

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

The following document is provided by the
LAW AND LEGISLATIVE DIGITAL LIBRARY
at the Maine State Law and Legislative Reference Library
<http://legislature.maine.gov/lawlib>



Reproduced from electronic originals
(may include minor formatting differences from printed original)

ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE
FIRST REGULAR SESSION
8th Legislative Day
Tuesday, February 25, 2025

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

Prayer by Pastor Ernie Farrar, United Methodist Church, New Harbor.

National Anthem by Embry Bivigou Pangou, Pihcintu Multinational Girls' Choir, Portland.

Pledge of Allegiance.

The Journal of Tuesday, February 11, 2025 was read and approved.

At this point, a message came from the Senate borne by Senator DUSON of Cumberland of that Body, proposing a Joint Convention of both branches of the Legislature to be held in the Hall of the House at 10:45 in the morning for the purpose of extending to the Honorable Valerie Stanfill, Chief Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court, the Justices of the Supreme Judicial Court, and members of the Judiciary, an invitation to attend the Joint Convention and to make such communication as pleases the Chief Justice.

Thereupon the House voted to concur in the proposal for a Joint Convention to be held at 10:45 in the morning and the Speaker appointed Representative MOONEN of Portland to convey this message to the Senate.

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

Subsequently, Representative MOONEN of Portland reported that he had delivered the message with which he was charged.

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

SPECIAL SENTIMENT CALENDAR

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

Recognizing:

Jennifer Fortin, of Augusta, who was named National Elegant Miss at the American Miss National Pageant. We extend our congratulations and best wishes;

(SLS 89)

On **OBJECTION** of Representative BRIDGEO of Augusta, was **REMOVED** from the Special Sentiment Calendar.

READ.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Augusta, Representative Bridgeo.

Representative **BRIDGEO**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just momentarily want to recognize my good friend and associate from the YMCA, Jen Fortin, for this honor. Jen is a dynamo in our community, and she is particularly beloved at our wonderful YMCA here in the city; just down the hill, by the way, if any of you find a little free time and need to work your stress off. And to know that she's being recognized like this brings pride to Augusta and to our YMCA. So, thank you very much.

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

Recognizing:

Rachel Williams, of Sidney, for her 42 years of dedicated service with the Sidney Fire and Rescue Department. We extend our appreciation and best wishes;

(HLS 91)

Presented by Representative COLLINS of Sidney.

Cosponsored by Senator BRADSTREET of Kennebec, Representative NUTTING of Oakland.

On **OBJECTION** of Representative COLLINS of Sydney, was **REMOVED** from the Special Sentiment Calendar.

READ.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Sidney, Representative Collins.

Representative **COLLINS**: Thank you, and good morning, Mr. Speaker, Gentlemen and Ladies of the House. What a great honor to speak about a woman who dedicated 42 years to emergency medicine in Sidney, Maine.

EMT work is never routine nor easy, and it can be downright depressing. I will share an experience with you about one Christmas I worked an extra shift to allow my co-worker at County Ambulance to stay home with his family. Typically, our day consisted of transfers from rehabilitation facilities to hospitals or from hospitals to rehabilitation facilities. Our service was contracted with several towns in the area, including the town of Bowdoin. Our call came in about 7 a.m. There was a female patient in pain who needed to be taken to the emergency room for treatment. We walked into the home to see the Christmas tree, the lights on and it was surrounded by unopened gifts. The lady we came to pick up was sitting in a kitchen chair next to that tree. She was hunched over because the pain was too great for her sit up straight. The mood in the room was heavy. Their mom had come home the night before from her treatment facility to celebrate Christmas with the family, only she couldn't stay; the pain in her body was too much. There was no celebration to be had.

Rachel Williams has lived with stories such as these for the past 42 years. More personal stories, because the patients she treated were often her neighbors, friends, co-workers and family. People in town describe her as always putting the patient first, always following procedure, never talking about the calls she was on and, as rescue chief for 20 years in a male-dominated occupation, never taking any, quote, crap from the boys. Phrases that came up to describe Rachel? Knowledgeable, helpful, endearing, compassionate, funny, fun and her heart is in the community. The one phrase that came up the most; she is so humble. These are the qualities of a good citizen. These are the qualities of a great EMT.

The Bible says in Romans 5:7, "very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person, someone might possibly dare to die." Rachel has shown the humility of Christ in her outstanding service to the people of Sidney. I think Chief Jandreau has said it best: Thank you, Rachel, for your service and dedication to the town for so many years. Enjoy your retirement, because you truly deserve it. Thank you.

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

In Memory of:

Bruce Martin Curran, of Lowell. Mr. Curran will be long remembered and sadly missed by his family, friends and community;

(HLS 6)

Presented by Representative MCINTYRE of Lowell.

Cosponsored by Senator STEWART of Aroostook, Senator TIPPING of Penobscot, Representative FAULKINGHAM of Winter Harbor, Representative JAVNER of Chester.

On **OBJECTION** of Representative JAVNER of Chester, was **REMOVED** from the Special Sentiment Calendar.

READ.

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

Representative **JAVNER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. Bruce was a man of steadfast character, someone who gave of himself generously and inspired those around him to be better.

When I was a very inexperienced candidate for the Maine Legislature, Bruce was the very first person to contact me to display my sign on his lawn. For a new candidate, unsure of their path, his simple act of encouragement was monumental. It gave me confidence at a time when I desperately needed it. Over the years, I visited Bruce during every campaign. His door was always open to me, and his words were always supportive. I know that I'm not alone in being touched by Bruce's warmth and encouragement. He had a way of making everyone feel valued.

Bruce's life was a testament to his deep commitment to Maine and to the values we hold dear. He loved this State, its beauty, its resilience and its people. Whether it was his support for local initiatives, his openhearted welcome to friends and neighbors or his unwavering belief in the importance of community, Bruce demonstrated a quiet but powerful dedication to the place that he called home. He represented the best of us; hardworking, humble and deeply connected to the fabric of our shared lives. Of course, Bruce's greatest commitment was to his family. He was a loving husband and a devoted father. His love for his family was evident in every story he shared, in every smile when he spoke of them and in every action he took to ensure their well-being. Bruce leaves behind a legacy of love that will endure in the hearts of his family for generations to come.

We also honor Bruce for his service to our nation. As a veteran, Bruce served with courage and dedication. He answered the call to serve at a time when our nation faced great challenges, and his commitment to his country never wavered.

In reflecting on Bruce's life, I'm reminded of a quote by William James: "The great use of life is to spend it for something that will outlast it." Bruce lived his life in a way that will indeed outlive his days on this earth. His kindness, his generosity, his commitment to his family, his community and his country; these are the things that will endure. His life serves as an example to us all of how to live with purpose and integrity.

As we say goodbye to Bruce, I'll carry forward the lessons that he taught us through his example. He taught us to commit ourselves to our families, our communities and the values that bind us together. And let us remember that the way we live our lives has the power to inspire and uplift those around, just as Bruce did. Thank you, Bruce, for your friendship, your service and your love. You will be missed, but your legacy will live on in all of us who were fortunate enough to have known you.

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

In Memory of:

Andrea Quaid, of Lewiston. Ms. Quaid worked in investment management services for banks in New York, Chicago, London and Paris before starting a career in government service. She worked in the office of Congressman Michael Michaud and at the time of her death as a Constituent Services Representative for Senator Angus King, handling casework around immigration and State Department issues. In the community, she performed for the Lewiston-Auburn Community Little Theatre in *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *You Can't Take It With You*, *The Importance of Being Earnest* and *The Odd Couple*. She served on the boards of the Franco-American Collection at the Lewiston-Auburn Campus of the University of Southern Maine, the Androscoggin Land Trust, the Lewiston-Auburn Community Little Theatre and the Dartmouth College Club of Maine. Ms. Quaid will be long remembered and sadly missed by her family, friends and community;

(HLS 87)

Presented by Representative LAJOIE of Lewiston.

Cosponsored by Senator ROTUNDO of Androscoggin, Representative ABDI of Lewiston, Representative CLOUTIER of Lewiston, Representative MCCABE of Lewiston.

On **OBJECTION** of Representative LAJOIE of Lewiston, was **REMOVED** from the Special Sentiment Calendar.

READ.

On motion of the same Representative, **TABLED** pending **ADOPTION** and later today assigned.

PETITIONS, BILLS AND RESOLVES REQUIRING REFERENCE

Bill "An Act to Establish a Comprehensive Program to Divert Youth from the Criminal Justice System and Address Their Needs"

(H.P. 482) (L.D. 740)

Sponsored by Representative LOOKNER of Portland.

Cosponsored by Senator LAWRENCE of York and Representatives: BRENNAN of Portland, GATTINE of Westbrook, GRAMLICH of Old Orchard Beach, HASENFUS of Readfield, MCCABE of Lewiston, MILLIKEN of Blue Hill, Senators: BENNETT of Oxford, MOORE of Washington.

Committee on **CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY** suggested and ordered printed.

REFERRED to the Committee on **CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY** and ordered printed.

Sent for concurrence.

Bill "An Act to Promote Voter Registration for Students in Maine's High Schools"

(H.P. 476) (L.D. 734)

Sponsored by Representative MCCABE of Lewiston.

Cosponsored by Representatives: ABDI of Lewiston, CLOUTIER of Lewiston, DODGE of Belfast, JULIA of Waterville, MACIAS of Topsham, SATO of Gorham, SHAGOURY of Hallowell, WARREN of Scarborough.

Bill "An Act to Improve Ferry Service Reliability by Providing Scholarships at the Maine Maritime Academy"

(H.P. 478) (L.D. 736)

Sponsored by Representative RAY of Lincolnville.

Cosponsored by Representative: DODGE of Belfast.

Committee on **EDUCATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS** suggested and ordered printed.

REFERRED to the Committee on **EDUCATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS** and ordered printed.
Sent for concurrence.

Bill "An Act to Protect Sand Dunes on Sears Island and to Establish Criteria for Legislation Regarding Land Development"
(H.P. 477) (L.D. 735)

Sponsored by Representative PAUL of Winterport.
Cosponsored by Senator GROHOSKI of Hancock and Representatives: COLLINS of Sidney, DANA of the Passamaquoddy Tribe, HAGGAN of Hampden, SIMMONS of Waldoboro, SOBOLESKI of Phillips, STROUT of Harrington, WHITE of Guilford, WHITE of Ellsworth.

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

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

Bill "An Act to Improve the Efficiency of Certain Department of Health and Human Services Licensing Investigations"

(H.P. 494) (L.D. 764)

Sponsored by Representative MEYER of Eliot.
Submitted by the Department of Health and Human Services pursuant to Joint Rule 204.

Bill "An Act to Amend the Laws Governing the Controlled Substances Prescription Monitoring Program"

(H.P. 495) (L.D. 765)

Sponsored by Representative MEYER of Eliot.
Submitted by the Department of Health and Human Services pursuant to Joint Rule 204.

Bill "An Act to Protect the Children of Maine"

(H.P. 496) (L.D. 766)

Sponsored by Representative MEYER of Eliot.

Committee on **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES** suggested and ordered printed.

REFERRED to the Committee on **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES** and ordered printed.

Sent for concurrence.

Bill "An Act to Permit Telehealth Services Across State Lines Following Referral from a Primary Care Provider Based in the State"

(H.P. 484) (L.D. 742)

Sponsored by Representative FREDETTE of Newport.

Bill "An Act to Increase the Availability and Affordability of Health Care by Eliminating Certificate of Need Requirements"

(H.P. 485) (L.D. 743)

Sponsored by Representative LIBBY of Auburn.
Cosponsored by Senator HAGGAN of Penobscot and Representatives: BOYER of Poland, FOLEY of Wells, NUTTING of Oakland.

Committee on **HEALTH COVERAGE, INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES** suggested and ordered printed.

REFERRED to the Committee on **HEALTH COVERAGE, INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES** and ordered printed.

Sent for concurrence.

Bill "An Act to Establish a Health Care Gap Year Program for Recent College Graduates"

(H.P. 442) (L.D. 703)

Sponsored by Representative RANA of Bangor.

Cosponsored by Senator INGWERSEN of York and Representatives: DHALAC of South Portland, DODGE of Belfast, SKOLD of Portland, Senators: BALDACCI of Penobscot, BENNETT of Oxford, BERNARD of Aroostook, RENY of Lincoln.

Committee on **HEALTH COVERAGE, INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES** suggested.

On motion of Representative MATHIESON of Kittery, the Bill was **REFERRED** to the Committee on **LABOR**, ordered printed and sent for concurrence.

Bill "An Act to Make Changes to the Law Based on a Pilot Project Conducted by the Maine State Housing Authority Regarding Efforts to Improve Access to Credit for Low-income Renters"

(H.P. 475) (L.D. 733)

Sponsored by Representative ZAGER of Portland.

Cosponsored by Senator BENNETT of Oxford and Representatives: BLIER of Buxton, GERE of Kennebunkport.

Bill "An Act to Increase Preparedness for Solar Power Adoption in Maine"

(H.P. 483) (L.D. 741)

Sponsored by Representative SKOLD of Portland.

Cosponsored by Senator GROHOSKI of Hancock and Representatives: GEIGER of Rockland, GERE of Kennebunkport, GRAMLICH of Old Orchard Beach, SAYRE of Kennebunk, WARREN of Scarborough, WEBB of Durham.

Bill "An Act to Provide Funds to Reduce Student Homelessness"

(H.P. 489) (L.D. 747)

Sponsored by Representative BRENNAN of Portland.

Cosponsored by Senator PIERCE of Cumberland and Representatives: CLOUTIER of Lewiston, DODGE of Belfast, GRAMLICH of Old Orchard Beach, LOOKNER of Portland, MALON of Biddeford, MURPHY of Scarborough, SALISBURY of Westbrook, Senator: RAFFERTY of York.

Bill "An Act to Increase Bridging Rental Assistance Program Housing Voucher Funding to Reduce the Current Partial Waiting List and Increase Housing Vouchers for Persons Living with Mental Health Challenges"

(H.P. 490) (L.D. 748)

Sponsored by Representative GOLEK of Harpswell.

Cosponsored by Representatives: BRIDGEO of Augusta, COPELAND of Saco, DEBRITO of Waterville, DHALAC of South Portland, EATON of Deer Isle, GERE of Kennebunkport, JULIA of Waterville, MATHIESON of Kittery.

Committee on **HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT** suggested and ordered printed.

REFERRED to the Committee on **HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT** and ordered printed.

Sent for concurrence.

Bill "An Act Regarding a So-called Clean Slate Initiative for Arrest and Conviction Records"

(H.P. 479) (L.D. 737)

Sponsored by Representative BOYER of Poland.

Bill "An Act to Remove Barriers to Becoming a Lawyer by Establishing a Law Office Study Program"

(H.P. 480) (L.D. 738)

Sponsored by Representative BOYER of Poland.

Cosponsored by Senator HICKMAN of Kennebec and Representatives: LEE of Auburn, MILLIKEN of Blue Hill, QUINT of Hodgdon, SUPICA of Bangor, WARREN of Scarborough, Senators: BAILEY of York, BENNETT of Oxford, TIPPING of Penobscot.

Bill "An Act to Reimburse the City of Ellsworth for an Access Road to a New Court Facility in Hancock County"

(H.P. 481) (L.D. 739)

Sponsored by Representative WHITE of Ellsworth.

Cosponsored by Senator GROHOSKI of Hancock and Representatives: BISHOP of Bucksport, FRIEDMANN of Bar Harbor, MCINTYRE of Lowell.

Committee on **JUDICIARY** suggested and ordered printed.

REFERRED to the Committee on **JUDICIARY** and ordered printed.

Sent for concurrence.

Bill "An Act to Prohibit Municipalities from Barring the Creation of Homeless Shelters"

(H.P. 473) (L.D. 731)

Sponsored by Representative LOOKNER of Portland.

Cosponsored by Senator BALDACCI of Penobscot and Representatives: ARFORD of Brunswick, BRENNAN of Portland, BRIDGEO of Augusta, CLOUTIER of Lewiston, DEBRITO of Waterville, EDER of Waterboro, SALISBURY of Westbrook, SUPICA of Bangor.

Bill "An Act to Prohibit Copyrights for Works of State Government"

(H.P. 474) (L.D. 732)

Sponsored by Representative POIRIER of Skowhegan.

Cosponsored by Representatives: DUCHARME of Madison, GRIFFIN of Levant, MORRIS of Turner, QUINT of Hodgdon.

Bill "An Act to Ensure That the Will of the Voters Is Reflected in Interim Appointments of United States Senators"

(H.P. 491) (L.D. 749)

Sponsored by Representative BOYER of Poland.

Cosponsored by Senator HAGGAN of Penobscot and Representatives: CHAPMAN of Auburn, DRINKWATER of Milford, FROST of Belgrade, HENDERSON of Rumford, PERKINS of Dover-Foxcroft, WARREN of Scarborough, Senators: GROHOSKI of Hancock, HICKMAN of Kennebec.

Bill "An Act to Require Bleeding Control Kits in State-owned Buildings"

(H.P. 497) (L.D. 774)

Sponsored by Representative PERKINS of Dover-Foxcroft.

Cosponsored by Senator CYRWAY of Kennebec and Representatives: ARDELL of Monticello, BUNKER of Farmington, FOSTER of Dexter, LAJOIE of Lewiston, MCINTYRE of Lowell, NUTTING of Oakland, Senators: MOORE of Washington, TIMBERLAKE of Androscoggin.

Bill "An Act Requiring Voter Approval of Legislative and Gubernatorial Pay Increases"

(H.P. 498) (L.D. 775)

Sponsored by Representative TUELL of East Machias.

Cosponsored by Senator MOORE of Washington and Representative: MCINTYRE of Lowell.

Committee on **STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT** suggested and ordered printed.

REFERRED to the Committee on **STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT** and ordered printed.

Sent for concurrence.

Bill "An Act to Remove Certain Wharves and Piers from the Laws Governing the Current Use Valuation of Working Waterfront Land"

(H.P. 486) (L.D. 744)

Sponsored by Representative ANKELES of Brunswick.

Cosponsored by Representatives: ARFORD of Brunswick, HEPLER of Woolwich, RIELLY of Westbrook.

Bill "An Act to Allow a Municipality to Sell Tax-acquired Property in Any Manner Authorized by the Municipality's Legislative Body"

(H.P. 487) (L.D. 745)

Sponsored by Representative LEMELIN of Chelsea.

