Representative Roeder.

Representative **ROEDER**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I'll be exceptionally brief, I promise. I wanted to say to the Body that something; wanted to highlight something that the Good Representative from Milford said. There was compromise, there was work, there was negotiation, there was a lot of good faith negotiation in our Committee. Even though we couldn't come to consensus, I think it's appropriate to thank the members of my Committee for acting in such good faith. Thank you.

After reconsideration, the House proceeded to vote on the question, 'Shall this Bill become a law notwithstanding the objections of the Governor?' A roll call was taken.

The SPEAKER: The pending question before the House is 'Shall this Bill become a law notwithstanding the objections of the Governor?' All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

**ROLL CALL NO. 553V**

YEA - Abdi, Ankeles, Arford, Beck, Bell, Brennan, Cloutier, Collings, Copeland, Crafts, Craven, Crockett, Dhalac, Dodge, Doudera, Eaton, Gattine, Geiger, Golek, Graham, Gramlich, Hasenfus, Kessler, Kuhn, LaRochelle, Lee, Lookner, Madigan, Matlack, Milliken, Montell, Murphy, O'Connell, Osher, Perry J, Pluecker, Pringle, Rana, Rielly, Riseman, Roeder, Russell, Sachs, Salisbury, Sayre, Shagoury, Shaw, Sinclair, Terry, Warren, White B, Zager, Zeigler, Madam Speaker.

NAY - Adams, Albert, Andrews, Arata, Ardell, Bagshaw, Blier, Boyer, Bradstreet, Bridgeo, Campbell, Carlow, Carmichael, Costain, Cray, Cyrway, Davis, Dill, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Dunphy, Faulkingham, Fay, Foster, Galletta, Gifford, Greenwood, Griffin, Guerrette, Haggan, Hall, Henderson, Hepler, Hymes, Jackson, Javner, Landry, Lavigne, Libby, Lyman, Mason, Meyer, Millett H, Moriarty, Morris, Ness, Newman, Nutting, Parry, Paul, Perkins, Poirier, Polewarczyk, Pomerleau, Quint, Rudnicki, Sampson, Schmursal-Burgess, Simmons, Smith, Soboleski, Stover, Strout, Swallow, Theriault, Thorne, Underwood, White J, Wood.

ABSENT - Babin, Boyle, Cluchey, Collamore, Fredericks, Gere, Hobbs, Lajoie, Lanigan, Lemelin, Malon, Mastraccio, Mathieson, Millett R, Moonen, O'Neil, Perry A, Roberts, Runte, Sargent, Sheehan, Skold, Supica, Walker, Woodsome, Worth.

Yes, 54; No, 69; Absent, 26; Vacant, 2; Excused, 0.

54 having voted in the affirmative and 69 voted in the negative, 2 vacancies with 26 being absent, and accordingly the Veto was **SUSTAINED**.

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

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The Following Communication: (H.C. 499)

**STATE OF MAINE  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
1 STATE HOUSE STATION  
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0001**

April 23, 2024

The 131st Legislature of the State of Maine  
State House  
Augusta, Maine

Dear Honorable Members of the 131st Legislature:  
By the authority vested in me by Article IV, Part Third, Section 2 of the Constitution of the State of Maine, I am hereby vetoing L.D. 2135, *Resolve, Regarding the Operation and Future Capacity of State-owned Landfills*.

L.D. 2135 requires the Bureau of General Services within the Department of Administrative and Financial Services to initiate negotiations of an amendment to the operating services agreement (OSA) of February 5, 2004 with Casella, the operator of the state-owned Juniper Ridge Landfill (JRL) in Old Town. L.D. 2135 further stipulates that execution of any amendment require the operator by January 1, 2027 to treat landfill leachate such that the concentration of regulated PFAS contaminants does not exceed the drinking water standards established by the Maine Department of Health and Human Services.

On the same day this bill was enacted in the Maine Legislature, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced the first-ever national drinking water standards for PFAS. The new Federal standard is more stringent than the temporary, interim standard that Maine adopted in 2021. Maine CDC's Drinking Water Program is evaluating the new Federal standard and will propose final State standards through the rulemaking process that align with the Federal standard.

My Administration appreciates this new national drinking water standard, which builds on our nation-leading work to address PFAS contamination, as part of the critical effort to protect the health of Maine people. The new Federal standard includes a five-year implementation timeline and applies only to public drinking water systems.

Leachate, on the other hand, is different, which means that we should not legislate the control of leachate contaminants in the same way we do drinking water. Importantly, the best available technologies for treating landfill leachate are not currently capable of meeting the more stringent federal drinking water standards, and prospective advanced technology could not be developed and fully operational to meet those standards in the timeframe that would be required by the bill. This makes the terms of the contract unattainable.

Advancements are being made in the treatment of PFAS in landfill leachate. A pilot project by the Anson-Madison Sanitary District is showing promising results separating PFAS from wastewater flows that include landfill leachate. In fact, JRL's operator, Casella, has implemented an on-site PFAS pre-treatment system pilot program utilizing foam fractionation at its landfill in Coventry, Vermont. As applied, the system consistently removes more than 95 percent of four out of five regulated compounds and is successful but less consistent in removing the fifth compound. I also noted that consulting firm Brown and Caldwell has been hired to study options for treating PFAS in the landfill leachate from JRL.

Landfill leachate and drinking water present very different considerations from the standpoint of public health and environmental regulation. There is no question that PFAS contamination poses a threat to the health of our people, our wildlife, and our environment, but applying drinking water standards to the treatment of landfill leachate is not appropriate. The EPA is developing guidelines for effluent and pretreatment standards for landfills to address PFAS and is expected to release human health criteria for discharge licensing in Fall 2024. Enforceable limits on PFAS in discharges of treated landfill leachate should be established through science-based regulatory and licensing processes. My Administration is committed to working closely with the Legislature and continuing to spearhead one of the strongest efforts in the nation to address PFAS.

For these reasons I am returning L.D. 2135 unsigned and vetoed, and I urge the Legislature to sustain this veto.

Sincerely,  
S/Janet T. Mills  
Governor

**READ and ORDERED PLACED ON FILE.**

The Following Communication: (H.C. 501)

The accompanying item Resolve, Regarding the Operation and Future Capacity of State-owned Landfills

(H.P. 1359) (L.D. 2135)

(H. "A" H-940 and S. "A" S-612 to C. "A" H-828)

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Phillips, Representative Soboleski.

Representative **SOBOLESKI**: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker, ladies and gentlemen. This bill set forth to make a lot of changes with the way we handle our waste disposal at Juniper Ridge Landfill. It had a lot of really good parts to it and a lot of good ideas. One part that wasn't a good idea is Casella is under a 30-year operating service agreement with the State. That's a contract. It was going to make changes to that contract 20 years into it. And that was a really bad message to send anybody in our State who is under contract with us, currently under a GSA; excuse me, under an operating service agreement, or anyone potentially who is going to contract with the State. We need to make sure that our business partners know that we are good with our word, that we stick by what we say and we will honor our contracts. I implore everyone in the Chamber to vote for the integrity of our contracts and vote to sustain this veto. Thank you.

After reconsideration, the House proceeded to vote on the question, 'Shall this Resolve become a law notwithstanding the objections of the Governor?' A roll call was taken.

The SPEAKER: The pending question before the House is 'Shall this Resolve become a law notwithstanding the objections of the Governor?' All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

**ROLL CALL NO. 555V**

YEA - Abdi, Ankeles, Arford, Beck, Bell, Brennan, Cloutier, Collings, Copeland, Craven, Crockett, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Eaton, Fay, Gattine, Geiger, Golek, Graham, Gramlich, Kessler, Kuhn, LaRochelle, Lee, Lookner, Madigan, Matlack, Milliken, Montell, Murphy, O'Connell, Osher, Perry J, Pluecker, Pringle, Rana, Rielly, Riseman, Roeder, Sachs, Salisbury, Shagoury, Shaw, Terry, Warren, White B, Zager, Zeigler, Madam Speaker.

NAY - Adams, Albert, Andrews, Arata, Ardell, Bagshaw, Blier, Boyer, Bradstreet, Bridgeo, Campbell, Carlow, Carmichael, Costain, Crafts, Cray, Cyrway, Davis, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Dunphy, Faulkingham, Foster, Galletta, Gifford, Greenwood, Griffin, Guerrette, Haggan, Hall, Hasenfus, Henderson, Hepler, Hymes, Jackson, Javner, Landry, Lavigne, Libby, Lyman, Mason, Meyer, Millett H, Moriarty, Morris, Ness, Newman, Nutting, Parry, Paul, Perkins, Poirier, Polewarczyk, Pomerleau, Quint, Rudnicki, Russell, Sampson, Sayre, Schmearsal-Burgess, Simmons, Sinclair, Smith, Soboleski, Stover, Strout, Swallow, Theriault, Thorne, Underwood, White J, Wood.

ABSENT - Babin, Boyle, Cluchey, Collamore, Fredericks, Gere, Hobbs, Lajoie, Lanigan, Lemelin, Malon, Mastraccio, Mathieson, Millett R, Moonen, O'Neil, Perry A, Roberts, Runte, Sargent, Sheehan, Skold, Supica, Walker, Woodsome, Worth.

Yes, 51; No, 72; Absent, 26; Vacant, 2; Excused, 0.

51 having voted in the affirmative and 72 voted in the negative, 2 vacancies with 26 being absent, and accordingly the Veto was **SUSTAINED**.

**STATE OF MAINE  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
1 STATE HOUSE STATION  
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0001**

April 26, 2024

The 131st Legislature of the State of Maine  
State House

Augusta, Maine

Dear Honorable Members of the 131st Legislature:

By the authority vested in me by Article IV, Part Third, Section 2 of the Constitution of the State of Maine, I am hereby vetoing L.D. 1231, An Act to Bring Fairness in Income Taxes to Maine Families by Adjusting the Tax Brackets.

L.D. 1231 would adjust Maine's current income tax rate structure by creating a new top tax rate of 8.45 percent and expanding the lower rate brackets. The intent, in theory, is to reduce the tax burden for lower-income individuals (a worthy goal I share) by offsetting that reduction by raising taxes on higher-income individuals.

First, this bill would make a substantial change to the structure of Maine's income tax, but it moved through the Legislature in a manner that deprived the public of a meaningful opportunity to be heard. The bill was printed as a concept draft and no actual legislative language was available at the public hearing. The tax rate increases included in the enacted bill were not presented during the public hearing; they were first unveiled and discussed at the work session afterward, which denied the public and stakeholders, small businesses, for instance, the opportunity to weigh in and shape the discussion. Fundamental changes to the State's income tax structure such as the one proposed in this bill should be made only following a transparent and deliberative process; they should not be made on a single, ad hoc basis near the end of a legislative session but, instead, as part of a larger, wholistic discussion about Maine's tax structure.

Additionally, while well-intentioned, the income tax shift in L.D. 1231 does not deliver meaningful tax relief. Low-income taxpayers would receive very little or no actual benefit from the proposal due to the State's many available deductions and exemptions as well as the size of the existing 5.8 percent tax bracket.

For example, in recent years, at the State (and Federal level), there have been numerous expansions of eligibility for, and increases in the value of deductions, exemptions, and credits that are specifically targeted to low-income taxpayers - several of which I supported and signed into law. The cumulative impact of these changes is that low-income individuals in Maine have little or no tax liability. As a result, this bill would have little or no impact on the taxpayers it is intended to benefit.

Additionally, because of the large standard deduction, personal exemption(s), and other state modifications (e.g. pension deduction, exemption of social security income, etc.) many low-income taxpayers have no taxable income, or their taxable income is well within the 5.8% tax bracket, so expanding the length of the 5.8% bracket provides no tax relief. It takes \$50,000 of Federal Adjusted Gross Income (FAGI) before a taxpayer begins to receive a meaningful benefit under LD 1231. It's estimated that there will be approximately 120,555 returns in the \$30,000<\$50,000 income band in tax year 2025, but only 6,735 returns are estimated to see a decrease as a result of this bill, and the average decrease is estimated to be just \$22.

Maine's highest income tax rate of 7.15 percent is the 10th highest state income tax rate in the country, and there are concerns that increasing that top rate even further would create

challenges for state budgeting, because it would increase the State's reliance on a small number of taxpayers (less than 1 percent) whose income is disproportionately composed of highly volatile sources such as capital gains and business income. Income tax revenue, which already varies significantly year-to-year, would become more volatile and likely more closely tied to economic conditions, increasing the challenge of managing the State's fiscal position and the size of a revenue shortfall during an economic downturn. At a time when we are already keeping a close eye on Maine's budget because of increased spending and flattening revenues, there is concern from our budgeting officials that relying on more volatile forms of revenue may inadvertently jeopardize the State of Maine's fiscal standing.

Lastly, I agree that progressive income tax rate structures serve an important role in creating a fair and balanced state tax structure. A recent report by the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy ranked Maine as one of the most progressive states in the country, with only five states being ranked as more progressive. This is in part due to the recent expansions of Maine's income tax credits specifically aimed at helping low-income Mainers.