Bill "An Act to Authorize a Local Option Sales Tax on Short-term Lodging to Fund Municipalities and Affordable Housing"

(H.P. 488) (L.D. 746)

Sponsored by Representative FRIEDMANN of Bar Harbor.

Cosponsored by Senator TIPPING of Penobscot and Representatives: Speaker FECTEAU of Biddeford, RAY of Lincolnville, SAYRE of Kennebunk.

Committee on **TAXATION** suggested and ordered printed.

REFERRED to the Committee on **TAXATION** and ordered printed.

Sent for concurrence.

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

ORDERS

On motion of Representative CLOUTIER of Lewiston, the following Joint Resolution: (H.P. 472) (Cosponsored by Senator MOORE of Washington)

JOINT RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT FAMILY CAREGIVERS IN MAINE

WHEREAS, Americans are living longer than ever before, and Maine is on the leading edge of this trend; and

WHEREAS, Mainers are predictably living healthy, productive lives into their 80s, 90s and 100s; and

WHEREAS, the majority of older Mainers wish to remain in their homes and communities as they age; and

WHEREAS, a quarter of older adults will need care and support as they age, and the majority of them will want to receive this care in their homes and communities; and

WHEREAS, eighty-three percent of the help provided to older adults in the United States comes from family members, friends or other unpaid caregivers, and nearly half of all caregivers who provide help to older adults do so for someone with Alzheimer's disease or another dementia; and

WHEREAS, a family caregiver can be a spouse, partner, adult child, other relative, friend or neighbor who has a significant relationship with, and who provides a broad range of assistance to, an adult dealing with the challenges of age, illness, injury or chronic or disabling conditions; and

WHEREAS, currently, there are 166,000 family caregivers in Maine; and

WHEREAS, family caregivers in Maine provide an estimated 155,000,000 hours of unpaid care annually, which can be valued at nearly \$2,920,000,000; and

WHEREAS, family caregivers spend, on average, more than \$7,200 out of pocket annually in caring for their loved ones; and

WHEREAS, approximately 51,000 family caregivers in Maine are caring for a loved one with Alzheimer's disease, providing an estimated 87,000,000 hours of unpaid care annually at a value of \$1,911,000,000; and

WHEREAS, dementia caregiving involves many hours over a long period of time, and the demands of dementia caregiving often result in physical and mental health problems among caregivers themselves; and

WHEREAS, the demand for family caregivers will increase as the United States population ages, and the prevalence of Alzheimer's disease will continue to rise significantly, nearly doubling by 2050; and

WHEREAS, the Maine State Legislature has passed various provisions into law in support of family caregivers, including the Alzheimer's disease and related dementia state plan, the Respite for ME program and the paid family and medical leave benefits program; and

WHEREAS, family caregivers often work full-time or part-time while providing care for a loved one, while others are forced to leave the workforce, for a period of time or permanently, to provide care; and

WHEREAS, Maine is missing out on over \$1,000,000,000 per year in additional economic activity as a result of family caregivers dropping out of the labor force due to care challenges; and

WHEREAS, the ratio of potential family caregivers to the growing number of those who need care has already begun a steep decline; and

WHEREAS, the number of personal support specialists, certified nursing assistants, personal care attendants and home health aides cannot meet the current or projected demand for care in Maine, and this shortage results in family caregivers leaving the workforce temporarily or permanently; and

WHEREAS, the lack of available supports and services for older people, such as Meals on Wheels, Adult Day Services and housing with services, challenges older people who wish to remain at home and their caregivers to find the help they need; and

WHEREAS, the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine report that the need to recognize and support family caregivers is the most significantly overlooked challenge facing the United States; and

WHEREAS, Maine must find ways to support family caregivers in their efforts to provide care to loved ones, allowing Maine citizens to safely and comfortably age in their own homes, helping to preserve communities and avoiding the expense of institutional care; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That We, the Members of the One Hundred and Thirty-second Legislature now assembled in the First Regular Session, on behalf of the people we represent, support the review of state policies and programs for their effectiveness in addressing the needs of family caregivers, professional caregivers and the loved ones they care for and recognize February 21, 2025 as National Caregivers Day; and be it further

RESOLVED: That a suitable copy of this resolution, duly authenticated by the Secretary of State, be transmitted to the Department of Health and Human Services.

READ.

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

Representative **CLOUTIER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last Friday, February 21st, was National Caregivers Day, and I am proud to count myself among the many Mainers who have provided care to a loved one.

I was a family caregiver for my mom until she passed away in 2018 from Alzheimer's disease. It was not long after her initial diagnosis that we moved her from her home in Ocala, Florida, back to Maine. At the time, her illness did not require her to be in a locked memory care facility, but it did require her to have access to round-the-clock care. This care ended up falling partly to my husband and me, who both needed to work full-time to keep our household and family afloat financially. Mom went to adult daycare in Topsham while we were at work and split the duties of taking care of her in the evenings and on weekends, juggling schedules to support our then 10-year-old daughter and community responsibilities as well. I was blessed to have had this time with my mother, and I would not change our decision to take her into our home. But my time as a family caregiver was one of the most challenging times in my life, as I was constantly navigating family, medical, housing and financial details, all while providing the basic care that my mother needed. As my mother's health began to decline, so did my capacity for self-care, as well as the quality of my relationships with her and others.

My story is not unique. Nearly one in eight Mainers care for a family member who is older or has a disability. In 2023, it was estimated that family members in Maine provided 155 million hours of unpaid care, worth \$2.9 billion annually. Dementia caregivers make up a substantial portion of these totals, representing 87 million hours of unpaid care, worth \$1.9 billion annually. But these aren't just statistics, they are real Maine families. I know personally what family caregivers sacrifice to provide care for their loved ones, especially those impacted by Alzheimer's disease. State programs like Respite for ME have helped to preserve the dignity of those needing care by enabling them to stay home with family while also supporting the caregiver's well-being. These dedicated family members deserve the recognition, support and resources to continue filling the gaps in Maine's currently unmet need for care. I hope you will join me in thanking them. Thank you.

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

CONSENT CALENDAR

First Day

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

(S.P. 67) (L.D. 131) Bill "An Act to Eliminate the Provision of the Maine Workers' Compensation Act of 1992 That Allows an Employer Member of a Group Self-insurer to Insure Its Employees Through a Fronting Arrangement" Committee on **HEALTH COVERAGE, INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES** reporting **Ought to Pass**

(H.P. 49) (L.D. 85) Bill "An Act to Revitalize the Maine Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Advisory Council" Committee on **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES** reporting **Ought to Pass**

(H.P. 62) (L.D. 97) Bill "An Act to Facilitate the Improvement of Credit Scores of Residents of Department of Corrections Facilities" Committee on **CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY** reporting **Ought to Pass**

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

There being no objection, the Senate Paper was **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED** in concurrence and the House Papers were **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED** and sent for concurrence.

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

At this point, the Senate came and a Joint Convention was formed.

In Convention

The President of the Senate, the Honorable Matthea Elisabeth Larsen Daughtry, in the Chair.

The Convention was called to order by the Chair.

On motion of Senator PIERCE of Cumberland, it was

ORDERED, that a Committee be appointed to wait upon the Honorable Valerie Stanfill, Chief Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court; the Honorable Janet T. Mills, Governor of the State of Maine; the Justices of the Supreme Judicial Court; and Members of the Judiciary, and inform them that the two branches of the Legislature are in Convention assembled, ready to receive such communications as the Chief Justice is pleased to make.

The Chair appointed the following Members:

The Sen. from Cumberland, Senator CARNEY
The Sen. from Cumberland, Senator TALBOT ROSS
The Sen. from Penobscot, Senator HAGGAN
The Rep. from Falmouth, Representative KUHN
The Rep. from Auburn, Representative LEE
The Rep. from Bath, Representative SINCLAIR
The Rep. from Gorham, Representative SATO
The Rep. from Portland, Representative PUGH
The Rep. from Brewer, Representative O'HALLORAN
The Rep. from Skowhegan, Representative POIRIER
The Rep. from Rumford, Representative HENDERSON
The Rep. from Caratunk, Representative CARUSO
The Rep. from Fort Fairfield, Representative BABIN
The Rep. from the Passamaquoddy Tribe, Rep. DANA

Subsequently, Senator CARNEY, for the Committee, reported that the Committee had delivered the message with which they were charged, and the Honorable Valerie Stanfill, Chief Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court; the Honorable Janet T. Mills, Governor of the State of Maine; the Justices of the Supreme Judicial Court; and Honorable Members of the Judiciary would attend forthwith.

The Chair welcomed to the Convention the Honorable Justices of the Maine Supreme Judicial Court: Associate Justice Andrew Mead; Associate Justice Andrew Horton; and Associate Justice Rick Lawrence.

The Chair welcomed to the Convention the Honorable Valerie Stanfill, Chief Justice of the Maine Supreme Judicial Court, accompanied by the Honorable Janet T. Mills, Governor of the State of Maine.

The Chair recognized in the Gallery, the following Members and guests of the Judicial Branch: Chief Justice Robert Mullen of the Maine Superior Court; Chief Judge Brent Davis of the Maine District Court; Deputy Chief Justice Eric Walker of the Maine District Court; Amy Quinlan, State Court Administrator; and Barbara Cardone, Director of Legal Affairs and Public Relations.

The Chair requested the Honorable Valerie Stanfill, Chief Justice of the Maine Supreme Judicial Court, to please step forward and address the Joint Convention.

Chief Justice **STANFILL**: Thank you and good morning. Governor Mills, President Daughtry, Speaker Fecteau, distinguished Members and guests of the Legislature, people of the State of Maine, I am pleased to once again be able to report to you on the State of the Judiciary, Maine's third branch of government.

I appreciate the recognition of members of the Judicial Branch by President Daughtry, but I always feel I have to take the opportunity to personally thank those members of the Branch who have accompanied me here today. So, I'm going to do it again. In order of seniority, I again recognize my wonderful and supportive colleagues on the Maine Supreme Judicial Court: Senior Associate Justice Andy Mead, who is located in Bangor; Justice Mark Horton, located in Portland; and somehow got down there, Justice Rick Lawrence, also located in Portland. I'm sure you've noticed that there are supposed to be seven of us, but there aren't seven of us here. Justices Cathy Connors and Wayne Douglas were unable to be here this morning and send their regrets. Also, we've had a vacancy for a year, but I'm hopeful that's going to be filled soon.

The Supreme Judicial Court operates like a Board of Directors for the Judicial Branch, but the Chiefs of the Trial Courts, who you just heard about, are like the Executive Committee that I work with on a regular basis. Chief Justice Bob Mullen of the Superior Court is based in Skowhegan; Chief Judge Brent Davis is based in Augusta; and Deputy Chief Judge Eric Walker is based in Belfast, and I thank them for their counsel on a daily basis.

Finally, also some of our administrative team, and you heard about that. Amy Quinlan is the State Court Administrator. That means she's the head of the Administrative Office of Courts and my essential partner in the management of the Judicial Branch. I am grateful for that partnership every day. And with her, of course, are two people you may know, or if you don't, you will know in the future; and that's Barbara Cardone, our Director of Legal Affairs and Public Relations; as well as Julie Finn, our Legislative Analyst.

I also need to thank all of the dedicated staff and judges of the Maine Judicial Branch for what they do every day. I wish I could name each and every one of them, but obviously, that would take far too long, but their extraordinary hard work and dedication in serving the cause of justice in the State of Maine is, for me, inspirational. We are lucky to have them.

Governor Mills released a statement on Martin Luther King Day in which she said the following: "May we all renew our commitment to building a State and nation grounded in shared responsibility, and to expanding justice, equality and fairness for all people." These aren't Liberal or Conservative sentiments; they are the ideals upon which this country was founded. They are embodied in our State Constitution, our Federal Constitution, in the Declaration of Independence and in the Pledge of Allegiance. And yet, I fear that our commitment to these ideals is falling short. For state courts, national events, continued drumbeats of misinformation on social media, traditional media, along, frankly, with deficits in, probably in Civics education, have led to a crisis across the country.

Courts have traditionally been the most trusted of the three branches of government; sorry to tell you that, but it's true; on both the federal and State level. The National Center for State Courts performs an annual survey and asks citizens across the country how much confidence they have in the different American institutions. State courts score a bit higher than other

branches of government, or indeed, than federal courts, by the way. But the numbers are low in recent years. In 2024, only 50% of Americans rated the job being done by state courts as good or excellent, and that's even above how it was in 2021, which was a record low of 44%. So, we have work to do.

I point out these statistics because it translates into an increased disrespect for all of our institutions. For courts, we rule on disputes; we make decisions affecting liberty and property interests. People must be able to trust those rulings are based in law, they're not swayed by other factors and that the process is fair. A lack of such trust threatens the very underpinnings of our society.

So, this growing disrespect that we see also affects the people who work tirelessly to provide a fair and open justice system in Maine. According to the American Bar Association, serious threats against judges have doubled since 2019. Let me say that again: In five years, those serious threats have doubled against judges. And it isn't just threats against judges, but also all court staff. Here in Maine, our marshals are called upon with greater and greater frequency to intervene with the public in our courthouses. Indeed, I would be in a bad place if I didn't take this opportunity to thank and to recognize the Director of our State Marshal Service, Ted Ross, who is here; our Deputy Chief Marshal, Mark Tibbetts, who is also here; as well as Deputy Judicial Marshals Ben Hall and Mark Lawrence, who are up on the balcony. Gentlemen, thank you, and thank you to all of your fellow officers.

When people come to court, it is frequently under incredibly stressful and often unhappy circumstances. The men and women of the Judicial Branch Marshal Service do an incredible job of soothing the waters and protecting judges, judicial staff, members of the public every day, in an increasingly volatile environment. So, while I'm not here to go through all our budget requests, I promise, we have asked that you continue to increase funding for the Marshal Service as you have in the past, so that they are able to do their job effectively and keep all of us safe at our courthouses.

I do want to talk to you about some of our biggest challenges, what we've done, and what we can do. So, unlike other professions which are regulated by the Executive Branch under laws passed by the Legislature, the practice of law is regulated and overseen by the Supreme Judicial Court, not by the Legislature. It is the Supreme Judicial Court that licenses attorneys, and thus the status of the legal profession is directly our concern. And the availability of lawyers, legal advice and legal representation is increasingly a pipe dream for many of our citizens.

In the vast majority of civil and family cases, at least one of the parties is unrepresented. And as you know, in addition, the Constitution requires that the State provide an attorney to those who cannot afford one in certain kinds of cases; primarily criminal, juvenile and child protective cases, the cases where the Department of Health and Human Services is involved. These are cases where significant rights are at stake, but the crisis in availability of constitutionally required counsel has only grown. The Maine Commission on Public Defense Services recently released its annual report. As of December 30th, there are 1,150 matters pending without counsel. Now, those same cases probably have shifted around, but this is where we are. That included 998 criminal, post-conviction and juvenile matters. It also included 112 child protective cases and 40 appeals. So, while the public defender offices hold promise for the future, they cannot currently meet the demand. I know in the Supreme Judicial Court alone, we, on a typical day may have as many as 40 cases, child protection cases, awaiting appointment of

counsel. That's a process that means it's now frequently taking months more than it should in cases involving Maine's most vulnerable children. In other words, the lack of attorneys adds to delay, and it adds to backlog.

So, what are we doing and what else can we do? As I say, we are the Body that governs the legal profession, so, I'm going to touch on some of that. Last year, I wrote to some of Maine's law firms who employ our former law clerks; who are usually the best and the brightest coming out of law school will clerk for the Supreme Judicial Court for a year; to ask them if those folks would take some child protective appeals, because they've seen a lot of those cases when they worked for us. Some agreed to do so, and I'm pleased to report that the briefs filed by those young lawyers are some of the best we've ever seen, confirming that they are more than competent to handle that kind of case, just by what the requirements may be from the PDS. So, I've let the Commission know that; the PDS is what we call it; and I hope to encourage more of that.

In September, we amended Rule 11C of the Bar Admission Rules to authorize temporary permission to practice for a period of up to two years for an attorney who is already a member of the Bar in good standing in another state who is coming to Maine and asking to be admitted by what we call motion; they don't have to go through the whole process again. If that attorney is employed by the Commission on Public Defense, which is also true for civil legal services providers, they can begin to practice while that motion is pending. Like I say, we're assuming these are people already members of the Bar of another state in good standing. This is primarily to aid in recruiting lawyers from out of state to come into Maine to fill those positions, because the formal process of admission by motion can take quite a bit of time to complete.

In November, the court amended the Bar Rules to permit attorneys to receive up to three continuing legal education credits for undertaking certain kinds of *pro bono* work in an effort to try to expand the pool of lawyers doing civil legal services. We've expanded the student practice rules for law students. These are rules that allow law students to represent clients in court under the supervision of an attorney. I actually had the occasion many years ago to supervise a lot of those students; as did the Governor, actually. And it's a wonderful learning experience, but it also helps expand the pool of lawyers available for people. So, the rules now identify the Public Defense Commission as an appropriate entity for student practice supervision, and that's so; in addition to prosecutor's offices and legal services providers. We also just authorized a pilot with the law school to allow supervision by private contract attorneys, not just those employed by the Public Defense Services, as long as they are rostered. These are little steps, but, you know, we're not a big State, so, everything helps.

Earlier this year, the Supreme Judicial Court, we all went over to the law school; those relationships had sort of fallen a little by the side, I think; and met with the first-year class as well as the faculty of the law school, with the goal, really, of encouraging those folks to stay and to engage in public interest work here in Maine. And, indeed, I understand the law school, I've had a lot of conversations with the Dean of the law school, and they are expanding their doctrinal and clinical offerings for both criminal defense and Child Protective Services to try to create a direct pipeline.

Finally, we also submitted a bill to this session; some of you will see it, I don't think it's come up for hearing yet; but, to provide that when there is no attorney available from PDS, when they are unable to provide an attorney, the courts can appoint any attorney who agrees to take the case. Something we've

always had the inherent ability to do, and in fact, it's how it used to work, but under the bill we've proposed, what is important is the PDS would then have to pay that attorney. The bill is crafted as emergency legislation; it's also crafted to sunset in three years, because what we're trying to do is not pull lawyers away from the PDS roster, but rather to bridge; to bridge the next three years until the public defender offices are fully up and running and able to fill what is now a yawning gap in appointed counsel services. And there are people out there who are able and capable of taking these cases who are not on the rosters, but frankly, would listen if a judge called them. So, that's what we're asking for.