Over the past several years, we have substantially reduced, if not outright eliminated, the tax burden for low-income Mainers. While I am always open to conversations about how we can continue to reduce the tax burden for Maine people, I do not believe this bill effectively achieves its aim. I believe it was arrived at through a flawed process and that it may have unintended consequences that could jeopardize the stability of the state budget.

For these reasons I am returning L.D. 1231 unsigned and vetoed, and I urge the Legislature to uphold this veto.

Sincerely,  
S/Janet T. Mills  
Governor

**READ and ORDERED PLACED ON FILE.**

The accompanying item An Act to Bring Fairness in Income Taxes to Maine Families by Adjusting the Tax Brackets (H.P. 779) (L.D. 1231) (C. "A" H-924)

After reconsideration, the House proceeded to vote on the question, 'Shall this Bill become a law notwithstanding the objections of the Governor?' A roll call was taken.

The SPEAKER: The pending question before the House is 'Shall this Bill become a law notwithstanding the objections of the Governor?' All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

**ROLL CALL NO. 556V**

YEA - Abdi, Ankeles, Arford, Beck, Bell, Brennan, Carmichael, Cloutier, Collings, Copeland, Crafts, Craven, Crockett, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Eaton, Gattine, Geiger, Golek, Graham, Gramlich, Hasenbus, Kessler, Kuhn, Landry, LaRochelle, Lee, Lookner, Madigan, Matlack, Meyer, Milliken, Montell, Murphy, Newman, O'Connell, Osher, Perry J, Pluecker, Rana, Rielly, Roeder, Russell, Sachs, Salisbury, Sayre, Shagoury, Shaw, Sinclair, Terry, Warren, White B, Zager, Zeigler, Madam Speaker.

NAY - Adams, Albert, Andrews, Arata, Ardell, Bagshaw, Blier, Boyer, Bradstreet, Bridgeo, Campbell, Carlow, Costain, Cray, Cyrway, Davis, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Dunphy, Faulkingham, Foster, Galletta, Gifford, Greenwood, Griffin, Guerrette, Haggan, Hall, Henderson, Hepler, Hymes, Jackson, Javner, Lavigne, Libby, Lyman, Mason, Millett H, Moriarty, Morris, Ness, Nutting, Parry, Paul, Perkins, Poirier, Polewarczyk, Pomerleau, Pringle, Quint, Riseman, Rudnicki, Sampson, Schmersal-Burgess, Simmons, Smith, Soboleski,

Stover, Strout, Swallow, Theriault, Thorne, Underwood, White J, Wood.

ABSENT - Babin, Boyle, Cluchey, Collamore, Fay, Fredericks, Gere, Hobbs, Lajoie, Lanigan, Lemelin, Malon, Mastraccio, Mathieson, Millett R, Moonen, O'Neil, Perry A, Roberts, Runte, Sargent, Sheehan, Skold, Supica, Walker, Woodsome, Worth.

Yes, 57; No, 65; Absent, 27; Vacant, 2; Excused, 0.

57 having voted in the affirmative and 65 voted in the negative, 2 vacancy with 27 being absent, and accordingly the Veto was **SUSTAINED**.

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

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The Following Communication: (H.C. 502)  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
2 STATE HOUSE STATION  
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0002**

May 5, 2024

Hon. Rachel Talbot Ross, Speaker of the House  
Maine House of Representatives  
2 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333-0002

Dear Speaker Talbot Ross,

With utmost gratitude and appreciation to the people of House District 51 and my colleagues in the Maine State Legislature, I am writing to share that I will be resigning from the Maine House of Representatives, effective May 5, 2024.

My constituents elected me to serve their needs and be a voice for our wonderful community in Topsham, Maine, and over the past year and a half, I have worked hard to deliver results for them. I am proud of the work I have done, and it has been a great honor to serve my community and the people of Maine. To everyone who offered me support and guidance during my term, I am deeply grateful.

I am resigning from the Maine House in order to take a federal career opportunity which requires me to vacate my elected position. While I will miss serving as a State Representative, I know that my new position in the federal government with the National Marine Fisheries Service, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, will afford me the opportunity to continue to do good work that benefits the people of Maine.

Sincerely,  
S/Rebecca Jauch

State Representative, District 51

**READ and ORDERED PLACED ON FILE.**

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The Following Communication: (H.C. 500)

**STATE OF MAINE  
OFFICE OF THE STATE AUDITOR  
66 STATE HOUSE STATION  
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0066**

Letter of Transmittal

Honorable Members of the Legislative Council, 131<sup>st</sup> Legislature;

Honorable Janet T. Mills

Governor of the State of Maine

I am pleased to submit the Single Audit of the State of Maine for the fiscal year ended

June 30, 2023. The audit was conducted in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States; the requirements of the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996; and Title 2 U.S. *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 200, *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards* (Uniform Guidance). Our audit complies with 5 MRSA §243 and is also a prerequisite for the receipt of Federal financial assistance. During fiscal year 2023, \$5.7 billion in Federal financial assistance was expended by the State of Maine.

This document contains the following reports and schedules:

- Independent Auditor's Report
- Basic Financial Statements, Management's Discussion and Analysis, Notes to the Financial Statements, and Required Supplementary Information
- Independent Auditor's Report on Internal Control over Financial Reporting and on Compliance and Other Matters based on an Audit of Financial Statements performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*
- Independent Auditor's Report on Compliance for Each Major Program and on Internal Control over Compliance Required by the Uniform Guidance
- Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards
- Schedule of Findings and Questioned Costs
- Financial Statement Findings
- Federal Findings Indexes and Federal Award Identification Numbers
- Federal Findings and Questioned Costs
- Corrective Action Plan
- Summary Schedule of Prior Audit Findings

On behalf of the Office of the State Auditor, I thank employees throughout Maine Government who assisted us during the audit. Please contact me if you have questions or comments about the 2023 Single Audit of the State of Maine.

Respectfully submitted,

S/Matthew Dunlap, CIA

State Auditor

March 28, 2024

**READ** and with accompanying papers **ORDERED PLACED ON FILE.**

The Following Communication: (S.C. 1113)

**MAINE SENATE  
131ST LEGISLATURE  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY**

April 18, 2024

Honorable Robert B. Hunt

Clerk of the House

2 State House Station

Augusta, ME 04333

Dear Clerk Hunt:

Please be advised the Senate today insisted to its previous action whereby it Indefinitely Postponed Bill "An Act to Clarify Licensing Criteria and Criminal History Record Check and Notification Requirements for Adult Use Cannabis Establishments" (H.P. 1379) (L.D. 2155) and all accompanying papers in non-concurrence.

Best Regards,

S/Darek M. Grant

Secretary of the Senate

**READ and ORDERED PLACED ON FILE.**

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

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**ORDERS**

On motion of Representative MEYER of Eliot, the following Joint Resolution: (H.P. 1483)

**JOINT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING  
MAY 6 TO MAY 12, 2024 AS NATIONAL NURSES WEEK**

WHEREAS, the nearly 5,200,000 registered nurses in the United States constitute our nation's largest health care profession; and

WHEREAS, the depth and breadth of the registered nursing profession meet the different and emerging health care needs of our nation's population in a wide range of settings; and

WHEREAS, the American Nurses Association, as the voice for the registered nurses of our nation, is working to chart a new course for a healthy nation that relies on increasing delivery of primary and preventive health care; and

WHEREAS, a renewed emphasis on primary and preventive health care will require better utilization of all of our nation's registered nursing resources; and

WHEREAS, professional nursing has been demonstrated to be an indispensable component of the safety and quality of care of hospitalized patients; and

WHEREAS, the demand for registered nursing services will be greater than ever as our nation continues to grapple with the long-term effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, an aging population, the continuing expansion of life-sustaining technologies and the explosive growth of home health care services; and

WHEREAS, more qualified registered nurses will be needed in the future to meet the increasingly complex needs of health care consumers in the State; and

WHEREAS, the cost-effective, safe and high-quality health care services provided by registered nurses will be an increasingly important component of the national health care delivery system in the future; and

WHEREAS, along with the American Nurses Association, the American Nurses Association – Maine has declared May 6 to May 12, 2024 as National Nurses Week, with the theme "Nurses Make the Difference" to honor the variety of roles that nurses play in the lives of their patients. Registered nurses

make a difference as trusted advocates to ensure that patients, their families and their communities receive safe and high-quality care; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That We, the Members of the One Hundred and Thirty-first Legislature now assembled in the Second Regular Session, recognize May 6 to May 12, 2024 as National Nurses Week to celebrate registered nurses' accomplishments and efforts to improve our health care system and show our appreciation for the nation's registered nurses not just during this week but at every opportunity throughout the year and ask that all residents of this State join in honoring the registered nurses who care for all of us.

**READ and ADOPTED.**

Sent for concurrence.

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On motion of Speaker TALBOT ROSS of Portland, the following Joint Resolution: (H.P. 1485) (Cosponsored by Senator HICKMAN of Kennebec and Representatives: ABDI of Lewiston, DANA of the Passamaquoddy Tribe, DHALAC of South Portland, RANA of Bangor, Senator: DUSON of Cumberland)

**JOINT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING  
JUNE 17, 2024 AS JAMES WELDON JOHNSON DAY**

WHEREAS, James Weldon Johnson was a novelist and poet, songwriter, educator, attorney, journalist, diplomat and civil rights leader; and

WHEREAS, Johnson began his career as an educator in rural Georgia, where he taught the descendants of former slaves and eventually became principal of Stanton, a school for African American students, where he was paid half of what white colleagues were paid; and

WHEREAS, while working as a teacher, he studied law, becoming the first African American to be admitted to the Florida Bar since Reconstruction; and

WHEREAS, Johnson's gifts in poetry and music led him to join his younger brother's popular music trio in New York City in 1901, where he helped to write many of their songs; and

WHEREAS, Johnson entered the United States Consular Service in 1906 and served for 7 years as a diplomat, beginning in Puerto Cabello, Venezuela, and then in 1909 taking a post in Corinto, Nicaragua, where he successfully navigated an attempt to overthrow the Nicaraguan government through skilled negotiation; and

WHEREAS, Johnson became the first African American professor to be hired at New York University in 1934, and he later served as a professor of creative literature and writing at Fisk University, a historically Black university; and

WHEREAS, Johnson was involved with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, NAACP, from 1916 through the end of his life, serving as field secretary, executive secretary and as a vice president, helping to lead the fight against racial discrimination, segregation, violence and lynching; and

WHEREAS, Johnson became a key artistic figure in the Harlem Renaissance in the 1920s, continuing to publish notable collections of poems and spirituals, and is known in particular for writing the lyrics to "Lift Every Voice and Sing," which he wrote to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation and which became known as the Black National Anthem due to its enormous importance to African Americans; and

WHEREAS, in 1938, Johnson's life was cut short when he and his wife, Grace Nail Johnson, were returning from visiting a friend on Islesboro to their home in Florida and their car was struck by a train in Wiscasset, killing him and grievously injuring his wife; and

WHEREAS, following his death, his wife donated her husband's papers to the Yale University Library and helped to establish the James Weldon Johnson Memorial Collection of African American Arts and Letters in the Yale Collection of American Literature, which joins other national commemorative landmarks and institutes; and

WHEREAS, in the 130th Legislature, June 17th was designated as James Weldon Johnson Day, a result of a joint effort of those in his home state of Florida and the State of Maine; 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 June 17, 2024 as James Weldon Johnson Day and to honor his remarkable achievements and his ongoing commitment to racial equity and progress.

**READ and ADOPTED.**

Sent for concurrence.

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On motion of Speaker TALBOT ROSS of Portland, the following Joint Resolution: (H.P. 1486) (Cosponsored by Senator DUSON of Cumberland and Representatives: ABDI of Lewiston, DANA of the Passamaquoddy Tribe, DHALAC of South Portland, RANA of Bangor, Senator: HICKMAN of Kennebec)

**JOINT RESOLUTION TO RECOGNIZE  
THE OBSERVANCE OF JUNETEENTH ON JUNE 19, 2024**

WHEREAS, for 157 years, Juneteenth National Freedom Day, also known as Emancipation Day, Emancipation Celebration, Freedom Day, Juneteenth Independence Day and Juneteenth, has been one of the most recognized African-American holiday observances in the United States; and

WHEREAS, Juneteenth commemorates the day freedom was proclaimed to all slaves in the South by Union General Gordon Granger, on June 19, 1865 in Galveston, Texas, more than 2 1/2 years after the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation by President Abraham Lincoln; and

WHEREAS, Juneteenth commemorates the determination of the first people from Africa, approximately 11,500,000 of whom survived the awful voyages across the Atlantic and who were brought to this country and enslaved in chattel slavery and whose descendants served as slaves for 200 years before the horrific institution of chattel slavery was abolished; and

WHEREAS, Juneteenth is the oldest known celebration commemorating the end of chattel slavery in the United States; and

WHEREAS, over 130 years after the Emancipation Proclamation and after years of informal annual celebration, Juneteenth was declared a federal holiday in 2021 by the President of the United States and the United States Congress; and

WHEREAS, "Until All are Free, None are Free" is an oft-repeated maxim that can be used to highlight the significance of the end of the era of chattel slavery in the United States; and

WHEREAS, Juneteenth became an official state holiday in Maine in 2022; and

WHEREAS, it is important to recognize the historical significance of Juneteenth in order to advance racial equity, human dignity and justice; 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, recognize the observance of Juneteenth on June 19, 2024, and encourage people in our State to participate in Juneteenth observances.