But we can also think outside the box. We're looking at whether we should expand who can provide some legal services, at least in a limited fashion. Perhaps it's time to allow trained paraprofessionals without a law degree to handle some limited, straightforward legal issues. There are many questions to be answered, of course, if we were to go down that route: Who? What kind of training? What kind of education? What kind of experience? Licensure? What area or areas of law? Would a paraprofessional need to work for a licensed attorney, or could they practice independently? In short, what are the guardrails to ensure that such paraprofessionals are actually a benefit to Maine citizens? But it is beginning to happen, and it's something we will explore.

Another issue, and this is one that's frankly common to all the professions; what do we do to recruit and keep lawyers in the rural deserts of our State? The national research seems to show that lawyers most likely to practice in rural areas and stay there are from there. It seems kind of like it makes sense. It may be that increased online and remote education would allow people who already live in the rural areas of our State to attend law school without having to uproot themselves and their families to move to Portland for three years. Again, an idea worth considering. That's a big conversation, there are a lot of barriers to it, but I will tell you that I serve on a national committee of the Conference of Chief Justices, and these are some of the issues we are looking at and figuring out how to navigate around.

There's also national research showing deficits in the practice readiness of these lawyers, and that's related to whether they can competently step into some of the lanes I've described. And as I say, we've had conversations with the law school that they are trying to create some really good direct pipelines to deal with some of those issues. But the economics of law practice have changed, making formal mentoring more difficult. And importantly, the significant increase in remote appearances means that the informal mentoring that many lawyers had in the office, at court appearances, has all but disappeared. There are, of course, broader societal issues, not just lawyer issues, but I fear things are not going better. So, many of us as lawyers learned a tremendous amount just going to the courthouse and watching other lawyers and judges instead of sitting in our offices on a screen.

Speaking of remote appearances, we continue to encourage the use of remote technology, however, for court appearances when appropriate. Indeed, as you may know, all traffic violations are heard remotely in Maine, and that has really worked tremendously well. Remote technology is a tool that may mean a litigant doesn't need to take the day off or find a babysitter in order to come to court for a brief appearance. It's a tool that may mean that lawyers can save their clients money by not traveling all around the State and being paid for it. It means that the limited pool of court-appointed lawyers are able to handle cases in different locations. And it also means fewer

continuances to accommodate the busy schedules of overworked lawyers. It may also mean that we can hold a court proceeding even though we don't have marshals available, or clerks.

But there are drawbacks to remote appearances as well. As I say, the mentoring piece is a big one, but also in criminal cases when dispositional conferences are held remotely, even when an agreement is reached to; in the case, the case nonetheless must frequently be reset for yet another court appearance in order to enter a plea, because the defendant's not in the conference or in the courtroom or in a different location from the lawyer. So, now, that may mean they have to discuss the matter later, so, what that means is that effectively doubles the number of court events by doing the first one remotely in a lot of instances. When attorneys and parties are not in the same location, they don't talk, they don't exchange information; and I'm talking about all case types here; they don't negotiate, they don't settle cases that could be settled. Think how much business gets done here out in the halls, right? Or outside a hearing room? Think how little might get done if you never actually saw your colleagues outside of the formal process here. And that's what is happening for us as well.

In other words, remote appearances can help with backlog by minimizing continuances because of scheduling conflicts, but they can also increase backlog, because it may mean that the appearances are less effective at moving or resolving cases and often need to be rescheduled. So, it's a balance. It's just a balance. It's a tool that we need to use effectively. We have an Administrative Order laying out the presumptions for what kinds of proceedings should be remote and what kinds should be in person, but there's also the ability to request that any other proceeding be held remotely and the factors that we would consider. Every day, judges balance these competing needs specific to the case, and specific to the attorneys and the parties.

So, that leads me to another point. Last year, I said the courts had changed rapidly in the last few years, and technology is no longer a luxury, if it ever was; it certainly isn't now. We have to look at technology as infrastructure of the court system, just as the courthouse buildings are infrastructure. Technology has to be maintained, it has to be updated, it has to be improved on a regular basis, just as we maintain roofs and HVAC systems. Maintenance includes replacement at various interludes. How many of you have had to update your operating system on your laptop on occasion? And we have to fund technology in the same way as we fund infrastructure.

So, what does that mean? It means that the annual fees and the licenses and maintenance and replacement of technology, hardware and software, have to be part of the General Fund budget. Back when we contracted for Maine eCourts; and I'll talk a little bit more about Maine eCourts in a moment; the Legislature some years ago authorized bonding to purchase and install the system, and that's been done, bonds have been issued. But there are annual fees, licenses, maintenance, not covered by the bond funds. So, you asked us to raise money by placing surcharges on filing fees and fines and things like that, and we did. And the biggest single source of revenue was the surcharges on, frankly, traffic fines; just from volume, that's by far the biggest. Those dwarf everything else. But fine revenues have gone down, the funds that are generated are far from adequate as prices go up and as we have more technology. So, they're far from adequate to pay for the system maintenance. In fact, we will be about \$1.8 million short each year of the next biennium, and that is part of our request. This has to be part of just how we do business. Trying to pay for this technology with surcharges on fines and fees is not a sound

plan. First, they're going down; but second of all, those surcharges are, of course, often imposed on those least able to pay, and then it becomes really diminishing returns, because you impose it, but you don't collect it and, of course, the higher fees are; filing fees, things like that; the more they get waived because people can't afford to pay them. So, it doesn't really generate a lot more. It might on paper look like it could generate money, but it really doesn't generate a lot of money.

So, the cost of technology is not just, of course, the ongoing maintenance and fees for Maine eCourts, which is our electronic case management and e-filing system. It permeates everything we do. Electronic evidence, bodycams, social media recordings are the stock and trade every day now in courts, in hearings. That means courtrooms have to be equipped with display screens, with appropriate sound systems, with computers, so that jurors, witnesses, attorneys, the judge and the public; because these are public proceedings; can see and hear what's going on. The same is true for remote appearances of parties, witnesses and attorneys; i.e. Zoom. Most Zoom hearings or proceedings don't take place in an office with the judge looking at a laptop screen; they take place in the courtroom. They're mixed, they're hybrid proceedings, where some people are in the courtroom and an attorney or a witness or a party are appearing remotely. So, if a witness or an attorney is on a screen, that witness needs to be seen and heard by the judge, by the jury, by the parties and by the public. You can't do that with one little laptop.

So, what else? Well, of course, we're required to record every case. We electronically record nowadays in most instances, which means a sophisticated system of recording and microphones, so that every word is captured as people move around the room, because they don't necessarily stand at a microphone. Courtrooms can't be used when the equipment isn't working, and we've had that experience where we have been unable to use some courtrooms because we don't have working electronic recording equipment. We're also installing public access kiosks in courthouses for accessing the electronic files, as we move to that electronic filing system. We need robust Wi-Fi and cell service at courthouses for parties and lawyers and the court staff as well. And we need to increase the salary and safety of everyone. And in terms of safety, electronic and technology means not only the marshals but, again, the technology. The security cameras, the recordings, the screening, the control rooms, these are all tools that we need to use these days.

So, I hope you can see why I say technology is infrastructure and why it needs to be part of the baseline in the General Fund budget. Without working technology these days, frankly, proceedings grind to a halt.

And by the way, we also need to protect against increasingly sophisticated cyber threats. We in the Judicial Branch are keepers of immense amount of sensitive and personal data which we have to safeguard. And, of course, there are more demands for data every year, from you and from everyone else, because data helps us understand the cost and benefit of programs and strategies, and we expect it now; we expect that it ought to be available. Having better data frankly also fits with the goal of increasing transparency and openness about what we do and how we do it.

The implementation of Maine eCourts is helping us marshal that data in the future. A lot more information is being captured electronically, so that we can do that. It's one of its many benefits. And just to be clear, as many of you know, we are in the process of implementing an electronic e-filing and case management system in all case types across the State. It

will be integrated; and this is the complication; it's integrated with a lot of other systems; law enforcement, Department of Health and Human Services, Motor Vehicle, *et cetera*, for bail, protection orders, all of those things. This is the system that, especially the lawyers here will know, is known as Odyssey. This year, Tyler decided to upgrade and change the name to Enterprise Justice, and we don't want to change the name every time Tyler Technologies changes it, so, we just simply call it Maine eCourts that we can just keep.

So, we've now successfully implemented Maine eCourts in all civil and family cases in Bangor, as well as Androscoggin, Oxford and Franklin Counties. Also, in the business and consumer docket, as well as the Violations Bureau, which we've had for a while. We've also this last year implemented protection from abuse and protection from harassment cases in all of those same locations. That implementation was a big test, it's more complex because of the law enforcement integrations and was the first test, frankly, of how that would go. And by that, what I'm really talking about is something that's known to those of you who are in law enforcement; where are you, Senator Cyrway, you would know; it's the automatic transfer of information from our system into law enforcement agencies, so that they automatically get information about a protection order was entered, bail conditions were entered, things like that. These are critical when liberty interests are at stake, as they are in those dockets. So, that was a big step forward to implement the protection order dockets this year.

So, next up is the implementation of criminal and juvenile case types that's scheduled for later this spring in Androscoggin County. We have a mighty team in our Office of Information Technology, but we are also dependent on Tyler Technologies, who is the vendor of the system that we use. It's an off-the-shelf but customizable and customized, so, it's sort of semi-off-the-shelf and a lot of it is customized to our systems. So, we are also dependent on Tyler Technologies for some development pieces, as well as CPI, who's the vendor for the switch for the Department of Public Safety, and we need them at the table as well. And so, we're actually waiting on some pieces. The implementation of e-filing in criminal and juvenile matters is a huge undertaking, not only for us but also for the vendors, the law enforcement agencies, and district attorneys, public defense counsel, everybody involved who are going to be mandatory filers; it's going to be really changing their processes in some pretty big ways. We've been working closely with all of these stakeholders in an endeavor to make a smooth transition into the world of electronic filing, so, I hope next year to be able to report on all of that.

And on a side note, I want to give a shout-out as well and special thanks to Dave Packard, who is our Director of Information Technology who's been leading our IT department for years. Dave is retiring this summer, which is going to kill me, but while I'm happy for him, he will be sorely missed at the Judicial Branch. He does, however, leave a terrific team in place and we'll stay on schedule for the statewide implementation of all case types within two years. Boy, do I look forward to that day. It's when we can unplug our Apple computers; although I love my Apple, but nonetheless; and get over to PCs and get rid of our blue screen operating system; our obsolete and dying electronic operating system known as MEJIS. I think there are two people in Idaho that know how to fix it, that's how old it is.

As many of you may have noticed who've been around, I have made it my mission to try to right-size the Judicial Branch; to ensure that we have adequate resources to be able to provide an efficient and impartial system of dispute resolution. That old saying, "justice delayed is justice denied," it has a great deal of

truth to it. And the Judicial Branch in this State, you've heard me say, has been underfunded for decades. And although we've made progress, and we have, the backlogs that were created during the pandemic persist. To be clear, the additional resources that we have received in the past years have helped enormously, but we're not there yet. As many of you know, we experienced a tremendous backlog of cases since the pandemic. By backlog, it's really two things. It means cases take longer to be heard or to resolve, and that results in more pending cases. So, you're looking both at how long cases take and how many cases are pending.

For a Judicial Branch that was already working to capacity even before the pandemic, reducing the backlog is a struggle every day, but everybody is working really hard at it and we are having progress. The criminal caseload now stands at about 35% above pre-pandemic levels, which is terrible, but it is actually down a bit from a year ago and even more from its highest point. But we still obviously have a long way to go, and I fear the remaining backlog will get more stubborn. As often is the case, we tend to pick off the low-hanging fruit and the last bits get harder and harder to deal with.

I've also been alarmed at what was happening in our family dockets. The number of pending child protective cases has increased. There are now about 25% more pending than before the pandemic, which is a big increase. And the average length of time it is taking to complete child protective, as well as all family cases, has steadily increased since the beginning of the pandemic. Cases, frankly, in family dockets are taking about twice as long to resolve as they used to. So, in 2024, we've put some pretty concerted effort; we've brought a lot of resources to bear from our court operations and as well as judges to try to reduce that, and I'm pleased to report we seem to have turned that corner. Those numbers now have gone down from the height, in terms of how long family cases were taking, the height was at the end; I get reports every six months, very detailed reports, and so, the height, I would say, is at the end of 2023, a year ago, and in 2024, we've managed to get those numbers to come down. But it is still taking far too long to reach cases. And every one of those cases is not a statistic, it's a real person in crisis.

So, you and the Governor have listened in the last few years, but in these times of belt tightening, it is critical that you continue to pay attention. We need to have enough people; clerks, marshals and others; to support the judges in the courtrooms and they need to be paid appropriately. There are still judicial vacancies. It's a never-ending process, I appreciate all of the nominations that the Governor has had to make in the last few years, but I've not asked for more judicial positions, but the supporting staff positions included in the Governor's budget are critical for supporting our work. So, I hope we have your continued support to ensure we can provide the services that Maine people need and deserve.

Again, I understand pennies are tight this year and there's maybe some financial uncertainty ahead. I get that. But I'm also not doing my job if I don't continue to advocate for appropriate judicial salaries. You may recall, those of you who are not in your first go-around, in the last biennial budget there was an increase in judicial salaries. At the time, Maine's judicial salaries ranked, on a national level, 51st in the country; behind every other state and the District of Columbia. So, we appreciate your attention to this. So, I am pleased now to report that, after the raises in the last biennium, as of January 2025, Maine judicial salaries now rank 51st. Fifty-first in the country when adjusted for cost of living, still after every other state and the District of Columbia. So, it's not just an issue of fairness and equity for

Maine judges, but also that judicial salaries impact other salaries in the Judicial Branch, and that makes it harder to attract and appropriately compensate other high-level professionals. As in any organization, you know, each step goes down. And so, think what a Director of Information Technology could now command on the private market.

When I advocate for right-sizing the Judicial Branch and ensuring that there are adequate resources, I am sure that many of you are out there thinking, yes, but there are many worthy causes. And there are. But that is also why we have to remember the central and critical role of courts in our system of government. You've heard me remind you that the Judicial Branch is the coequal third branch of government in both our State and federal systems. The Legislature, the Executive and the Judiciary. These aren't words spoken lightly. The Judiciary plays an integral role in maintaining the rule of law. The Judicial Branch does so through competent, ethical and independent judges delivering justice in a timely and accessible fashion.

We are all partners in upholding the rule of law, which is a phrase being bandied about a lot these days. And so, I'm going to take a moment to answer the question: What does that mean? By Rule of Law, I mean that all people and institutions are accountable under laws that are publicly promulgated, equally enforced and independently adjudicated. Laws are publicly promulgated by the Legislature, they are equally enforced by the Executive, and they are independently adjudicated by the Judiciary. It matters not whether I think a law is wise or foolish; sometimes I have those opinions inside; but it matters not. The promulgation of laws is your job. It is for the Legislature. The role and duty of judges is to adjudicate independently, fairly and in a timely fashion. These are the ideals and, indeed, the requirements of our State and federal Constitutions, and to carry out that duty, the Judicial Branch must have adequate resources. This is what we owe to all of the citizens of Maine.

Thank you for inviting me here today, and thank you for all of your hard work.

At the conclusion of the address, the Chief Justice withdrew amid the applause of the Convention, the audience rising.

The purpose for which the Joint Convention was assembled having been accomplished, the Chair declared the same dissolved.

The Senate then retired to its chamber.

(After the Convention)

The House was called to order by the Speaker.

SENATE PAPERS

The following Joint Resolution: (S.P. 219)

JOINT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING FEBRUARY 2025 AS 211 MAINE MONTH

WHEREAS, 211 Maine is a Maine-based health and human services and emergency preparedness and response helpline that provides Maine people free and confidential referrals to needed resources; and

WHEREAS, 211 Maine provides around-the-clock service statewide, offering efficient and effective responses from people employed in Maine to questions arising from the growing complexities in health, financial and human services and the needs of Maine people, and offers interpreter services to those whose first language is not English; and

WHEREAS, since 2006, 211 Maine call specialists have assisted with requests for information regarding topics ranging from substance use and recovery services to housing support and food resources, in 2024 fielding over 75,000 calls, text messages and e-mails from people looking for help for themselves or someone they know, amounting to over 271,000 minutes of service; and

WHEREAS, 211 Maine provides emergency operations support during times of natural and other disasters, including assisting the Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management, Maine Emergency Management Agency, fielding calls from those impacted by windstorms and floods, collecting critical data and helping people find winter warming shelters or cooling centers; and

WHEREAS, this past year, 211 Maine directly distributed over \$208,000 in emergency heating assistance, potentially preventing utility shut-offs and keeping people from spending winter nights in the cold; and

WHEREAS, 211 Maine handles a number of specialized services and partnerships, including the opiate helpline and the gambling helpline and serving as the centralized access point for the Help Me Grow Maine program, helping families with children from birth to 8 years of age get connected to needed services, and is also a resource for finding information about needs such as COVID-19 advice, tax preparation and browntail moth caterpillar prevention, mitigation and treatment; and

WHEREAS, 211 Maine provides a powerful example of how the government and nonprofit and private sectors can work together to improve the quality of life of the people of Maine; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That We, the Members of the One Hundred and Thirty-second Legislature now assembled in the First Regular Session, on behalf of the people we represent, take this opportunity to recognize February 2025 as 211 Maine Month.