**READ and ADOPTED.**

Sent for concurrence.

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On motion of Representative GRAHAM of North Yarmouth, the following Joint Resolution: (H.P. 1489) (Cosponsored by Representatives: SHAGOURY of Hallowell, ZAGER of Portland)

**JOINT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING**

**MAY 2024 AS MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH**

WHEREAS, the mental health and well-being of all children, youth, adults and families in the State are of fundamental importance to the Legislature; and

WHEREAS, since 1999, the national suicide rate has increased more than 36%, with more than 13.2 million individuals experiencing suicidal thoughts and 1.6 million individuals attempting suicide annually in the United States; and

WHEREAS, over 49,000 people died by suicide in 2022, which is about one death every 11 minutes; and

WHEREAS, suicide, opioid misuse and addiction and children's mental health issues are areas of concern in the State; and

WHEREAS, there are approximately 61,000 adults in the State who are living with a serious mental illness, including, but not limited to, bipolar disorder, severe depression and schizophrenia, and 14,000 children 12 to 17 years of age in the State have depression; and

WHEREAS, over 260,000 people in the State live in a community that does not have enough mental health professionals; and

WHEREAS, the effective treatment of mental health conditions is critical to reducing the number of individuals and families who find themselves in mental health crises, to breaking individual and generational cycles of mental illness and to promoting healing; and

WHEREAS, recovery from a mental illness requires access to professional services and involves families and caregivers as allies in recovery and as critical members of the care delivery team; and

WHEREAS, maintaining an open dialogue regarding mental health conditions encourages individuals struggling with mental illness to seek help and is an essential component to fighting the stigma associated with mental illness; 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 May 2024 as Mental Health Awareness Month in order to raise awareness of mental health conditions and services and to break the stigma surrounding mental illness in the State.

**READ and ADOPTED.**

Sent for concurrence.

**SENATE PAPERS**

The following Joint Resolution: (S.P. 1009)

**JOINT RESOLUTION TO REAFFIRM THE FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN MAINE AND TAIWAN, ENHANCE BILATERAL TRADE RELATIONS WITH TAIWAN AND SUPPORT TAIWAN'S INTERNATIONAL PARTICIPATION**

WHEREAS, the United States and the Republic of China (Taiwan) share a robust bilateral relationship marked by a mutually beneficial partnership, supported by our common values of freedom, democracy, rule of law and a free market economy, and our countries now enjoy the strongest relations ever, and we congratulate Taiwan on its presidential election held on January 13, 2024 and the election of Dr. Lai Ching-te, whose presidential inauguration is to be held on May 20, 2024; and

WHEREAS, the United States ranks as Taiwan's 2nd largest trading partner, and Taiwan is the 8th largest trading partner of the United States, with United States trade in goods with Taiwan totaling an estimated \$127.4 billion in 2023, and Taiwan was the 7th largest consumer of agricultural goods in 2023, totaling \$3.7 billion; and

WHEREAS, 2024 marks the 45th anniversary of the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA), Public Law 96-8, which has acted as the cornerstone of United States-Taiwan relations to help maintain peace, security and stability in the Western Pacific and to promote the foreign policy of the United States by authorizing the continuation of commercial, cultural and other relations between the people of the United States and the people of Taiwan, and for other purposes; and

WHEREAS, Taiwan-Maine bilateral trade totaled \$50.3 million in 2023, and Maine exported to Taiwan \$31.1 million in integrated circuits, wafers, printed circuit boards, crustaceans, paper products and other goods, making Taiwan Maine's 17th largest export market in the world and 8th largest export market in Asia, and a formal bilateral trade agreement between Taiwan and the United States would result in even greater Maine exports to Taiwan and create more jobs for the people of Maine; and

WHEREAS, Maine and Taiwan have mutually agreed to enhancing K-12 education exchange, and we welcome all opportunities for even closer educational cooperation with Taiwan, such as the signing of a memorandum of understanding regarding higher education cooperation and a driver's license reciprocity agreement for those who live and work in Maine and Taiwan; and

WHEREAS, Maine recognizes Taiwan's contribution to a broad range of global issues, and therefore Taiwan's inclusion in international organizations such as the World Health Organization, the International Criminal Police Organization, the International Civil Aviation Organization and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is imperative for the best interests and safety of the international community; 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, support a stronger United States-Taiwan relationship under the Biden administration, including the signing of a bilateral trade agreement and an income tax agreement, and encourage the further exploration of ways to strengthen and promote bilateral exchange between Maine and Taiwan, including signing a driver's license reciprocity agreement and a memorandum of understanding regarding higher education cooperation with Taiwan in the near future, and support pursuing ways to further

increase trade and people-to-people exchanges; and be it further

RESOLVED: That we support Taiwan's legitimate right to participate in international organizations, agreements and mechanisms; and be it further

RESOLVED: That suitable copies of this resolution, duly authenticated by the Secretary of State, be transmitted to the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, President of the United States, the members of the Maine Congressional Delegation, the Honorable Janet Mills, Governor of Maine, the Honorable Tsai Ing-wen, President of the Republic of China (Taiwan) and the Honorable Charles Liao, Director-General of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Boston, Massachusetts.

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

---

The following Joint Resolution: (S.P. 1010)

**JOINT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING  
JUNE 28, 2024 AS MAINE ACADIAN DAY**

WHEREAS, in 1604, French settlers established the first European settlement in Maine on Saint Croix Island, and these settlers, known as Acadians, were adaptable and resilient, turning hardy wilderness into fertile farmland using nutrients from the sea; and

WHEREAS, Acadians endured great hardships during their settling in the Acadian region, including their expulsion between 1755 and 1764, when more than 10,000 men, women and children were forcefully deported from the region at the hands of the British governors of Nova Scotia and Massachusetts to southern colonies and British prisons, with some escaping and becoming refugees; and

WHEREAS, in 2003, a Royal Proclamation was signed in Canada that acknowledged the wrongdoings committed in the name of the English Crown during the Acadian deportation between 1755 and 1764 and established June 28th of every year as "a day of commemoration of the Great Upheaval"; and

WHEREAS, Acadians settled in the Madawaska region decades before Maine achieved statehood; and

WHEREAS, today more than 1/3 of the population of the State is of French descent, mostly of Quebecois and Acadian origin; and

WHEREAS, Franco-Americans and those of Acadian heritage have contributed greatly to the history and cultural heritage of the State; and

WHEREAS, French, and by extension Acadian, culture is celebrated throughout the State with events such as Franco-American Day; and

WHEREAS, residents who are fluent in both French and English are of great cultural and economic importance to the State; and

WHEREAS, French is the primary language for thousands of Maine residents, and a 2nd language for thousands more; 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 June 28, 2024 as Maine Acadian Day in honor of the Acadian culture that holds great significance in the Saint John Valley and throughout the State.

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

The following Joint Resolution: (S.P. 1008)

**JOINT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING  
APRIL 18, 2024 AS WORLD AMATEUR RADIO DAY**

WHEREAS, amateur radio provides a bridge between people, societies and countries by creating friendships and sharing ideas; and

WHEREAS, on April 18, 1925, the International Amateur Radio Union was founded, which illustrates how international cooperation and communication are hallmarks of amateur radio; and

WHEREAS, there are more than 2,500,000 amateur radio operators worldwide, with nearly 780,000 in the United States and approximately 4,500 in the State of Maine; and

WHEREAS, amateur radio provides an excellent opportunity for leadership development, technical innovation and scientific exploration; and

WHEREAS, showing that there is no age barrier in amateur radio, at 9 years of age Simon Golob of Sabattus earned his amateur radio license in 2023 and in the last year has been learning Morse code, has served as a Net Control Station for a public service radio net in the State, participated in a disaster communications exercise and made contacts with amateur radio operators in Europe, Oceania and South America; and

WHEREAS, amateur radio is a licensed service for noncommercial use and, during emergencies or natural disasters, such as the ice storm of 1998, Hurricane Katrina, the Boston Marathon bombing and countless other emergency situations, is often the only dependable way to communicate locally or internationally; and

WHEREAS, many Maine amateur radio operators serve their local and county emergency management agencies by training and holding exercises to prepare for when their skills are needed during times of emergency; and

WHEREAS, during Tropical Storm Lee in September 2023, amateur radio was used to transmit messages from the Emergency Operations Center in Machias to the Maine Emergency Management Agency in Augusta; and

WHEREAS, Maine amateur radio operators routinely volunteer their equipment and time to provide public service communications for such events as the Dempsey Challenge, the Trek Across Maine, the TD Beach to Beacon 10K Road Race, the New England Forest Rally, the Kenduskeag Stream Canoe Race, the Can Am Crown International Sled Dog Race, the Loon Echo Bike Trek, the Mount Desert Island Marathon, BikeMaine, the Sugarloaf Marathon and the Northwoods Gravel Grind; 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 and acknowledge the accomplishments and public service provided by amateur radio operators as they celebrate World Amateur Radio Day on the 99th anniversary of the founding of the International Amateur Radio Union; and be it further

RESOLVED: That suitable copies of this resolution, duly authenticated by the Secretary of State, be transmitted to the American Radio Relay League and the International Amateur Radio Union.

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



**ORDERS**

On motion of Representative GOLEK of Harpswell, the following Joint Resolution: (H.P. 1490)

**JOINT RESOLUTION DESIGNATING  
MAY 2024 AS AMYOTROPHIC LATERAL SCLEROSIS  
AWARENESS MONTH**

WHEREAS, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, also known as ALS, is a progressive neurodegenerative disease that affects nerve cells in the brain and the spinal cord; and

WHEREAS, the life expectancy for an individual with ALS is between 2 and 5 years after the date on which the individual receives an ALS diagnosis; and

WHEREAS, ALS occurs throughout the world with no racial, ethnic, gender or socioeconomic boundaries; and

WHEREAS, the 2 different types of ALS are sporadic ALS and familial ALS; and

WHEREAS, sporadic ALS is the most common form of motor neuron disease in the United States, accounts for between 90% and 95% of all cases of ALS in the United States and may affect any individual in any location; and

WHEREAS, familial ALS, also known as FALS, is inherited and accounts for between 5% and 10% of all cases of ALS in the United States; and

WHEREAS, there is a 50% chance that each of the offspring of an individual with familial ALS will inherit the gene mutation for familial ALS and develop the disease; and

WHEREAS, the onset of ALS often involves muscle weakness or stiffness, and the progression of ALS results in the further weakening, wasting and paralysis of the muscles of the limbs and trunk and the muscles that control vital functions, including speech, swallowing and breathing; and

WHEREAS, on average, the period between the date on which an individual first experiences symptoms of ALS and the date on which the individual is diagnosed with ALS is about one year; and

WHEREAS, ALS can strike individuals of any age but predominantly strikes adults, and it is estimated that tens of thousands of individuals in the United States have ALS at any given time; and

WHEREAS, based on studies of the population of the United States, slightly more than 5,600 individuals in the United States are diagnosed with ALS each year, and 15 individuals in the United States are diagnosed with ALS each day; and

WHEREAS, the majority of individuals with ALS die of respiratory failure; and

WHEREAS, a military veteran is approximately twice as likely to be diagnosed with ALS as is a member of the general public in the United States; and

WHEREAS, as of the date of introduction of this resolution, there is no cure for ALS; and

WHEREAS, the spouses, children and other family members of individuals living with ALS provide support to those individuals with love, day-to-day care and more; and

WHEREAS, an individual with ALS, and the caregivers of such an individual, can be required to bear significant costs for medical care, equipment and home health care services for the individual as the disease progresses; 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 May 2024 as Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Awareness Month. We affirm the dedication of the Legislature to helping to work toward securing cures and better treatments for ALS, recognize the challenges that individuals with ALS face on a daily basis and commend the dedication of

the family members, friends, organizations, volunteers, researchers and caregivers across the United States who are working to improve the quality and length of life of persons with ALS.

**READ and ADOPTED.**

Sent for concurrence.

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

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At this point, the Speaker recognized all Members who have served as Speaker Pro Tem during the 131st Legislature.

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The SPEAKER: It is now my pleasure, Members, to recognize Members of the House who served as Speaker Pro Tem and thank them, on behalf of all the Members, for their service to this Chamber. I want to present them with a ceremonial gavel and a photo. As I call your name, please approach the rostrum on my right.

The Representative from Gorham, Representative Terry, who served as Speaker Pro Tem on February 28, 2023, and May 30, 2023. The Representative from Montville, Representative Zeigler, who served as Speaker Pro Tem on January 23, 2024. The Representative from Waterville, Representative Madigan, who served as Speaker Pro Tem on January 30, 2024. The Representative from Vassalboro, Representative Bradstreet, who served as Speaker Pro Tem on February 6, 2024.