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

The following Joint Resolution: (S.P. 236)

**JOINT RESOLUTION CELEBRATING
THE LIFE OF STAGECOACH MARY FIELDS**

WHEREAS, standing six feet tall and powerfully built, Stagecoach Mary struck fear in the hearts of bandits in the American Old West. Stagecoach Mary Fields carried a gun, smoked, drank and had a wicked temper. Mary was the first African American woman to carry mail on a Star Route for the United States Post Office Department; and

WHEREAS, Mary Fields was born into slavery in either 1832 or 1833; her exact birthday is unknown. Mary's birthplace and other details about her early childhood are also unknown. What is known is that she worked for the Warner family in West Virginia in the years leading up to the Civil War. Mary was emancipated in 1863 or shortly after the Civil War; she then moved from West Virginia and went up the Mississippi River, where she worked on steamboats; and

WHEREAS, Mary ended up in Toledo, Ohio. There, Mary began working at Ursuline Convent of the Sacred Heart. There is debate over how and why Mary ended up working at the convent, yet what is known is that Mary's gruff style was not something that fit into the serene calm of the convent; and

WHEREAS, during her time at the convent, Mary washed laundry, bought supplies, managed the kitchen and grew and maintained the garden and grounds. Mary was known to lose her temper and was quick to yell at anyone who stepped on the grass after she had cut it; and

WHEREAS, it is unclear why Mary left Toledo. Many sources think that she moved to take care of an ill friend. Mother Amadeus Dunne, who had been Mother Superior in Toledo before moving west, had fallen ill. Mary and Mother Amadeus were known friends. Some records date their friendship all the way back to the Warren family in West Virginia, though this claim is not substantiated; and

WHEREAS, once she arrived in the West, Mary got to work. Mary mainly worked for Saint Peter's Mission near Cascade, Montana, where she did many of the jobs she had done before in Toledo. This mission was run by Ursuline nuns and was where Mother Amadeus Dunne resided. Mary performed maintenance and repair work. She also gardened and did the laundry. One major thing that Mary was also in charge of was the locating and delivery of supplies needed for the mission. Yet Mary had no official contract with the mission and nuns; thus, she was free to come and go as she pleased, taking additional work outside the mission; and

WHEREAS, Mary was unfortunately dismissed from the mission. This was due in part to her cross behavior, unruly temper and penchant for drinking and smoking in saloons with men. The final straw appears to involve an argument in which Mary and another mission janitor, a man, got into a fight and were agitated to the point that both drew guns. While neither ever fired their gun, this incident was enough to make the bishop of the area demand that the nuns relieve her of her duties; and

WHEREAS, Mary moved to neighboring Cascade, Montana, where she tried but failed to open one or more eateries. They were said to have failed due to her giving nature of allowing folks who could not pay to eat for free. Mary also reportedly set up a laundry shop and did other odd jobs to make money. It is around this time that Mary's drinking, gun toting and smoking become well known to the townspeople of Cascade; and

WHEREAS, in 1895, in her early sixties, Mary obtained a contract with the United States Post Office Department to be a Star Route Carrier. A Star Route Carrier was an independent contractor who used a stagecoach to deliver the mail in the

harsh weather of northern Montana. Mary was the first African American woman and the second woman to receive a Star Route contract from the United States Post Office Department. This contract was secured with the help of the Ursuline nuns. The nuns wished to look out for Mary as they felt connected with her. This was because they did not wish to see her go as the nuns heavily relied on Mary for work done around the mission; and

WHEREAS, Mary built a reputation of being fearless while working as a mail carrier. Mary's job was not only to deliver the mail but to also protect the mail from bandits, thieves, wolves and the weather as well. Mary gained her nickname "Stagecoach Mary" due to her use of a stagecoach as a method of transportation to deliver the mail. Mary was also known for the guns she carried. During the time that Mary was delivering the mail, she was known to carry both a rifle and a revolver; and

WHEREAS, Mary spent 8 years delivering the mail as a Star Route Carrier. During this time, Mary became beloved by the locals of Cascade, Montana for her fearlessness and generosity, as well as for her kindness to children. Mary retired from being a Star Route Carrier in the early 20th century. After her retirement, Mary settled into life in Cascade, Montana; and

WHEREAS, upon retiring, Mary started a laundry business in town. She also opened an eatery as well as babysat the local children. She remained famous, even becoming the mascot for the town's baseball team. Mary was beloved by the people of Cascade, so much so that she drank in saloons for free and ate for free at local restaurants and hotels; and

WHEREAS, Mary Fields died on December 5, 1914. After her death, the townspeople raised money to have her buried in a cemetery on a road she drove frequently that linked Cascade to the mission. Mary's funeral was said to be one of the largest ever held in town; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That We, the Members of the One Hundred and Thirty-second Legislature now assembled in the First Regular Session, pause in our deliberations to celebrate the life of Stagecoach Mary Fields.

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

READ and **ADOPTED** in concurrence.

COMMUNICATIONS

The Following Communication: (H.P. 470)

**STATE OF MAINE
CLERK'S OFFICE**

**2 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0002**

February 20, 2025

Honorable Ryan D. Fecteau

Speaker of the House

132nd Legislature

Honorable Matthea Daughtry

President of the Senate

132nd Legislature

Dear Mr. Speaker and Madam President:

On February 20, 2025, 100 bills were received by the Clerk of the House.

Pursuant to the provisions of Joint Rule 308.2, these bills were referred to the Joint Standing Committees on February 20, 2025, as follows:

Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Resolve, to Study Barriers to Financial Assistance Programs for Farmers and Food Producers (H.P. 374) (L.D. 606) (Sponsored by Representative PLUECKER of Warren)

Appropriations and Financial Affairs

Bill "An Act Making Certain Supplemental Appropriations and Allocations and Changing Certain Provisions of Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government" (H.P. 376) (L.D. 608) (Sponsored by Representative GATTINE of Westbrook)

Bill "An Act Making Certain Appropriations and Allocations and Changing Certain Provisions of Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government" (H.P. 377) (L.D. 609) (Sponsored by Representative GATTINE of Westbrook)

Bill "An Act to Provide Appropriations and Allocations for the Operations of State Government" (H.P. 444) (L.D. 705) (Sponsored by Representative GATTINE of Westbrook)

Criminal Justice and Public Safety

Bill "An Act to Explicitly Allow the Department of Corrections to Charge Room and Board to Residents Who Perform Remote Work in Detention and Correctional Facilities and to Amend the Laws Governing Rehabilitative Programs" (H.P. 394) (L.D. 626) (Sponsored by Representative NUTTING of Oakland) (Submitted by the Department of Corrections pursuant to Joint Rule 204.)

Bill "An Act to Improve Training Opportunities for Law Enforcement Officers" (H.P. 407) (L.D. 639) (Sponsored by Representative CROCKETT of Portland) (Cosponsored by Representative SARGENT of York)

Bill "An Act Regarding Telephone and Video Call Access in Detention and Correctional Facilities and Jails" (H.P. 415) (L.D. 647) (Sponsored by Representative MILLIKEN of Blue Hill) (Cosponsored by Senator CARNEY of Cumberland and Representatives: BISHOP of Bucksport, BOYER of Poland, FREDERICKS of Sanford, GUERRETTE of Caribou, MATHIESON of Kittery, SARGENT of York, SAYRE of Kennebunk, WARREN of Scarborough)

Bill "An Act to Expand the Supervised Community Confinement Program" (H.P. 416) (L.D. 648) (Sponsored by Representative MILLIKEN of Blue Hill) (Cosponsored by Senator TALBOT ROSS of Cumberland and Representatives: HASENFUS of Readfield, MATHIESON of Kittery, SARGENT of York, SAYRE of Kennebunk, WARREN of Scarborough, WEBB of Durham)

Bill "An Act to Prevent Domestic Violence by Providing Adequate Funding Support for Court-ordered Certified Domestic Violence Intervention Programs" (H.P. 434) (L.D. 666) (Sponsored by Representative GATTINE of Westbrook) (Cosponsored by Senator BEEBE-CENTER of Knox and Representatives: HASENFUS of Readfield, MILLIKEN of Blue Hill, Senator: CURRY of Waldo)

Bill "An Act to Amend the Maine Criminal Code Governing Restitution to Include the Costs of All Analyses of Suspected Illegal Drugs" (H.P. 456) (L.D. 717) (Sponsored by Representative BISHOP of Bucksport) (Cosponsored by Senator HAGGAN of Penobscot and Representatives: ARDELL of Monticello, LIBBY of Auburn, PAUL of Winterport, PERKINS of Dover-Foxcroft, WHITE of Guilford, WHITE of Ellsworth)

Bill "An Act to Amend the Share of State Funding for the County Jail Operations Fund" (H.P. 458) (L.D. 719) (Sponsored by Representative SALISBURY of Westbrook) (Cosponsored by Senator STEWART of Aroostook and Representatives: DUCHARME of Madison, HASENFUS of Readfield, LAJOIE of Lewiston, LOOKNER of Portland)

Bill "An Act Requiring the Maine Criminal Justice Academy to Develop a Nonresidential Basic Law Enforcement Training Program" (H.P. 462) (L.D. 723) (Sponsored by Representative LAJOIE of Lewiston) (Cosponsored by Senator BICKFORD of Androscoggin and Representatives: ABDI of Lewiston, CLOUTIER of Lewiston, LEE of Auburn, LIBBY of Auburn, MCCABE of Lewiston, SALISBURY of Westbrook, SARGENT of York, WOOD of Greene)

Bill "An Act to Protect Municipalities' Investment in Law Enforcement Officers" (H.P. 465) (L.D. 726) (Sponsored by Representative BOYER of Poland) (Cosponsored by Senator HARRINGTON of York and Representatives: BISHOP of Bucksport, HASENFUS of Readfield, PERKINS of Dover-Foxcroft, WHITE of Ellsworth, Senators: BEEBE-CENTER of Knox, BENNETT of Oxford, GROHOSKI of Hancock, TIPPING of Penobscot)

Education and Cultural Affairs

Bill "An Act to Require the Approval of Superintendent Agreements Regarding Transfers of Students Between School Administrative Units" (H.P. 375) (L.D. 607) (Sponsored by Representative LIBBY of Auburn) (Cosponsored by Representatives: BOYER of Poland, FOLEY of Wells, FOSTER of Dexter, HAGGAN of Hampden, LANCE of Paris, OLSEN of Raymond, POIRIER of Skowhegan)

Bill "An Act Regarding Eligibility to Apply for a Department of Education Diploma" (H.P. 396) (L.D. 628) (Sponsored by Representative BRENNAN of Portland) (Cosponsored by Senator RAFFERTY of York and Representatives: BRIDGEO of Augusta, CLOUTIER of Lewiston, DHALAC of South Portland, DODGE of Belfast, MURPHY of Scarborough, RANA of Bangor, STOVER of Boothbay, Senator: PIERCE of Cumberland)

Bill "An Act to Provide Students in the University of Maine System Who Are Parents or Pregnant Individuals Priority Registration for Courses" (H.P. 410) (L.D. 642) (Sponsored by Representative GRIFFIN of Levant) (Cosponsored by Representatives: COLLAMORE of Pittsfield, COLLINS of Sidney, HAGGAN of Hampden, SMITH of Palermo)

Resolve, to Study the Effects of Artificial Intelligence, Cellular Telephones and Social Media on Public Education (H.P. 411) (L.D. 643) (Sponsored by Representative BRENNAN of Portland) (Cosponsored by Senator PIERCE of Cumberland and Representatives: CLOUTIER of Lewiston, DODGE of Belfast, GRAMLICH of Old Orchard Beach, LOOKNER of Portland, MURPHY of Scarborough, SALISBURY of Westbrook, SARGENT of York, Senator: RAFFERTY of York)

Bill "An Act to Provide Transparency and Public Access to Public School Curricula" (H.P. 428) (L.D. 660) (Sponsored by Representative CARUSO of Caratunk) (Cosponsored by Senator HAGGAN of Penobscot and Representatives: COLLINS of Sidney, DAIGLE of Fort Kent, LYMAN of Livermore Falls, PERKINS of Dover-Foxcroft, SMITH of Palermo, THORNE of Carmel, WALKER of Naples, Senator: LIBBY of Cumberland)

Resolve, Directing the Department of Education to Report on Financial Literacy Education in the System of Learning Results (H.P. 440) (L.D. 701) (Sponsored by Representative ROLLINS of Augusta) (Cosponsored by Senator BRADSTREET of Kennebec and Representatives: BRIDGEO of Augusta, DHALAC of South Portland, GATTINE of Westbrook, HAGGAN of Hampden)

Bill "An Act to Fund an Administrative Structure of an Emergency Medical Services Education Program in the Community College System" (H.P. 461) (L.D. 722) (Sponsored by Representative SALISBURY of Westbrook) (Cosponsored by Representatives: CLOUTIER of Lewiston, DUCHARME of Madison)

Bill "An Act to Repeal Certain Immunization Requirements for Schools" (H.P. 466) (L.D. 727) (Sponsored by Representative QUINT of Hodgdon) (Cosponsored by Senator HAGGAN of Penobscot and Representatives: BOYER of Poland, CARUSO of Caratunk, FOLEY of Wells, HYMES of Waldo, JAVNER of Chester, PAUL of Winterport, SMITH of Palermo, SWALLOW of Houlton)

Resolve, Regarding Legislative Review of Portions of Chapter 132: Learning Results: Parameters for Essential Instruction, a Major Substantive Rule of the Department of Education (EMERGENCY) (H.P. 469) (L.D. 730) (Submitted by the Department of Education pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 5, section 8072.)

Energy, Utilities and Technology

Bill "An Act to Remove State-imposed Referendum Requirements Regarding Nuclear Power" (H.P. 369) (L.D. 601) (Sponsored by Representative PAUL of Winterport) (Cosponsored by Senator HARRINGTON of York and Representatives: ALBERT of Madawaska, CAMPBELL of Orrington, FOSTER of Dexter, MCINTYRE of Lowell, WADSWORTH of Hiram)

Bill "An Act Concerning the Restoration of Electricity During Emergencies for Certain Medically Vulnerable Individuals Who Rely on Electronic Medical Apparatuses" (H.P. 401) (L.D. 633) (Sponsored by Representative FRIEDMANN of Bar Harbor)

Bill "An Act to Create Equal Opportunity Access to Clean Energy by Removing the 100-megawatt Limit on Clean Energy Sources" (H.P. 406) (L.D. 638) (Sponsored by Representative ARDELL of Monticello) (Cosponsored by Senator BERNARD of Aroostook and Representatives: DAIGLE of Fort Kent, HENDERSON of Rumford, PAUL of Winterport, PERKINS of Dover-Foxcroft, SWALLOW of Houlton)

Bill "An Act to Facilitate the State Meeting Its Climate Goals While Protecting Farms" (H.P. 450) (L.D. 711) (Sponsored by Representative COLLAMORE of Pittsfield) (Cosponsored by Representatives: DILL of Old Town, GUERRETTE of Caribou, HALL of Wilton, LANIGAN of Sanford, ROBERTS of South Berwick)

Bill "An Act to Advance Equitable Energy Policy in Maine" (H.P. 464) (L.D. 725) (Sponsored by Representative WARREN of Scarborough)

Environment and Natural Resources

Bill "An Act to Provide Solutions for Sustainable Management of Municipal Solid Waste" (H.P. 373) (L.D. 605) (Sponsored by Representative CAMPBELL of Orrington)

Bill "An Act to Implement Portions of the 'Protecting Maine's Beaches for the Future: 2017 Update' Report Regarding Beach Nourishment and Dune Restoration Projects" (H.P. 398) (L.D. 630) (Sponsored by Representative FOLEY of Wells)

Resolve, Establishing the Commission to Study Unregulated Storm Water Pollution (EMERGENCY) (H.P. 414) (L.D. 646) (Sponsored by Representative BELL of Yarmouth) (Cosponsored by Representatives: ANKELES of Brunswick, BRIDGEO of Augusta, DOUDERA of Camden, GRAMLICH of Old Orchard Beach, OSHER of Orono, RIELLY of Westbrook, TERRY of Gorham)

Bill "An Act to Clarify Performance Standards for Quarries" (H.P. 443) (L.D. 704) (Sponsored by Representative PLUECKER of Warren)

Bill "An Act to Allow for Rescission of a Site Location of Development Permit When a Development Is Decommissioned" (H.P. 447) (L.D. 708) (Sponsored by Representative BRIDGEO of Augusta) (Submitted by the Department of Environmental Protection pursuant to Joint Rule 204.)

Health and Human Services

Bill "An Act to Ensure Access to Concurrent Methadone Treatment and Intensive Outpatient Programs" (H.P. 372) (L.D. 604) (Sponsored by Representative SUPICA of Bangor) (Cosponsored by Senator BALDACCI of Penobscot and Representatives: BOYER of Poland, GRAHAM of North Yarmouth, LOOKNER of Portland, MASTRACCIO of Sanford, MILLIKEN of Blue Hill, SHAGOURY of Hallowell, WARREN of Scarborough, Senator: BRENNER of Cumberland)

Bill "An Act to Require the Department of Health and Human Services to Review Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and Electronic Benefits Transfer Card Transactions and Lottery Operations" (H.P. 380) (L.D. 612) (Sponsored by Representative HENDERSON of Rumford) (Cosponsored by Senator MOORE of Washington and Representatives: ALBERT of Madawaska, CIMINO of Bridgton, COLLINS of Sidney, COOPER of Windham, DAIGLE of Fort Kent, HAGGAN of Hampden, OLSEN of Raymond, QUINT of Hodgdon)

Bill "An Act to Amend the Maine Death with Dignity Act to Ensure Access by Qualified Patients" (H.P. 381) (L.D. 613) (Sponsored by Representative MEYER of Eliot) (Cosponsored by Senator MOORE of Washington and Representatives: KUHN of Falmouth, MATHIESON of Kittery, STOVER of Boothbay, ZAGER of Portland, Senators: BAILEY of York, CARNEY of Cumberland, President DAUGHTRY of Cumberland, INGWERSEN of York)

Bill "An Act to Enhance Support Services for Individuals with an Acquired Brain Injury" (H.P. 391) (L.D. 623) (Sponsored by Representative HEPLER of Woolwich) (Cosponsored by Representatives: BUNKER of Farmington, DILL of Old Town, GRAHAM of North Yarmouth, SARGENT of York, Senator: BLACK of Franklin)

Bill "An Act Supporting Education for the Rural Health Care Workforce" (H.P. 393) (L.D. 625) (Sponsored by Representative OSHER of Orono) (Cosponsored by Senator MOORE of Washington and Representatives: EATON of Deer Isle, GRAHAM of North Yarmouth, OLSEN of Raymond, ZAGER of Portland, Senators: BENNETT of Oxford, TIPPING of Penobscot)

Resolve, Directing the Department of Health and Human Services to Evaluate the Municipal General Assistance Program Database (H.P. 405) (L.D. 637) (Sponsored by Representative HENDERSON of Rumford) (Cosponsored by Representatives: COLLINS of Sidney, DAIGLE of Fort Kent, HAGGAN of Hampden, LYMAN of Livermore Falls, QUINT of Hodgdon)

Bill "An Act to Support Municipal Public Health" (H.P. 418) (L.D. 650) (Sponsored by Representative GRAHAM of North Yarmouth) (Cosponsored by Representatives: MEYER of Eliot, SALISBURY of Westbrook, SHAGOURY of Hallowell, WEBB of Durham, ZAGER of Portland)

Bill "An Act to Modify the Law Governing Municipal General Assistance by Designating Broadband Internet Access Service and Wireless Access Point Technology as Basic Necessities" (H.P. 425) (L.D. 657) (Sponsored by Representative SIMMONS of Waldoboro)

Bill "An Act to Establish the Respite for ME Program" (H.P. 448) (L.D. 709) (Sponsored by Representative CLOUTIER of Lewiston) (Submitted by the Department of Health and Human Services pursuant to Joint Rule 204.)