Can we have one more round of applause for all those who served as Speaker Pro Tem?

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At this point, the House performed the Ceremony of Lights.

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The SPEAKER: At this time, the House will proceed with the Ceremony of Lights. During the Ceremony of Lights, we take the time to honor those of us who, after years of service, will be moving on, serving their communities outside of the State House. We will truly miss each and every one of you in this Chamber. And while we may not be able to see it now, I know that we will look back on this time and reflect on it with deep gratitude for the history we have made, the experiences we have shared and the progress we have made for Maine people.

Personally, I can't think of this last day without being reminded of my first day in this session, in this Chamber, friends and family packing the hallway; the excitement, the responsibility of swearing an oath and serving the people. As many of you know, I was honored to follow in the footsteps of my father, who is here today, the Honorable Gerald E. Talbot. On that day, he and mother and my family sat up there as a reminder of what came before, and they looked to this Chamber to move forward the work that was left undone. And while they haven't been sitting in the Chamber every day, like they were today, I can say that with every single day and every single action, I have worked to make them proud and honor their legacy.

I want to acknowledge the dedication and preservation of all of our lawmakers. Despite the challenges and contentious debates we faced, the issues we have grappled with have been as diverse as the landscape of our great State, reflecting the needs and perspectives of our diverse constituents. While we

may not have always seen eye to eye, the passion and commitment displayed by each Member advocating for their beliefs is a testament to the strength of our democracy. In the face of disagreement, we have remained steadfast in our duty to serve the people of Maine to the best of our abilities.

As we adjourn and return to our communities, let us not forget the lessons learned during this session. Let us remember the importance of listening, of compromise and of finding common ground for the greater good of our State. Our work here is a reflection of our shared commitment to building a better Maine for generations to come.

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The SPEAKER: At this time, we will remember the Members lost. The Clerk will call the roll for Members no longer with us.

The CLERK: The Representative from South Portland, Representative Reckitt; 7 years of legislative service.

The SPEAKER: Would Members please rise for a moment of silence.

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At this point, the Members of the House stood and joined in a moment of silence in honor of the Honorable Lois Galgay Reckitt, of South Portland.

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The SPEAKER: As the Clerk calls your name, please vote green. The Clerk will read the names.

The CLERK: The Representative from Auburn, Representative Kathy A. Shaw; 2 years of legislative service. The Representative from Phillips, Representative Michael Soboleski; 2 years of legislative service. The Representative from Fort Kent, Representative Austin L. Theriault; 2 years of legislative service. The Representative from East Machias, Representative Kenneth Ralph Davis, Jr.; 2 years of legislative service. The Representative from Fryeburg, Representative Caleb Joshua Ness; 2 years of legislative service. The Representative from Augusta, Representative Raegan French LaRochelle; 3 years of legislative service. The Representative from Biddeford, Representative Erin R. Sheehan; 4 years of legislative service. The Representative from Gorham, Representative James A. Boyle; 5 years of legislative service. The Representative from Harrison, Representative Walter N. Riseman; 6 years of legislative service. The Representative from Paris, Representative John Andrews; 6 years of legislative service. The Representative from Plymouth, Representative Danny Edward Costain; 6 years of legislative service. The Representative from Portland, Representative Benjamin T. Collings; 8 years of legislative service. The Representative from Raymond, Representative Jessica L. Fay; 8 years of legislative service. The Representative from Cumberland, Representative Stephen W. Moriarty; 8 years of legislative service. The Representative from Saco, Representative Margaret M. O'Neil; 8 years of legislative service. The Representative from Gorham, Representative Maureen Fitzgerald Terry; 8 years of legislative service. The Representative from Montville, Representative Stanley Paige Zeigler, Jr.; 8 years of legislative service. The Representative from Embden, Representative Larry C. Dunphy; 8 years of legislative service. The Representative from Hampden, Representative David G. Haggan; 8 years of legislative service. The Representative from Alfred, Representative Heidi H. Sampson; 8 years of legislative service. The Representative from Vassalboro, Representative Richard T. Bradstreet; 8 years of legislative service. The Representative

from Waterville, Representative Colleen M. Madigan; 10 years of legislative service. The Representative from Albion, Representative Scott W. Cyrway; 10 years of legislative service. The Representative from Cape Elizabeth, Representative Rebecca J. Millett; 12 years of legislative service. The Representative from Calais, Representative Anne C. Perry; 16 years of legislative service. The Representative from Lewiston, Representative Margaret Craven; 18 years of legislative service. The Representative from Waterford, Representative H. Sawin Millett, Jr.; 18 years of legislative service. The Representative from Portland, Speaker Rachel Talbot Ross; 8 years of legislative service.

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The SPEAKER: Thank you all. And now, a few remarks about my corners, the people I spend more time with during this hectic rush than my own family.

Representative Terry, my absolutely outstanding House Majority Leader. In your final term in the House, you have navigated the complexities of our legislative process, guiding us toward consensus and progress. Your leadership not only shaped our legislative agenda, but has also fostered an environment of collaboration and inclusivity. You've always been there with a smile, with a dedication to work at hand and you've always upheld the values that define us as public servants. Thank you for always being in my corner. Thank you for always being in our corner.

Representative Faulkingham, on paper, we probably couldn't be more different. But over the past two years, I think we have forged a friendship based on mutual trust and communication. When we both assumed these roles, I'm not certain either of us were aware of exactly what lay ahead of us, but we have; almost; made it through, with respect for the institution; the institution and for each other. Your role in the Legislature has been shaped by your faith; of which I truly admire; your family and your dedication to this State. And whether making a partisan or a bipartisan vote, you've done so in service to this State and to the people of Maine. I am grateful for the experience and the perspective you have shared with this Chamber and your willingness to always, always come back to the table. Thank you for your service to your district, to your caucus, to this institution. And, to both of you, to the people of Maine.

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

Representative **TERRY**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. As we bring the 131st Legislature to a close today, I want to take this opportunity to express my deep gratitude and appreciation for the hard work and dedication of every Member of this Body. It's been an honor and privilege to serve as the House Majority Leader this session. I am truly grateful for the community we've created here, and honored to serve my final term in the House with this group of incredible individuals.

I want to specifically recognize and thank my counterpart across the aisle, the Representative from Winter Harbor. Throughout this session, the Minority Leader has shown steadfast commitment to the people of Maine, and although we may disagree on many policy issues, we share that commitment and the fundamental belief that the Maine people should be the focus of our work here. The Minority Leader's tireless efforts and willingness to engage, despite our differences and amidst an immense amount of pressure, has been invaluable to our work this legislative session. I appreciate that, despite our

political differences, we have always appreciated our shared responsibilities with integrity and genuine desire to find common ground and to do the right thing for the people of this State and to try to be on time. We've tried.