Bill "An Act to Expand Access and Reduce Barriers to Access to Naloxone Hydrochloride and Other Opioid Overdose-reversing Medications" (H.P. 449) (L.D. 710) (Sponsored by Representative ZAGER of Portland) (Submitted by the Department of Health and Human Services pursuant to Joint Rule 204.)

Bill "An Act to Clarify the Relationship Between Palliative Care Physicians and Hospital Physicians" (H.P. 451) (L.D. 712) (Sponsored by Representative SCHMERSAL-BURGESS of Mexico) (Cosponsored by Senator BRADSTREET of Kennebec and Representatives: BAGSHAW of Windham, FREDERICKS of Sanford, GRIFFIN of Levant, HALL of Wilton, LAVIGNE of Berwick, LYMAN of Livermore Falls, OLSEN of Raymond, SOBOLESKI of Phillips)

Resolve, to Support the Full Implementation of Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics in the State (EMERGENCY) (H.P. 460) (L.D. 721) (Sponsored by Representative GRAHAM of North Yarmouth) (Cosponsored by Representatives: BRENNAN of Portland, CLOUTIER of Lewiston, DEBRITO of Waterville, DHALAC of South Portland, MCCABE of Lewiston, SHAGOURY of Hallowell, STOVER of Boothbay, Senator: MOORE of Washington)

Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services

Bill "An Act to Require Insurance Coverage for Glucagon-like Peptide-1 Receptor Agonist Medication" (H.P. 395) (L.D. 627) (Sponsored by Representative STOVER of Boothbay) (Cosponsored by Representatives: ANKELES of Brunswick, DHALAC of South Portland, GRAHAM of North Yarmouth, GRAMLICH of Old Orchard Beach, MEYER of Eliot, ROBERTS of South Berwick, ROEDER of Bangor, SALISBURY of Westbrook)

Bill "An Act to Change the Size and Composition of the Board of Directors of the Maine Health Data Organization" (H.P. 413) (L.D. 645) (Sponsored by Representative MATHIESON of Kittery) (Submitted by the Maine Health Data Organization pursuant to Joint Rule 204.)

Bill "An Act to Certify Chiropractic Assistants Who Perform X-rays as Radiologic Technologists" (H.P. 417) (L.D. 649) (Sponsored by Representative WADSWORTH of Hiram) (Cosponsored by Representatives: CIMINO of Bridgton, MORRIS of Turner, Senators: BENNETT of Oxford, HAGGAN of Penobscot, MARTIN of Oxford)

Bill "An Act Regarding Health Care" (H.P. 431) (L.D. 663) (Sponsored by Representative MATHIESON of Kittery)

Bill "An Act to Amend the Membership of the State Employee Health Commission and Make Referential Changes to the Office of Employee Health, Wellness and Workers' Compensation" (H.P. 446) (L.D. 707) (Sponsored by Representative MATHIESON of Kittery) (Submitted by the Department of Administrative and Financial Services pursuant to Joint Rule 204.)

Bill "An Act to Protect Federal Home Loan Banks That Lend Money to Insurer Members That Become Delinquent" (H.P. 459) (L.D. 720) (Sponsored by Representative FOLEY of Wells) (Cosponsored by Senator HAGGAN of Penobscot and Representatives: FLYNN of Albion, MORRIS of Turner, OLSEN of Raymond, Senator: BAILEY of York)

Resolve, Regarding Legislative Review of Chapter 800: Uniform Reporting of Wholesale Acquisition Costs for Insulin, a Major Substantive Rule of the Maine Health Data Organization (EMERGENCY) (H.P. 468) (L.D. 729) (Submitted by the Maine Health Data Organization pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 5, section 8072.)

Housing and Economic Development

Bill "An Act to Ensure That the Exemption of Certain Agricultural Buildings from the Maine Uniform Building and Energy Code Includes Maple Sugarhouses" (H.P. 371) (L.D. 603) (Sponsored by Representative COOPER of Windham) (Cosponsored by Senator BRADSTREET of Kennebec and Representatives: BAGSHAW of Windham, CIMINO of Bridgton, COLLINS of Sidney, CRAY of Palmyra, GUERRETTE of Caribou, HALL of Wilton, JACKSON of Oxford, OLSEN of Raymond)

Bill "An Act to Restore Matching Funding to the Maine Development Foundation" (H.P. 397) (L.D. 629) (Sponsored by Representative ROBERTS of South Berwick) (Cosponsored by Senator CURRY of Waldo and Representatives: COLLAMORE of Pittsfield, DILL of Old Town, DUCHARME of Madison, GERE of Kennebunkport, STOVER of Boothbay, WALKER of Naples, Senators: BENNETT of Oxford, MOORE of Washington)

Bill "An Act to Support Diversion Efforts to Address Homelessness in Maine" (H.P. 409) (L.D. 641) (Sponsored by Representative MALON of Biddeford) (Cosponsored by Senator BAILEY of York and Representative: SACHS of Freeport)

Bill "An Act to Fund the Maine Health Care Provider Loan Repayment Program" (H.P. 419) (L.D. 651) (Sponsored by Representative MURPHY of Scarborough) (Cosponsored by Senator RAFFERTY of York and Representatives: CLOUTIER of Lewiston, DODGE of Belfast, MITCHELL of Cumberland, Senator: PIERCE of Cumberland)

Bill "An Act to Reduce Housing Costs by Not Requiring Fire Sprinkler Systems for Single-family Homes and Duplexes" (H.P. 427) (L.D. 659) (Sponsored by Representative CRAFTS of Newcastle) (Cosponsored by Representatives: ANKELES of Brunswick, COLLAMORE of Pittsfield, GERE of Kennebunkport, KESSLER of South Portland, MORRIS of Turner, ROBERTS of South Berwick, Senator: BAILEY of York)

Inland Fisheries and Wildlife

Bill "An Act to Restrict the Hunting of Coyotes" (H.P. 455) (L.D. 716) (Sponsored by Representative MILLIKEN of Blue Hill) (Cosponsored by Representatives: GOLEK of Harpswell, MATHIESON of Kittery, PUGH of Portland)

Bill "An Act to Amend the Laws Regarding Smelt Fishing" (H.P. 467) (L.D. 728) (Sponsored by Representative DILL of Old Town) (Cosponsored by Representatives: BRIDGEO of Augusta, DRINKWATER of Milford, HEPLER of Woolwich, MASON of Lisbon, THORNE of Carmel)

Judiciary

Resolve, to Direct the Attorney General to Drop the Lawsuit Filed Against Big Oil Companies Concerning Climate Change (H.P. 403) (L.D. 635) (Sponsored by Representative TUELL of East Machias) (Cosponsored by Senator HAGGAN of Penobscot and Representatives: FOSTER of Dexter, JAVNER of Chester, MINGO of Calais, MORRIS of Turner, POIRIER of Skowhegan, SMITH of Palermo, STROUT of Harrington, WOOD of Norway)

Bill "An Act Requiring Certain Fees Charged by the Courts for Court-ordered Payments Be Capped and Paid by the Defendant" (H.P. 408) (L.D. 640) (Sponsored by Representative HENDERSON of Rumford) (Cosponsored by Representatives: BRIDGEO of Augusta, CARUSO of Caratunk, FREDERICKS of Sanford, LEE of Auburn, LYMAN of Livermore Falls)

Bill "An Act to Adjust the Maximum Small Claim Limit Based on the Consumer Price Index" (H.P. 422) (L.D. 654) (Sponsored by Representative KESSLER of South Portland) (Cosponsored by Senator LAWRENCE of York and Representatives: MCINTYRE of Lowell, POIRIER of Skowhegan)

Bill "An Act to Address Coercive Control in Domestic Abuse Cases" (H.P. 438) (L.D. 670) (Sponsored by Representative EATON of Deer Isle) (Cosponsored by Senator TALBOT ROSS of Cumberland and Representatives: CLOUTIER of Lewiston, COPELAND of Saco, GRAHAM of North Yarmouth, MILLIKEN of Blue Hill, ROEDER of Bangor, STOVER of Boothbay, WEBB of Durham, Senator: GROHOSKI of Hancock)

Labor

Bill "An Act to Allow Minors Under 16 Years of Age to Work Until 9 p.m. During the School Year and Until 10 p.m. During Summer Vacation" (H.P. 386) (L.D. 618) (Sponsored by Representative BOYER of Poland) (Cosponsored by Senator HARRINGTON of York and Representatives: BISHOP of Bucksport, CHAPMAN of Auburn, FOLEY of Wells, MASON of Lisbon, MCINTYRE of Lowell, PERKINS of Dover-Foxcroft, SIMMONS of Waldoboro, WHITE of Ellsworth)

Bill "An Act to Expand Employment Opportunities for Minor Students by Eliminating Certain Work Limitations" (H.P. 412) (L.D. 644) (Sponsored by Representative COLLINS of Sidney) (Cosponsored by Senator CYRWAY of Kennebec and Representatives: DRINKWATER of Milford, FROST of Belgrade, HAGGAN of Hampden, HENDERSON of Rumford, PARRY of Arundel, POIRIER of Skowhegan, ROLLINS of Augusta, Senator: BRADSTREET of Kennebec)

Bill "An Act to Allow Teachers to Qualify for Overtime Pay" (H.P. 421) (L.D. 653) (Sponsored by Representative ROEDER of Bangor)

Bill "An Act Establishing a State Minimum Hourly Wage for Agricultural Workers" (H.P. 423) (L.D. 655) (Sponsored by Representative BRENNAN of Portland) (Cosponsored by Representatives: CLOUTIER of Lewiston, DHALAC of South Portland, DODGE of Belfast, Speaker FECTEAU of Biddeford, SALISBURY of Westbrook, SKOLD of Portland, STOVER of Boothbay, Senator: PIERCE of Cumberland)

Bill "An Act to Improve Unemployment Insurance" (H.P. 432) (L.D. 664) (Sponsored by Representative ROEDER of Bangor)

Bill "An Act Regarding Labor" (H.P. 437) (L.D. 669) (Sponsored by Representative ROEDER of Bangor)

Bill "An Act Regarding the Laws Relating to Unemployment Insurance" (H.P. 445) (L.D. 706) (Sponsored by Representative ARCHER of Saco) (Submitted by the Department of Labor pursuant to Joint Rule 204.)

Marine Resources

Bill "An Act Related to Marine Resources and Maine's Working Waterfront" (H.P. 387) (L.D. 619) (Sponsored by Representative HEPLER of Woolwich)

State and Local Government

Bill "An Act Regarding the Notification Process for Competitive Bids" (H.P. 370) (L.D. 602) (Sponsored by Representative CAMPBELL of Orrington)

Bill "An Act to Provide Funding to the Maine Semiquincentennial Commission to Commemorate the United States of America's 250th Birthday in 2026" (H.P. 384) (L.D. 616) (Sponsored by Representative GREENWOOD of Wales) (Cosponsored by Senator BALDACCI of Penobscot and Representative: SALISBURY of Westbrook, Senator: MARTIN of Oxford)

Resolve, to Create the Commission to Study a Legislative Internship Program (H.P. 392) (L.D. 624) (Sponsored by Representative OSHER of Orono) (Cosponsored by Senator TIPPING of Penobscot and Representatives: RANA of Bangor, SARGENT of York, SATO of Gorham, STROUT of Harrington, Senator: LIBBY of Cumberland)

Resolve, to Establish the Commission to Study the Reduction of Unfunded and Outdated Municipal and County Mandates (H.P. 402) (L.D. 634) (Sponsored by Representative TUELL of East Machias) (Cosponsored by Senator MOORE of Washington and Representatives: FOSTER of Dexter, JAVNER of Chester, MINGO of Calais, MORRIS of Turner, POIRIER of Skowhegan, STROUT of Harrington, WOOD of Norway, WOODSOME of Waterboro)

Bill "An Act to Designate January 6th as A Day to Remember and to Preserve the Accounts of Witnesses to the Events of January 6, 2021" (H.P. 441) (L.D. 702) (Sponsored by Representative MACIAS of Topsham) (Cosponsored by Representatives: ARCHER of Saco, BELL of Yarmouth, BRIDGEO of Augusta, ROLLINS of Augusta, TERRY of Gorham)

Bill "An Act to Recognize Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha as State Holidays" (H.P. 463) (L.D. 724) (Sponsored by Representative ABDI of Lewiston) (Cosponsored by Representatives: CLUCHEY of Bowdoinham, DEBRITO of Waterville, DHALAC of South Portland, MACIAS of Topsham, MCCABE of Lewiston, MONTELL of Gardiner, RANA of Bangor, SATO of Gorham)

Taxation

Bill "An Act to Modify Current Property Tax Assessment Methods to Make Property Taxes Affordable for Longtime Property Owners" (H.P. 382) (L.D. 614) (Sponsored by Representative FOSTER of Dexter) (Cosponsored by Senator STEWART of Aroostook and Representatives: DRINKWATER of Milford, GUERRETTE of Caribou, MCINTYRE of Lowell, RUDNICKI of Fairfield, SWALLOW of Houlton, Senators: BALDACCI of Penobscot, CYRWAY of Kennebec, HAGGAN of Penobscot)

Bill "An Act to Allow a Local Option Sales Tax on Short-term Lodging to Fund Affordable Housing" (H.P. 400) (L.D. 632) (Sponsored by Representative SKOLD of Portland) (Cosponsored by Senator DUSON of Cumberland and Representatives: BRENNAN of Portland, DODGE of Belfast, Speaker FECTEAU of Biddeford, FRIEDMANN of Bar Harbor, GOLEK of Harpswell, HASENFUS of Readfield, MATLACK of St. George, RANA of Bangor)

Bill "An Act to Provide Qualifying Downtown Businesses and Developments with Assistance Paying Flood Insurance Premiums" (H.P. 420) (L.D. 652) (Sponsored by Representative ROLLINS of Augusta) (Cosponsored by Representatives: COPELAND of Saco, MATLACK of St. George, MONTELL of Gardiner, ROEDER of Bangor, SALISBURY of Westbrook, SHAGOURY of Hallowell, TUELL of East Machias, Senator: MARTIN of Oxford)

Bill "An Act to Lower Property Taxes by Increasing the Homestead Property Tax Exemption" (H.P. 426) (L.D. 658) (Sponsored by Representative FAULKINGHAM of Winter Harbor) (Cosponsored by Senator BICKFORD of Androscoggin and Representatives: BAGSHAW of Windham, EDER of Waterboro, GREENWOOD of Wales, GRIFFIN of Levant, LYMAN of Livermore Falls, PARRY of Arundel, RUDNICKI of Fairfield, SMITH of Palermo)

Bill "An Act to Abolish the Maine Income Tax and Establish a Zero-based Budget" (H.P. 439) (L.D. 671) (Sponsored by Representative LIBBY of Auburn) (Cosponsored by Senator HAGGAN of Penobscot and Representatives: BOYER of Poland, HAGGAN of Hampden, MINGO of Calais, MORRIS of Turner, OLSEN of Raymond)

Bill "An Act Regarding Taxation" (H.P. 452) (L.D. 713) (Sponsored by Representative CLOUTIER of Lewiston)

Bill "An Act to Amend the Tax Laws" (H.P. 453) (L.D. 714) (Sponsored by Representative CLOUTIER of Lewiston)

Bill "An Act to Provide Property Tax Relief by Increasing the Availability of the Property Tax Fairness Credit Based on a Resident's Age and Income" (H.P. 454) (L.D. 715) (Sponsored by Representative MILLIKEN of Blue Hill)

Transportation

Resolve, to Designate a Portion of Route 234 in the Town of New Vineyard and the Town of Anson in Honor of Corporal Andrew L. Hutchins (H.P. 378) (L.D. 610) (Sponsored by Representative MORRIS of Turner) (Cosponsored by Senator BLACK of Franklin and Representatives: CARUSO of Caratunk, HALL of Wilton)

Bill "An Act to Allow the Secretary of State to Collect Excise Taxes on Motor Vehicles Owned by Residents Who Are Unhoused" (H.P. 379) (L.D. 611) (Sponsored by Representative SAYRE of Kennebunk) (Cosponsored by Senator RAFFERTY of York and Representatives: CRAFTS of Newcastle, JULIA of Waterville, KUHN of Falmouth, LEE of Auburn, MOONEN of Portland, RANA of Bangor, SATO of Gorham)

Resolve, to Rename a Bridge in the Town of Waterboro the Waterboro Veterans Memorial Bridge (H.P. 385) (L.D. 617) (Sponsored by Representative EDER of Waterboro) (Cosponsored by Senator HARRINGTON of York and Representatives: FREDERICKS of Sanford, PARRY of Arundel, WOODSOME of Waterboro)

Resolve, to Rename a Bridge in Mattawamkeag the Mattawamkeag Veterans Memorial Bridge (H.P. 389) (L.D. 621) (Sponsored by Representative QUINT of Hodgdon)

Bill "An Act to Implement a Surcharge on Electric Vehicle Registration" (H.P. 390) (L.D. 622) (Sponsored by Representative HEPLER of Woolwich) (Cosponsored by Representatives: ANKELES of Brunswick, CRAFTS of Newcastle, DILL of Old Town, DRINKWATER of Milford, MASON of Lisbon, PARRY of Arundel)

Bill "An Act to Amend Motor Vehicle Inspection Requirements" (H.P. 429) (L.D. 661) (Sponsored by Representative ROEDER of Bangor)

Bill "An Act to Modernize the State Motor Vehicle Inspection Program and the Law Governing Inspection Fees" (H.P. 435) (L.D. 667) (Sponsored by Representative PARRY of Arundel) (Cosponsored by Representative: CRAFTS of Newcastle)

Veterans and Legal Affairs

Bill "An Act to Initiate Recounts in Tied Elections" (H.P. 368) (L.D. 600) (Sponsored by Representative MALON of Biddeford) (Cosponsored by Senator TIPPING of Penobscot and Representatives: BUNKER of Farmington, FROST of Belgrade)

Bill "An Act Regarding Elections" (H.P. 383) (L.D. 615) (Sponsored by Representative GRAMLICH of Old Orchard Beach)

Bill "An Act to Provide Support Services for Military Members Transitioning to Civilian Life in Maine" (H.P. 388) (L.D. 620) (Sponsored by Representative TERRY of Gorham) (Cosponsored by Representatives: CLOUTIER of Lewiston, Speaker FECTEAU of Biddeford, GATTINE of Westbrook, GRAMLICH of Old Orchard Beach, MACIAS of Topsham, ZAGER of Portland)

Bill "An Act to Allow a Home Distiller to Distill and Share Homemade Spirituous Liquor" (H.P. 399) (L.D. 631) (Sponsored by Representative SCHMERSAL-BURGESS of Mexico) (BY REQUEST) (Cosponsored by Senator MARTIN of Oxford and Representatives: BAGSHAW of Windham, HALL of Wilton, HENDERSON of Rumford, LAVIGNE of Berwick, LYMAN of Livermore Falls, OLSEN of Raymond, PERKINS of Dover-Foxcroft, SOBOLESKI of Phillips)

Bill "An Act to Remove the Limit on Free Promotional Merchandise Bars and Restaurants May Accept from Vendors" (H.P. 404) (L.D. 636) (Sponsored by Representative ARDELL of Monticello)

Bill "An Act to Save Tax Dollars in Maine's Elections by Amending the Laws Governing When a Ranked-choice Voting Count Must Be Conducted" (H.P. 424) (L.D. 656) (Sponsored by Representative BOYER of Poland) (Cosponsored by Senator TIMBERLAKE of Androscoggin and Representatives: CARLOW of Buxton, CHAPMAN of Auburn, FREDERICKS of Sanford, HYMES of Waldo, PERKINS of Dover-Foxcroft)

Bill "An Act to Fund Military Sexual Trauma Liaisons" (H.P. 430) (L.D. 662) (Sponsored by Representative RIELLY of Westbrook) (Cosponsored by Senator HICKMAN of Kennebec and Representatives: MCINTYRE of Lowell, MEYER of Eliot, SUPICA of Bangor)

Bill "An Act Regarding the Use of Military Protective Orders in Protection from Abuse and Protection from Harassment Proceedings" (H.P. 433) (L.D. 665) (Sponsored by Representative RIELLY of Westbrook) (Cosponsored by Senator HICKMAN of Kennebec and Representatives: MCINTYRE of Lowell, SUPICA of Bangor)

Bill "An Act to Abolish Ranked-choice Voting" (H.P. 436) (L.D. 668) (Sponsored by Representative UNDERWOOD of Presque Isle) (Cosponsored by Senator LIBBY of Cumberland and Representatives: ADAMS of Lebanon, BAGSHAW of Windham, CAMPBELL of Orrington, COLLINS of Sidney, HAGGAN of Hampden, QUINT of Hodgdon, SOBOLESKI of Phillips, THORNE of Carmel)

Bill "An Act to Require Municipal Clerks to Issue Absentee Ballots Only to Residents of That Municipality and to Eliminate Ongoing Absentee Voter Status" (H.P. 457) (L.D. 718) (Sponsored by Representative ADAMS of Lebanon)

Sincerely,

S/Robert B. Hunt

Clerk of the House

S/Darek M. Grant

Secretary of the Senate

READ and ORDERED PLACED ON FILE.

Sent for concurrence.

The Following Communication: (H.C. 65)

**STATE OF MAINE
SUPREME JUDICIAL COURT
163 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0163**

January 24, 2025

Hon. Matthea Elisabeth Larsen Daughtry

President of the Senate

3 State House Station

Augusta, Maine 04333-0003

Hon. Ryan D. Fecteau

Speaker of the House

2 State House Station

Augusta, Maine 04333-0002

Re: State of the Judiciary

Greetings,

Thank you for your invitation of January 23, 2025. Please be advised that I am pleased to accept your invitation and will be in attendance to address the Joint Session of the 132nd Maine Legislature on February 25, 2025 at 11:00 a.m. concerning the State of the Judiciary.

Very truly yours,
S/Valerie Stanfill
Chief Justice

The Following Communication: (H.C. 66)
STATE OF MAINE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
SPEAKER'S OFFICE
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0002

February 10, 2025
Honorable Robert B. Hunt
Clerk of the House
2 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333
Dear Clerk Hunt,
Pursuant to my authority under M.R.S.A. Title 3, §231, I am pleased to appoint the following Representatives to the *New England and Eastern Canada Legislative Commission*, effective immediately.
These four members of the House of Representatives are the members who I have appointed to the Maine-Canadian Legislative Advisory Commission:
Representative Christopher Kessler of South Portland
Representative Daniel Sayre of Kennebunk
Representative Mark Blier of Buxton
Representative Lucien Daigle of Fort Kent
If you have any questions regarding these appointments, please do not hesitate to contact my office.
Sincerely,
S/Ryan D. Fecteau
Speaker of the House

READ and ORDERED PLACED ON FILE.

The Following Communication: (H.C. 67)
STATE OF MAINE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
SPEAKER'S OFFICE
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0002

February 10, 2025
Honorable Robert B. Hunt
Clerk of the House
2 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333
Dear Clerk Hunt,
Pursuant to my authority under Title 3, MRSA, Chapter 10, §227, I am pleased to appoint the following to the *Maine-Canadian Legislative Advisory Commission*, effective immediately:
Honorable Anne Perry of Calais as a member who is a citizen of this State;
Honorable Joyce Maker of Calais as a member who is a citizen of this State;
Honorable Christopher Kessler of South Portland as a member of the House of Representatives;
Honorable Daniel Sayre of Kennebunk as a member of the House of Representatives;
Honorable Mark Blier of Buxton as a member of the House of Representatives; and
Honorable Lucien Daigle of Fort Kent as a member of the House of Representatives and as a member who is fluent in the French language.

Should you have any questions regarding these appointments, please do not hesitate to contact my office.
Sincerely,
S/Ryan D. Fecteau
Speaker of the House

READ and ORDERED PLACED ON FILE.

The Following Communication: (H.C. 68)
STATE OF MAINE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
SPEAKER'S OFFICE
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0002

February 19, 2025
Honorable Robert B. Hunt
Clerk of the House
2 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333
Dear Clerk Hunt,
Pursuant to my authority under Title 7, MRSA, Part 1, Ch. 5, §125.2-G, I am pleased to reappoint Representative William Pluecker of Warren to the *Board of Agriculture*, effective immediately.
Representative Pluecker will continue to serve on this board as the member of the House of Representatives who is a member of the Joint Standing Committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over agricultural matters.

If you have any questions regarding this appointment, please don't hesitate to contact my office.

Sincerely,
S/Ryan D. Fecteau
Speaker of the House

READ and ORDERED PLACED ON FILE.

The Following Communication: (H.C. 69)
SENATE OF MAINE
132ND LEGISLATURE
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

February 12, 2025
Honorable Robert B. Hunt
Clerk of the House
2 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333
Dear Clerk Hunt,
Pursuant to my authority under MRSA, Title 3, §231, I am pleased to appoint the following to the *New England and Eastern Canada Legislative Commission*, effective immediately.
These four members of the Maine State Senate are the members who I have appointed to the Maine-Canadian Legislative Advisory Commission:
Senator Rick Bennett of Oxford County
Senator Stacey Guerin of Penobscot County
Senator Mike Tipping of Penobscot County
Senator Mark Lawrence of York County
If you have any questions regarding these appointments, please do not hesitate to contact my office.
Sincerely,
S/Matthea Elisabeth Larsen Daughtry
President of the Senate

READ and ORDERED PLACED ON FILE.

The Following Communication: (H.C. 70)

**SENATE OF MAINE
132ND LEGISLATURE
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT**

February 12, 2025

Honorable Robert B. Hunt

Clerk of the House

2 State House Station

Augusta, ME 04333

Dear Clerk Hunt,

Pursuant to my authority under Title 3, MRSA, Chapter 10, §227, I am pleased to appoint the following to the *Maine-Canadian Legislative Advisory Commission*, effective immediately:

Honorable Rick Bennett of Oxford County as a member of the Senate;

Honorable Stacey Guerin of Penobscot County as a member of the Senate;

Honorable Mike Tipping of Penobscot County as a member of the Senate; and

Honorable Mark Lawrence of York County as a member of the Senate and as a member who is fluent in the French language.

If you have any questions regarding these appointments, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Sincerely,

S/Mathea Elisabeth Larsen Daughtry

President of the Senate

READ and ORDERED PLACED ON FILE.

The Following Communication: (H.C. 73)

**STATE OF MAINE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
SPEAKER'S OFFICE
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0002**

February 24, 2025

Honorable Robert B. Hunt

Clerk of the House

2 State House Station

Augusta, ME 04333

Dear Clerk Hunt:

Pursuant to my authority under House Rule 201.1 (I) (a), I rescind the appointment of Representative Randall Hall of Wilton from the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, effective immediately.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

S/Ryan D. Fecteau

Speaker of the House

READ and ORDERED PLACED ON FILE.

The Following Communication: (H.C. 71)

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

February 25, 2025

Honorable Ryan D. Fecteau

Speaker of the House

2 State House Station

Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Speaker Fecteau:

Pursuant to Joint Rule 310, the Committee on Judiciary has approved the request by the sponsor, Representative Hasenfus of Readfield, to report the following "Leave to Withdraw:"

L.D. 43 An Act to Further Protect Victims from Contact Prohibited by Probation Conditions

Pursuant to Joint Rule 310, the Committee on Taxation has approved the request by the sponsor, Representative Flynn of Albion, to report the following "Leave to Withdraw:"

L.D. 190 An Act to Exempt Certain Numismatic Transactions from State Sales Tax

Sincerely,

S/Robert B. Hunt

Clerk of the House

READ and with accompanying papers ORDERED PLACED ON FILE.

The Following Communication: (H.C. 72)

**STATE OF MAINE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
SPEAKER'S OFFICE
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0002**

February 25, 2025

Honorable Robert B. Hunt

Clerk of the House

2 State House Station

Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Clerk Hunt:

Please be advised that pursuant to her authority, Governor Janet T. Mills has nominated the following:

on February 19, 2025

Michael J. Foley, Jr. of Cape Elizabeth and Simon Ferland of Bangor as new appointments and William C. Tracy as a reappointment to serve on the Finance Authority of Maine

Pursuant to Title 10, MRSA §965, these appointments and reappointment are contingent on confirmation by the Maine Senate after review by the Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development

Edward S. David of Farmington for reappointment to the Maine Human Rights Commission.

Pursuant to Title 5 MRSA §4561, this reappointment is contingent on confirmation by the Maine Senate after review by the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary

Sincerely,

S/Ryan D. Fecteau

Speaker of the House

READ and with accompanying papers ORDERED PLACED ON FILE.

The Following Communication: (S.C. 100)

**MAINE SENATE
132ND LEGISLATURE
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY**

February 11, 2025

Honorable Ryan Fecteau
Speaker of the House

2 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0002

Dear Speaker Fecteau:

In accordance with 3 M.R.S.A. §158 and Joint Rule 506 of the 132nd Maine Legislature, please be advised that the Senate today confirmed the following nominations:

Upon the recommendation of the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs:

- Claire Jeffers of Portland for appointment, to the Board of the Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and the Governor Baxter School for the Deaf,
- Janet May of Bangor for appointment, to the Board of the Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and the Governor Baxter School for the Deaf,
- Jason A. Bubier of Ellsworth for reappointment, to the Board of the Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and the Governor Baxter School for the Deaf,
- Thomas W. Minch of Cumberland for reappointment, to the Board of the Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and the Governor Baxter School for the Deaf,
- Elizabeth A. Seal of Lisbon Falls for reappointment, to the Board of the Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and the Governor Baxter School for the Deaf,
- Stacey M. Harris of Windham for appointment, to the Maine Community College System, Board of Trustees,
- Elise Baldacci of North Yarmouth for reappointment, to the University of Maine System, Board of Trustees,
- Riley Worth of Sabattus for appointment, to the University of Maine System, Board of Trustees.

Upon the recommendation of the Committee on Housing and Economic Development

- F. Jay Astle of Brunswick for appointment, to the Midcoast Regional Redevelopment Authority,
- Linda E. Smith of Richmond for appointment, to the Midcoast Regional Redevelopment Authority.

Upon the recommendation of the Committee on Judiciary

- The Honorable Brent Davis of Skowhegan for reappointment, as a District Court Judge,
- The Honorable Tammy Ham-Thompson of Hallowell for reappointment, as a District Court Judge,
- The Honorable Lea-Anne Sutton of Gorham for reappointment, as a District Court Judge,
- The Honorable Ann M. Murray of Bangor for reappointment, as a Superior Court Justice.

Best Regards,

S/Darek M. Grant

Secretary of the Senate

READ and ORDERED PLACED ON FILE.

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

ORDERS

On motion of Representative MEYER of Eliot, the following Joint Resolution: (H.P. 471)

**JOINT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING FEBRUARY 2025
ASNATIONAL PARENT LEADERSHIP MONTH**

WHEREAS, partnering with parents is a critical and effective way to help families identify and build upon their strengths and prevent child abuse and neglect; and

WHEREAS, authentic partnerships with parents are created when parents have the opportunity to partner with other parents and present a "parent perspective and lens" to inform policies and programs that support the growth of the protective factors that lead to strong families and communities; and

WHEREAS, the Maine Children's Trust, a statewide abuse and neglect prevention organization, supports, encourages and acknowledges partnerships between parents and community stakeholders, leaders and policymakers as critical to developing strong communities; and

WHEREAS, partnerships with parents can help with building strengths-based communities that thrive based on protective factors; and

WHEREAS, partnerships with parents are successfully achieved when parents are partners in the planning, implementation, oversight and evaluation of policies, practices and programs that affect families and communities, receive support and training and have multiple opportunities to share their expertise; and

WHEREAS, parents each year are partnering with other parents to build stronger, safer communities where all children can thrive; and

WHEREAS, parents can have a powerful effect on communities by sharing their lived expertise, and they will continue to have a positive effect on the lives of families across the State; and

WHEREAS, many organizations across the State support and provide partnership opportunities for parents; and

WHEREAS, National Parent Leadership Month is an opportunity to recognize, honor and celebrate these parents and their contributions; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: that We, the Members of the One Hundred and Thirty-second Legislature now assembled in the First Regular Session, on behalf of the people we represent, take this opportunity to recognize February 2025 as Parent Leadership Month in order to raise awareness of the vital role parents play in creating local communities that produce thriving children.

READ and ADOPTED.

Sent for concurrence.

On motion of Representative LAJOIE of Lewiston, the following House Order: (H.O. 14)

ORDERED, that Representative Jeffrey Sean Adams of Lebanon be excused Feb 4 for personal reasons.

AND BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that Representative Amy Bradstreet Arata of New Gloucester be excused Jan 21 and Feb 4 for personal reasons.

AND BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that Representative Allison Hepler of Woolwich be excused Feb 4 for legislative business reasons.

AND BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that Representative Joseph F. Underwood of Presque Isle be excused Feb 4 for health reasons.

AND BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that Representative Mark Walker of Naples be excused Jan 8, 14, 21, 28 and Feb 4 for health reasons.

READ and PASSED.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

Report of the Chair-Pursuant to Joint Rule 308.2

Representative SALISBURY from the Committee on **STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT** on Bill "An Act to Require the Updating of Voter Registration Signatures"

(H.P. 169) (L.D. 266)

Reports a recommendation for a **CHANGE OF COMMITTEE.**

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

On motion of Representative SALISBURY of Westbrook, the Bill was **REFERRED** to the Committee on **VETERANS AND LEGAL AFFAIRS.**

Refer to the Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry Pursuant to Statute

Representative PLUECKER for the **Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry** on Resolve, Regarding Legislative Review of Portions of Chapter 27: Standards for Timber Harvesting and Timber Harvesting Related Activities Within Unorganized and Deorganized Areas of the State, a Major Substantive Rule of the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Bureau of Forestry (EMERGENCY)

(H.P. 492) (L.D. 750)

Reporting that it be **REFERRED** to the Committee on **AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY** pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 5, section 8072.

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

Subsequently, the Resolve was **REFERRED** to the Committee on **AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY** and sent for concurrence.

Refer to the Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Pursuant to Public Law

Representative ROBERTS for the **Joint Standing Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife** on Bill "An Act to Amend the Hunting Laws Related to the Training of Dogs and Open Training Seasons" (EMERGENCY)

(H.P. 493) (L.D. 751)

Reporting that it be **REFERRED** to the Committee on **INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE** pursuant to Public Law 2023, chapter 172, section 2.

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

Subsequently, the Bill was **REFERRED** to the Committee on **INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE** and sent for concurrence.

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

ENACTORS

Emergency Measure

An Act to Make Supplemental Appropriations and Allocations from the General Fund and Other Funds for the Expenditures of State Government and to Change Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2025

(H.P. 131) (L.D. 209)

(C. "A" H-1)

Reported by the Committee on **Engrossed Bills** as truly and strictly engrossed.

Representative GATTINE of Westbrook **REQUESTED** a roll call **PASSAGE TO BE ENACTED.**

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

The **SPEAKER**: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Westbrook, Representative Gattine.

Representative **GATTINE**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Members of the House. I rise in support of Enactment.

I won't repeat all of the remarks that I made when we convened two weeks ago, but I will take a minute to remind the Body that the item before us is the result of weeks of work by the Appropriations Committee and the policy Committees that participated in the public hearings and work sessions around the supplemental budget. It is a report that has changed dramatically the original proposal from the Chief Executive and has, in essence, been stripped down to the items that the Members of the Appropriations Committee agreed were truly urgent.