In a time when partisan politics, especially on the national level, often gets in the way of actually doing our job to represent our constituents and make life better for fellow Mainers, I'm reminded by the Good Representative of the power of collaboration and the importance of putting the needs of our communities above all else.

So, in closing out this session, I'd like to keep in mind our shared purpose as elected officials, to serve the people of Maine and to work towards a brighter future for our entire State. It's my hope that the future Legislatures will continue this good work and will remain committed to our roots as Mainers who care about the people above politics. It's been an honor and privilege to serve alongside each and every one of the Members of this Body. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Winter Harbor, Representative Faulkingham.

Representative **FAULKINGHAM**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I would first say to the Majority Leader and the Members of the Democrat Caucus that, although we've been on opposite sides of many, many issues, it's easy to forget the times we've been on the same side and done the work for the Maine people. I can't think of a single person on the other side that I don't have respect for, and many people in the seats over there are people that will be friends for a lifetime, that I've had the pleasure to meet because of being in this place and I look forward to sharing many more memories with many of you over there.

Madam Speaker, I would say to you that I consider you a good friend. We have been on opposite sides of very many passionate, heated issues that are deep to our core, but throughout that, we always met each other with respect and honesty and I appreciated that. I appreciated that every time I walked into your office, I felt that warmth and friendship. And although, as you said, on paper, many, many, many, many times, we were opposed, but there were also times where we worked together. And you were instrumental in helping me pass a bill and that overwhelmingly passed and gave Maine one of the greatest civil asset forfeiture laws in the country. That's the type of thing that wouldn't happen without mutual respect, and we did that on more than one occasion, Madam Speaker. So, I appreciate that, and you'll continue to be my friend.

I say to the Members of my caucus that when I ran for Leader, it was a term that I don't really love. I think we are here to represent and serve and I asked you to let me be your representative. I hope that I represented you well, with honor and dignity, because I can say that each and every one of you represented us in that way. I'm proud of the Members of my caucus. It's incredibly difficult to serve in the minority when you don't have a Senate or a Chief Executive to back you up, to feel like you're getting run over every day, but to get back up. And the way that my caucus represented and stuck with it and showed up makes me incredibly proud that they chose me to stand in this corner and represent them.

And Madam Speaker, with that being said, I present to you the first House Republican majority since 2012. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

At this point, the Speaker appointed Representative TERRY of Gorham on the part of the House to inform the Senate that the House is ready to adjourn without day.

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The Speaker appointed the following members on the part of the House to wait upon her Excellency, Governor JANET T. MILLS, and inform her that the House is ready to adjourn without day:

Representative MOONEN of Portland  
Representative MORIARTY of Cumberland  
Representative SHEEHAN of Biddeford  
Representative LEE of Auburn  
Representative KUHN of Falmouth  
Representative BECK of South Portland  
Representative POIRIER of Skowhegan  
Representative ANDREWS of Paris  
Representative HAGGAN of Hampden  
Representative HENDERSON of Rumford  
Representative DANA of the Passamaquoddy Tribe

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The SPEAKER: The Chair would advise Members that there is one person who was not able to participate in the Ceremony of Lights and is here with us now and we would like to give him the opportunity, since he will not be returning to the Chamber, to recognize him now.

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The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Brewer, Representative O'Connell, who wishes to address the House on the record.

Representative **O'CONNELL**: Thank you, Madam Speaker, and I appreciate the recognition. But I wanted to say real quick that, even though I am leaving, I recently found out I had a great-uncle from Milford that was here in 1910, and then my grandfather was here in 1950, representing Van Buren. So, if I'm not back, if you guys will be lucky enough, another member of my family will be here.

And another thing I wanted to share, I've kept John Tuttle's prayer card in my desk, those of you who were lucky enough to serve with him, and I'd like to read the blessing that was on the back, if I may? Thank you. "May the road rise up to meet you, may the wind always be at your back, may the sun shine warm upon your face and the rains fall soft upon your fields. And until we meet again, may God hold you in the palm of His hand." And I just want to thank you very, very much, everybody here. It's been a pleasure; it's been an honor. That's all I got.

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Subsequently, the Committee reported that they had delivered the message with which they were charged.

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Subsequently, Representative TERRY reported that she had delivered the message with which she was charged.

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The SPEAKER: The Chair is pleased to welcome to the Hall of the House, the Honorable Janet T. Mills, Governor of the State of Maine.

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The Chair welcomed the Honorable Janet T. Mills, Governor of the State of Maine, to the rostrum.

Governor Mills then addressed the Maine House of Representatives.

Governor **MILLS**: Thank you. Members of the House of Representatives, Members of the 131st Legislature, I know that today has been a long day and on behalf of the people of Maine, I want to thank you for your commitment to your constituents, for pouring your hearts and souls into creating public policy for the people of our State this session.

Like many legislative sessions, this one was not an easy one, but we don't expect it to be easy. The problems we faced this session were not easy, and neither were the solutions. You convened this past winter in the wake of some traumatic events that threatened the safety and security of our State and of all Maine people. From the horrific attack on the people of Lewiston last October, to back-to-back storms, vicious storms, in December and January that claimed our citizens' lives and some of their livelihoods and devastated our communities. We sat together and painstakingly wrote language and legislation to address these challenges. We negotiated to find compromise; sometimes successfully, sometimes not. But as the final hours of the 131st Legislature fade and as we all face a new day in Maine, I want to thank each of you for every time that you met partisanship with patience, narrowmindedness with a willingness to listen, setbacks and losses with a resolve to try again. Although nobody got everything they wanted, we honored the promise of Maine in those moments. A promise that public servants like you, from different backgrounds and beliefs, from different parts of the State, can and will come together to do everything we can to make life better for our neighbors, for our communities and for our State.

Thank you for keeping that promise. Thank you for your great service on behalf of the State of Maine. To Representative Millett and others who are termed out or not running again, I thank you especially for your friendship, your patience, your wisdom; we will certainly miss you. Thank you all, Godspeed, safe journey home. Thank you. Good night.

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At the conclusion of the address, Governor Janet T. Mills withdrew amid the applause of the Maine House of Representatives, the audience rising.

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At this point, a message came from the Senate borne by Senator DAUGHTRY of Cumberland of that Body, informing the House that the Senate is ready to adjourn without day.

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On motion of Representative CRAVEN of Lewiston, the House adjourned without day at 10:00 p.m. Friday, May 10, 2024, in honor and lasting tribute to the Honorable Windol C. Weaver of York and the Honorable Russell P. Treadwell of Carmel.