Many, many important issues were removed from the original bill and set aside, with the understanding that we would take them up again when we deliberate the biennial budget. These include many items that are critically important to Members of this Chamber on both sides of the aisle, and include funding for community colleges, changes to General Assistance, various expenses incurred by the Judicial Branch and the Secretary of State, funding for rural pharmacy services and behavioral health receiving centers. We didn't set these things aside because we didn't think they were important. They're all actually really important. We set them aside because they didn't meet the framework that we had agreed upon among Members of the Committee; namely, that we would focus this bill on the items that were so urgent that they couldn't wait until we worked on the biennial budget. So, the items I'd like you to think about when we vote on this in a few minutes are the items that really need to be funded right away; things that will have a very serious negative impact to Maine and Maine people if we don't move ahead immediately.

This supplemental budget appropriates \$118 million to the MaineCare program. Without this funding, MaineCare will run out of money this spring and DHHS has said that it will begin to reduce provider payments sometime in March. About one in three Maine children rely on MaineCare. MaineCare pays for the health care of about 400,000 Mainers in total. Most of the long-term care provided to older Mainers, including nursing homes, are paid for by MaineCare. Providers of behavioral health services and services for people with disabilities receive the vast majority of their revenue from MaineCare, and many are not in a situation where they can hang on with reduced or delayed payments. This money needs to be appropriated to maintain the basic functioning of our health care system.

We need to immediately address the risk to our northern forest from the impact of spruce budworm infestation. This infestation puts millions of acres of our forests at risk, with an economic impact easily in the hundreds of millions of dollars.

We need to be ready to spray this spring. Doing nothing means the loss of thousands of jobs and the destruction of some of our most important and valuable natural resources.

Another issue that we haven't really talked about much is tax conformity, which should not be a controversial issue at all. Each year, we align Maine tax law with any changes that have been made at the federal level. My colleague, the Good Representative from Lewiston, will speak more about tax conformity, but the bottom line is we are already behind; tax season is well underway, people are filing now.

I also think it's important to point out, given where this bill stands, that there's nothing in this bill that has been added to the original bill at the request of the Democratic Members of the Appropriations Committee. There's nothing that we tried to move in during the negotiations. However, during negotiations, the Republicans on the Committee and their Leaders came forward with a number of new items that they wanted to add. So, instead of rejecting these requests, the Democrats on the Committee engaged with our Republican colleagues and negotiated in good faith. As a result, there were four new items added to the supplemental budget proposed by the Republicans on the Committee. Democrats on the Committee supported these when the Republican Lead on the Committee moved them in; we supported them because they were part of the negotiation that led to a unanimous Committee Report. These were moved in four separate motions, and all the Democrats on the Committee supported each one. These items include a new structure for how the Department of Health and Human Services reports MaineCare information to the Legislature in order to provide greater accountability for MaineCare spending; repeal of what's known as the Easy Enrollment Program, an underutilized enrollment tool for CoverME and MaineCare; clarifying language to make explicit that gambling winnings are considered toward income eligibility for MaineCare; clarifying language to ensure that no MaineCare payments are processed for incarcerated people while they are incarcerated. Republicans on the Committee and Republican Leaders asked for these things, and our response wasn't to say no; it was to negotiate with them to get to a place where we all agree. That's how negotiation is supposed to work.

Mr. Speaker, it is very clear that this supplemental budget meets the moment and addresses some of the most urgent needs facing our State today. In a few minutes, each of us will make an individual decision about where we stand when it comes to providing health care for people who need it and protecting our forests and our rural economy. Mr. Speaker, I hope each and every Member understands the urgency of the matter before us and votes to support the people of Maine in this very important way. Thank you.

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

Representative **DUCHARME**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today in opposition to this.

As the Representative from Westbrook said, I'm not going to recount everything that I said. I do want to say that we don't oppose the current funding for MaineCare, we don't oppose the \$2 million for spruce budworm, we don't oppose the tax conformity piece; we simply realize that we have to be fiscally prudent. If we look at the projections coming for '26-'27, this MaineCare hole is no longer \$118 million; it's \$240 million. We can't sustain this. My experience in this Body with biennial budgets is that there's not real substantive changes made in biennial budgets. It's really not. One party has control, and they do what they want. This is an opportunity for us to come together and say, look, we know we've got a problem. If you

know we have a problem, then we need to oppose this. And we have a problem. I've been saying since 2022 that we have a fiscal problem, and it's come home to roost.

All I would say is, we are charged with taking care of the peoples' money. The people have said, you've got to stop spending, and the only way to stop spending is to put the brakes on it. The reforms that we've asked for are common sense, they're not slash and burn reforms, they are what we seem to think, what we believe; and our friends on the other side have helped us craft language to get some things that will help us understand how we're spending the MaineCare money, particularly, and how we can perhaps do a better job of that and be more fiscally prudent with that. And in doing so, we can sustain the program. But if we don't stop and take a look at it, then it will never happen. What we're saying is, it's time to stop and take a look at it. What we proposed is fairly easy to do. We've offered several times, several different ways. We've been challenged in the media, we've been challenged in other places that we're not offering anything; we've made many offers. But yet, my response has been, okay, we've offered; we haven't heard anything back. Five times I've asked in Committee, in Chairs and Leads; five times I've asked, how do we get your side to get to two-thirds, so that we can all do something together? Five times. Five times, I've gotten no response.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would challenge us to be fiscally prudent today. Because the only way we are going to get through '26-'27 is if we start the process right now and say, woah, put the brakes on it. We know the federal programs take time, waivers from the federal government may take six or eight months; at the end of the day, if we don't start the process, we will never do the process. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Newport, Representative Fredette.

Representative **FREDETTE**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. I hate to get into the details of the nuances of the Rules, but as we know, this Body adopted a set of Rules at the beginning of the Session. One of the Rules, probably rushed through, said that Members of this Body have the opportunity to vote on a bill the following day and record their vote. I think it's pretty well known at this point in time that at 9:00 in the morning, after the 1:30 vote in the morning, that I cast a vote not supporting this supplemental budget. Now, the rules at that point in time, we evidently learned that you're not entitled to do that because that created a Report. And again, getting into the nuances of the Rules, I don't think that's what anybody intended and, in fact, as evidence of that, this Body changed that Rule, so that people have the opportunity to show up at the next morning and vote in favor or in opposition to a bill. So, people had acknowledged the Rule was wrong, but the fact remains I voted against that proposal.

Now, what have we done since then? We have come into this Body and the majority party has sought to push through this vote, and what were the results of that? The results were not one Republican person in this Body or the Other Body voted for that supplemental budget. So, we know, I would propose, we know what the outcome of this vote is going to be. And as an emergency bill, it requires two-thirds of this Body. Two-thirds. Which requires votes from this side of the aisle in order for the supplemental budget to pass as an emergency measure. I, along with other Members of this Body, just spent a week off. I received no text messages, no phone calls, no smoke signals saying, please come back so we can talk about this supplemental budget. Ten days, 14 days; we had to vote, what, two weeks ago? And now, there's a call today that this is a crisis, this is an emergency. Yet here we are, two weeks later, we have

not had further conversations on this that have been meaningful, the Appropriations Committee has not had conversations on this that have been meaningful. And I would submit to you, Mr. Speaker, that the results of this vote are going to be, people on this side of the aisle are not going to vote in favor of this emergency measure, which in my opinion means it's going to fail. The majority party has the option, then, of removing the emergency measure, and I don't know as if we've really accomplished a whole lot.

The hospitals need to be paid. I agree with that. A lot of people on this side of the aisle, Mr. Speaker, agree. The hospitals need to be paid. The spruce budworm issue is a real issue that needs to be resolved. I don't think that there's a lot of work to be done to try to get everybody on board and get to two-thirds in this supplemental package. But I think having a committee of 186 people to accomplish that is going to be difficult. And I have suggested that this bill be sent back down to the Appropriations Committee, so that they can send up a bill that can garner the necessary two-thirds to pass as an emergency measure.

Now, my understanding, Mr. Speaker, is that the Chief Executive has asked this Body and has asked --

The SPEAKER: The Member will defer. Before the Member finishes his comments, I just remind the Member to not speak on behalf of what the Chief Executive will do; has done. The Member may proceed.

Representative **FREDETTE**: If I may continue, the Chief Executive has been publicly clear that she would like to see a two-thirds emergency passed supplemental budget. The Chief Executive's been clear on that. So, I would submit to you, Mr. Speaker, this bill be sent back down to the Appropriations Committee, so that we can pass out a bill that will get two-thirds vote. I believe our side of the aisle wants to do that, and we want to work with the majority party to do that, but I think that's the right way to accomplish this, and as we proceed forward with a vote on this as an emergency measure is not the right way, I would ask the people not to vote not in favor of the current motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Representative **MEYER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Women and Men of the House. I rise in support of the pending measure, as I did on February 11th, when I rose to speak to this Body about MaineCare and its primacy to our health care system, our hospitals, long-term care, home and community base services and to the health care workforce providing care in those places in communities statewide; rural, suburban and urban, in homes and offices where Mainers seek the care they require to treat and maintain their mental and physical health; a system and a workforce that supports us in illness and in wellness and that has an outsized reliance on MaineCare.

I speak with some professional and personal experience with Medicaid. I am a registered nurse and 35 years ago, while I was a struggling full-time nursing student, my own children were covered under Medicaid. It was, for me and my kids then, as it is for hundreds of thousands of Maine families now, a lifeline to the care required to stitch up a wound, diagnose and treat an ear infection, to save a child's life.

I have heard from many people and providers in the last few weeks. In fact, we all have. There has been outreach to Members in this Chamber and the other from the people we represent all over Maine. No excuse for ignorance about just how important MaineCare coverage is to real Mainers. And frankly, don't give a damn about our political squabbling. They care about their kids, their aged parents, their disabled family

members, their foster child, their patients. The emails and the phone calls are too numerous to mention.

One stands out for me from Julie, a hospice social worker who wrote to Members of the York County delegation about a day in her work with nursing home patients. Julie writes, and I quote, "my hospice social work job takes me regularly to nursing homes in York County, where in the last week, this is what I saw as I arrived for work. An elderly resident sits in a high-backed wheelchair in the common room, her legs are bent at awkward angles, contracted. Her debility has left her frozen in that chair, but she's awake, her eyes are open and bright. She's waiting for her lunch. A young woman, a CNA, prepares to feed her, as this resident can neither take solid food nor feed herself. Most of the residents are being fed, while a few others are able, with shaky hands, to feed themselves. MaineCare makes their care possible."

Julie continued, "of the 50 states, Maine has the oldest population, and 70% of the State's nursing home residents rely on MaineCare to pay for their care. These are among Maine's most vulnerable citizens. They require more care on a daily basis than any loved one can provide. They are our neighbors, our parents, our grandparents, our aunts and uncles, and someday, although none of us likes to think about this, we, too, may need the kind of care that would be endangered by voting against the supplemental budget. What will become of these nursing home residents," Julie asked? "I've seen video of people in far-away places who abandon sick old people at bus stops because there are simply no funds to pay for their care. I can't believe that Mainers would do that, but just what do you suggest be done with our elderly neighbors and loved ones if the lives they are living in nursing homes doesn't matter to you?" She concludes her email; "political maneuvering has life and death implications for the people of Maine. They may live hidden away in nursing homes, but their lives are as valuable as any of our lives, and they are our responsibility. We are responsible to each other." End-quote.

We are responsible to each other. Thomas Jefferson said, "the care of human life and happiness, and not their destruction, is the first and only legitimate object of good government." Mr. Speaker, I am not sure how voting against this budget is justifiable, or how any rationale wrapped up in partisan politics passes the straight face test. But I do know this; voting against health care access for one in three Mainers, half of all Maine kids and the many thousands of health care workers providing their care is simply not good government and the people of Maine are watching. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair would remind Members to try to keep their comments to the point where they're not impugning the motives of other Members.

The Chair recognizes the Representative from Lewiston, Representative Cloutier.

Representative **CLOUTIER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker and Honorable Women and Men of the House, I rise in support of the pending motion.

As a member of the Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee, and as Chair of the Taxation Committee, I want to speak briefly about an issue in the supplemental budget that is seemingly less controversial than the other budget issues being discussed today, but that has a direct and timely impact on the people of Maine: Tax conformity. Ensuring our State tax laws align with changes at the federal level is just common sense. It makes life easier for folks when filing their taxes, and this year, it can truly mean more money in their pockets. Here's why. In December, President Biden signed into law the Federal Disaster Tax Relief Act. The Act is exactly as it sounds; it allows special

provisions for qualified disaster-related personal casualty losses. It means that folks can claim expenses incurred by disasters, like the storms we had in December of 2023 and January of 2024. And they can claim the deduction even if they do not itemize deductions on their tax returns. The federal legislation allows taxpayers to file amended returns or seek refunds for losses that were previously non-deductible back to January of 2020.

Now, I realize this sounds a little wonky, but here's the thing; it will make a real difference to taxpayers across the State who have been impacted by storms since 2020. And if this supplemental budget does not pass as an emergency measure, many Maine taxpayers will lose that money. Taxpayers who have seen their homes flooded, like those in Rumford and Mexico and businesses that were forced to close because of storm damage in Skowhegan and along the Kennebec River. Tax season is already underway. Maine people are already filing their taxes. If we fail to pass this supplemental budget in a bipartisan manner, real Maine people who have already suffered extreme losses from severe storms will be impacted once again and they deserve better.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Portland, Representative Moonen.

Representative **MOONEN**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Colleagues of the House, I wanted to respond to what was said about the public comments of the Chief Executive in regards to this supplemental budget. It is accurate that she said she wants a two-thirds budget, we all know that. However, she has also been very clear and very public that there is no good reason not to give this current budget, in its current form, a two-thirds vote.

The two Minority Leaders issued a statement on social media in the last few days outlining their demands in order to get a two-thirds vote on this. One is Part S, dealing with GA. Many of us in this Body have been clear that we have a willingness to talk about GA and to figure out some changes. The Chief Executive has also been clear about that desire, but she has been clear that that conversation can happen in the context of the biennial budget. There is no need to force it now; there's no need to stall this budget for that issue.

The second demand is an item that would be a massive policy change. It is an item that has had no public hearing, no public input, and it would be wildly inappropriate on all of our behalf to pass a massive policy change with no public hearing and no public input, and we simply cannot do it.

So, I appreciate my Republican colleagues' desire to support the Chief Executive, but she's been clear that this budget is ready for a two-thirds vote as it is. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Representative **FAULKINGHAM**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I feel like today's episode of the Legislature is a rerun. The Democrats are talking about the horrible outcomes that will come from not passing this funding, and the Republicans sound like a broken record saying that we want fiscal responsibility. We agree that paying the hospitals and the spruce budworm are very important issues and this bill certainly, if it didn't make it to the one-yard line, was in the red zone, but we're not going to sign a blank check today without seeing some fiscal responsibility in the form of cost savings. If that doesn't come in the form of General Assistance reform or work requirements, we are open to suggestions from the other side. But we have yet to see any proposals that suggest a willingness to put cost savings into the budget, and we're just

not prepared to move forward with this biennial signing a blank check to be cut out; or to be cut out of the biennial and sign a blank check to this supplemental.

Mr. Speaker, we have to admit there's a problem before we can fix it. Right now, we are in a budget catastrophe that we all have to fix together. And I agree with the Representative from Newport that a committee of 186 probably is not going to do a good job of coming to a consensus on this. I do think that the Appropriations Committee that handles these matters could go back to work and put out a bill that will get two-thirds. So, Mr. Speaker, I move that we send this bill back to Appropriations Committee.

Representative **FAULKINGHAM** of Winter Harbor moved to **COMMIT** the Bill and all accompanying papers to the Committee on **APPROPRIATIONS AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS**.

Representative **MOONEN** of Portland **REQUESTED** a roll call on the motion to **COMMIT** the Bill and all accompanying papers to the Committee on **APPROPRIATIONS AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS**.

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

The SPEAKER: A roll call has been ordered. The pending question before the House is to Commit the Bill and all accompanying papers to the Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs. All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

ROLL CALL NO. 12

YEA - Adams, Albert, Arata, Ardell, Babin, Bagshaw, Bishop, Blier, Boyer D, Campbell, Carlow, Caruso, Chapman, Cimino, Collamore, Collins, Cooper, Cray, Daigle, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eder, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foley, Foster, Fredericks, Fredette, Gifford, Griffin, Guerrette, Haggan, Hall, Henderson, Hymes, Javner, Lance, Lavigne, Lemelin, Libby, Mason, McIntyre, Mingo, Morris, Nutting, Olsen, Parry, Paul, Perkins, Poirier, Pomerleau, Quint, Rudnicki, Schmearsal-Burgess, Simmons, Smith, Soboleski, Strout, Swallow, Thorne, Tuell, Underwood, Wadsworth, Walker, White J, White R, Wood P, Wood S, Woodsome.

NAY - Abdi, Ankeles, Archer, Arford, Beck, Bell, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, Crockett, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Eaton, Farrin, Friedmann, Frost, Gattine, Geiger, Gere, Graham, Gramlich, Hasenfus, Hepler, Julia, Kessler, Kuhn, Lajoie, Lee, Lookner, Macias, Malon, Mastraccio, Mathieson, Matlack, McCabe, Meyer, Milliken, Mitchell, Montell, Moonen, Murphy, O'Halloran, Osher, Pluecker, Pugh, Rana, Ray, Rielly, Roberts, Roeder, Rollins, Runte, Sachs, Salisbury, Sargent, Sato, Sayre, Shagoury, Sinclair, Skold, Stover, Supica, Terry, Warren, Webb, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

ABSENT - Golek, Greenwood, Jackson, Lanigan, Lyman. Yes, 69; No, 76; Absent, 5; Vacant, 1; Excused, 0.

69 having voted in the affirmative and 76 voted in the negative, 1 vacancy with 5 being absent, and accordingly the motion to **COMMIT** the Bill and all accompanying papers to the Committee on **APPROPRIATIONS AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS** **FAILED**.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Newport, Representative Fredette.

Representative **FREDETTE**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. May I ask a question through the Chair?

The SPEAKER: The Member may proceed.

Representative **FREDETTE**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My understanding that the vote now to occur is an emergency vote,

and as an emergency vote, what is the required vote tally that is required in order to pass an emergency measure?

The SPEAKER: The Chair would inform the Body the count would be 101.

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

This being an emergency measure, a two-thirds vote of all the members elected to the House being necessary, a total was taken.

ROLL CALL NO. 13

YEA - Abdi, Ankeles, Archer, Arford, Beck, Bell, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, Crockett, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Eaton, Farrin, Friedmann, Frost, Gattine, Geiger, Gere, Graham, Gramlich, Hasenfus, Hepler, Julia, Kessler, Kuhn, Lajoie, Lee, Lookner, Macias, Malon, Mastraccio, Mathieson, Matlack, McCabe, Meyer, Milliken, Mitchell, Montell, Murphy, O'Halloran, Osher, Pluecker, Pugh, Rana, Ray, Rielly, Roberts, Roeder, Rollins, Runte, Sachs, Salisbury, Sargent, Sato, Sayre, Shagoury, Sinclair, Skold, Stover, Supica, Terry, Warren, Webb, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

NAY - Adams, Albert, Arata, Ardell, Babin, Bagshaw, Bishop, Blier, Boyer D, Campbell, Carlow, Caruso, Chapman, Cimino, Collamore, Collins, Cooper, Cray, Daigle, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eder, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foley, Foster, Fredericks, Fredette, Gifford, Griffin, Guerrette, Haggan, Hall, Henderson, Hymes, Javner, Lance, Lavigne, Lemelin, Libby, Mason, McIntyre, Mingo, Moonen, Morris, Nutting, Olsen, Parry, Paul, Perkins, Poirier, Pomerleau, Quint, Rudnicki, Schmearsal-Burgess, Simmons, Smith, Soboleski, Strout, Swallow, Thorne, Tuell, Underwood, Wadsworth, Walker, White J, White R, Wood P, Wood S, Woodsome.

ABSENT - Golek, Greenwood, Jackson, Lanigan, Lyman.

Yes, 75; No, 70; Absent, 5; Vacant, 1; Excused, 0.

75 having voted in the affirmative and 70 voted in the negative, 1 vacancy with 5 being absent, and accordingly the Bill **FAILED PASSAGE TO BE ENACTED**.

Representative MOONEN of Portland moved that the House **RECONSIDER** its action whereby the Bill **FAILED PASSAGE TO BE ENACTED**.

On further motion of the same Representative, the Bill was **TABLED** pending **RECONSIDERATION** whereby the Bill **FAILED PASSAGE TO BE ENACTED** and later today assigned.

COMMUNICATIONS

The Following Communication: (S.P. 284)

MAINE SENATE

132ND LEGISLATURE

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

February 19, 2025

Hon. Matthea Daughtry

President of the Senate

132nd Legislature

Hon. Ryan D. Fecteau

Speaker of the House

132nd Legislature

Dear Madam President and Mr. Speaker:

On February 19, 2025, 42 bills were received by the Secretary of the Senate.

Pursuant to the provisions of Joint Rule 308.2, these bills were referred to the Joint Standing Committees on February 19, 2025, as follows:

Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Bill "An Act to Extend Funding for the Land for Maine's Future Program" (S.P. 277) (L.D. 593) (Sponsored by Senator BLACK of Franklin) (Cosponsored by Representative HALL of Wilton and Senators: BRENNER of Cumberland, RENY of Lincoln, Representatives: MASON of Lisbon, BLIER of Buxton, CRAFTS of Newcastle, DUCHARME of Madison, BUNKER of Farmington, DILL of Old Town)

Appropriations and Financial Affairs

Bill "An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Improve Coastal Climate Resiliency" (S.P. 239) (L.D. 560) (Sponsored by Senator BAILEY of York) (Cosponsored by Representative GRAMLICH of Old Orchard Beach and Senators: President DAUGHTRY of Cumberland, TEPLER of Sagadahoc, GROHOSKI of Hancock, RAFFERTY of York, RENY of Lincoln, Representatives: FOLEY of Wells, COPELAND of Saco, ARCHER of Saco)

Criminal Justice and Public Safety

Bill "An Act to Support Informed Community Self-determination in Emergency Medical Services Planning" (S.P. 266) (L.D. 583) (Sponsored by Senator CURRY of Waldo) (Cosponsored by Senators: TALBOT ROSS of Cumberland, BALDACCI of Penobscot, RENY of Lincoln, NANGLE of Cumberland)

Bill "An Act to Amend the Laws Governing the Crime of Endangering the Welfare of a Child" (S.P. 276) (L.D. 592) (Sponsored by Senator BALDACCI of Penobscot) (Cosponsored by Senator: RAFFERTY of York)

Education and Cultural Affairs

Bill "An Act to Address Student Hunger and Nutrition Through Expanded Access to Free Milk in Schools" (S.P. 258) (L.D. 577) (Sponsored by Senator TIPPING of Penobscot)

Bill "An Act to Require Cardiac Emergency Response Plans and Athletic Emergency Action Plans for Schools and School-sponsored Athletic Events" (S.P. 270) (L.D. 587) (Sponsored by Senator RAFFERTY of York) (Cosponsored by Representative DODGE of Belfast and Representatives: MURPHY of Scarborough, SARGENT of York, MITCHELL of Cumberland)

Energy, Utilities and Technology

Bill "An Act to Modify the Process for Standard-offer Contracts with the Public Utilities Commission" (S.P. 248) (L.D. 568) (Sponsored by Senator HARRINGTON of York) (Cosponsored by Senator: STEWART of Aroostook, Representatives: WARREN of Scarborough, PAUL of Winterport)

Bill "An Act to Use Certain Regional Transmission Organization Payments for Beneficial Electrification to Reduce Electricity Rates" (S.P. 268) (L.D. 585) (Sponsored by Senator INGWERSEN of York) (Cosponsored by Representative KESSLER of South Portland and Senators: CARNEY of Cumberland, BRENNER of Cumberland, Representatives: MALON of Biddeford, RUNTE of York, SAYRE of Kennebunk) Resolve, to Provide Legislative Approval of Northern Maine Transmission Infrastructure (S.P. 280) (L.D. 596) (Sponsored by Senator LAWRENCE of York) (Cosponsored by Representative SACHS of Freeport)

Bill "An Act Concerning Energy, Utilities and Technology" (S.P. 281) (L.D. 597) (Sponsored by Senator LAWRENCE of York)

Health and Human Services

Bill "An Act to Ensure Subsidy Reimbursements for Certain Child Care Providers" (S.P. 240) (L.D. 561) (Sponsored by Senator BALDACCI of Penobscot) (Cosponsored by Senators: MOORE of Washington, RAFFERTY of York, Representatives: SHAGOURY of Hallowell, MCCABE of Lewiston)

Bill "An Act to Update Reimbursement Rates for Transportation of Deceased Persons by Funeral Homes When the Transport is at the Request of the Chief Medical Examiner" (S.P. 241) (L.D. 562) (Sponsored by Senator BALDACCI of Penobscot) (Cosponsored by Senators: MOORE of Washington, RAFFERTY of York, Representatives: LEMELIN of Chelsea, SHAGOURY of Hallowell)

Resolve, Directing the Department of Health and Human Services to Apply for a Waiver from the Federal Government for the Medicaid Limitation on Payment to a Facility with More than 16 Inpatient Beds for Psychiatric Treatment (S.P. 242) (L.D. 563) (Sponsored by Senator BALDACCI of Penobscot) (Cosponsored by Senator BENNETT of Oxford)

Resolve, Establishing the Commission to Study MaineCare Estate Recovery (EMERGENCY) (S.P. 275) (L.D. 591) (Sponsored by Senator BALDACCI of Penobscot) (Cosponsored by Representative HASENFUS of Readfield and Senator: RAFFERTY of York)

Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services

Bill "An Act to Strengthen Consumer Protections by Prohibiting the Report of Medical Debt on Consumer Reports" (S.P. 237) (L.D. 558) (Sponsored by Senator BAILEY of York) (Cosponsored by Representative MATHIESON of Kittery and Senators: President DAUGHTRY of Cumberland, HICKMAN of Kennebec, RENOY of Lincoln, TIPPING of Penobscot)

Bill "An Act to Protect Maine Consumers by Prohibiting Fees Charged for Receiving Paper Statements from Financial Institutions and Credit Card Issuers" (S.P. 261) (L.D. 580) (Sponsored by Senator BAILEY of York) (Cosponsored by Representative GRIFFIN of Levant and Senators: BENNETT of Oxford, MOORE of Washington, INGWERSEN of York, LIBBY of Cumberland, Representatives: ARFORD of Brunswick, SHAGOURY of Hallowell)

Bill "An Act to Require Health Insurance Carriers to Provide Coverage for Blood Testing for Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances" (S.P. 265) (L.D. 582) (Sponsored by Senator BRENNER of Cumberland) (Cosponsored by Representative FLYNN of Albion and Senators: BLACK of Franklin, BAILEY of York, INGWERSEN of York, BALDACCI of Penobscot, Representatives: PARRY of Arundel, MATHIESON of Kittery, ARFORD of Brunswick, HYMES of Waldo)

Housing and Economic Development

Bill "An Act to Fund the Doctors for Maine's Future Scholarship Program" (S.P. 264) (L.D. 581) (Sponsored by Senator BENNETT of Oxford) (Cosponsored by Representative MURPHY of Scarborough and Senators: PIERCE of Cumberland, RAFFERTY of York, LIBBY of Cumberland, Representatives: CARLOW of Buxton, SARGENT of York, BRENNAN of Portland)

Judiciary

Bill "An Act to Provide a Court Authority to Issue Proximity Restrictions in Protection from Abuse Orders" (S.P. 269) (L.D. 586) (Sponsored by Senator RAFFERTY of York) (Cosponsored by Representative KUHN of Falmouth, Representative SALISBURY of Westbrook and Senators: BENNETT of Oxford, PIERCE of Cumberland, Representatives: DODGE of Belfast, MURPHY of Scarborough, MITCHELL of Cumberland)

Bill "An Act to Update Privacy Protections for Maine Consumers" (S.P. 279) (L.D. 595) (Sponsored by Senator CARNEY of Cumberland)

Labor

Bill "An Act to Improve Conditions for Maine Workers and Retirees" (S.P. 252) (L.D. 571) (Sponsored by Senator TIPPING of Penobscot)

Bill "An Act to Improve Maine's Workers' Compensation Laws" (S.P. 253) (L.D. 572) (Sponsored by Senator TIPPING of Penobscot)

Bill "An Act to Improve Penalty Collection for Labor Protection Violations" (S.P. 254) (L.D. 573) (Sponsored by Senator TIPPING of Penobscot)

Bill "An Act to Improve Labor Conditions for Workers in the State" (S.P. 255) (L.D. 574) (Sponsored by Senator TIPPING of Penobscot)

Bill "An Act to Ensure Equitable Access to the Paid Family and Medical Leave Benefits Program by Removing the Requirement That Leave Must Be Scheduled to Prevent Undue Hardship on the Employer" (S.P. 256) (L.D. 575) (Sponsored by Senator TIPPING of Penobscot) (Cosponsored by Representative: ROEDER of Bangor)

Bill "An Act Regarding Reciprocal Licensure for Professional Engineers" (S.P. 257) (L.D. 576) (Sponsored by Senator TIPPING of Penobscot) (Submitted by the Department of Professional and Financial Regulation pursuant to Joint Rule 204.)

Bill "An Act to Improve Occupational Regulation" (S.P. 259) (L.D. 578) (Sponsored by Senator TIPPING of Penobscot)

Bill "An Act to Include Certain Mental Health Workers Under the 1998 Special Plan for Retirement" (S.P. 260) (L.D. 579) (Sponsored by Senator TIPPING of Penobscot) (Cosponsored by Representative ROEDER of Bangor and Senator: BRADSTREET of Kennebec, Representative: DRINKWATER of Milford)

Bill "An Act to Enact the Agricultural Employees Concerted Activity Protection Act" (S.P. 272) (L.D. 588) (Sponsored by Senator TALBOT ROSS of Cumberland) (Cosponsored by Representative ROEDER of Bangor and Senator: TIPPING of Penobscot)

Bill "An Act to Make Agricultural Workers and Other Related Workers Employees Under the Wage and Hour Laws" (S.P. 273) (L.D. 589) (Sponsored by Senator TALBOT ROSS of Cumberland) (Cosponsored by Representative ROEDER of Bangor and Senators: BENNETT of Oxford, President DAUGHTRY of Cumberland, HICKMAN of Kennebec, CURRY of Waldo, TIPPING of Penobscot, ROTUNDO of Androscoggin, Representatives: Speaker FECTEAU of Biddeford, GERE of Kennebunkport)

Bill "An Act to Require Minimum Pay for Reporting to Work" (S.P. 282) (L.D. 598) (Sponsored by Senator TIPPING of Penobscot) (Cosponsored by Representative ARCHER of Saco and Representatives: GEIGER of Rockland, ROEDER of Bangor, BECK of South Portland, MACIAS of Topsham)

Bill "An Act to Codify the Federal Salary Threshold for Overtime Pay" (S.P. 283) (L.D. 599) (Sponsored by Senator TIPPING of Penobscot) (Cosponsored by Representative ARCHER of Saco and Representatives: GEIGER of Rockland, ROEDER of Bangor, BECK of South Portland, SATO of Gorham, MACIAS of Topsham)

State and Local Government

Bill "An Act to Improve the Operations of State Government" (S.P. 243) (L.D. 564) (Sponsored by Senator BALDACCI of Penobscot)

Bill "An Act to Designate the 2nd Week of May as Dark Sky Week" (S.P. 247) (L.D. 567) (Sponsored by Senator GUERIN of Penobscot) (Cosponsored by Representative OSHER of Orono and Senator: MOORE of Washington, Representatives: MATLACK of St. George, COPELAND of Saco, SALISBURY of Westbrook, POMERLEAU of Standish)

Bill "An Act Regarding the Inclusion of Racial and Other Demographic Data from State Agencies in the Legislative Process" (S.P. 274) (L.D. 590) (Sponsored by Senator TALBOT ROSS of Cumberland)

Resolve, Directing the State Auditor to Audit All State Agencies (S.P. 278) (L.D. 594) (Sponsored by Senator BRADSTREET of Kennebec) (Cosponsored by Representative LIBBY of Auburn and Representatives: GREENWOOD of Wales, DRINKWATER of Milford, UNDERWOOD of Presque Isle, FREDERICKS of Sanford, SCHMERSAL-BURGESS of Mexico, HENDERSON of Rumford, CHAPMAN of Auburn, CARUSO of Caratunk)

Taxation

Bill "An Act to Provide Property Tax Stabilization for Older Maine Residents" (S.P. 238) (L.D. 559) (Sponsored by Senator BAILEY of York) (Cosponsored by Senators: CURRY of Waldo, RAFFERTY of York, RENY of Lincoln, NANGLE of Cumberland, Representatives: STOVER of Boothbay, DOUDERA of Camden)

Bill "An Act to Amend the Definition of 'Homestead' Under the Homestead Property Tax Exemption Laws" (S.P. 244) (L.D. 565) (Sponsored by Senator BALDACCI of Penobscot) (Cosponsored by Senators: BAILEY of York, RAFFERTY of York, Representative: MATLACK of St. George)

Bill "An Act to Provide an Additional Maine Resident Homestead Property Tax Exemption Based on Income" (S.P. 250) (L.D. 570) (Sponsored by Senator RENY of Lincoln)

Transportation

Bill "An Act to Modernize the Motor Vehicle Inspection Program and Amend the Law Governing Inspection Fees" (S.P. 246) (L.D. 566) (Sponsored by Senator FARRIN of Somerset) (Cosponsored by Representatives: CRAFTS of Newcastle, DUCHARME of Madison, ANKELES of Brunswick)

Resolve, to Rename the Shapleigh Bridge the Shapleigh Veterans Memorial Bridge (S.P. 249) (L.D. 569) (Sponsored by Senator LIBBY of Cumberland) (Cosponsored by Representative: LANIGAN of Sanford)

Veterans and Legal Affairs

Bill "An Act to Make the Director of the Office of Cannabis Policy an Appointed Position Subject to Confirmation by the Legislature" (S.P. 267) (L.D. 584) (Sponsored by Senator HICKMAN of Kennebec) (Cosponsored by Representative SUPICA of Bangor and Senators: President DAUGHTRY of Cumberland, TALBOT ROSS of Cumberland, DUSON of Cumberland, TIMBERLAKE of Androscoggin, Representatives: RUDNICKI of Fairfield, FAULKINGHAM of Winter Harbor, FREDERICKS of Sanford, BOYER of Poland)

Sincerely,

S/Darek M. Grant

Secretary of the Senate

S/Robert B. Hunt

Clerk of the House

Came from the Senate, **READ** and **ORDERED PLACED ON FILE**.

READ and **ORDERED PLACED ON FILE** in concurrence.

The Following Communication: (S.P. 318)

MAINE SENATE 132ND LEGISLATURE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

February 20, 2025

Hon. Matthea Daughtry

President of the Senate

132nd Legislature

Hon. Ryan D. Fecteau

Speaker of the House

132nd Legislature

Dear Madam President and Mr. Speaker:

On February 20, 2025, 29 bills were received by the Secretary of the Senate.

Pursuant to the provisions of Joint Rule 308.2, these bills were referred to the Joint Standing Committees on February 20, 2025, as follows:

Appropriations and Financial Affairs

Bill "An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Provide Funding for Affordable and Low-income Housing Programs" (S.P. 307) (L.D. 690) (Sponsored by Senator PIERCE of Cumberland) (Cosponsored by Representative GERE of Kennebunkport and Senators: BENNETT of Oxford, President DAUGHTRY of Cumberland, CURRY of Waldo, Representatives: Speaker FECTEAU of Biddeford, CLOUTIER of Lewiston)

Bill "An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue for Further Investment in Maine-based Businesses" (S.P. 308) (L.D. 691) (Sponsored by Senator PIERCE of Cumberland) (Cosponsored by Representative SARGENT of York and Senators: President DAUGHTRY of Cumberland, CURRY of Waldo, Representative: Speaker FECTEAU of Biddeford)

Bill "An Act Providing Appropriations and Allocations for State Government Operations" (S.P. 316) (L.D. 699) (Sponsored by Senator ROTUNDO of Androscoggin)

Criminal Justice and Public Safety

Bill "An Act to Increase the Funding to the Live Fire Service Training Facilities Fund" (S.P. 294) (L.D. 679) (Sponsored by Senator CURRY of Waldo) (Cosponsored by Representative BUNKER of Farmington and Senators: RENY of Lincoln, NANGLE of Cumberland)

Education and Cultural Affairs

Bill "An Act to Better Support the Educational Attainment of Low-income and Moderate-income Communities by Providing Additional Funding to Certain School Administrative Units" (S.P. 286) (L.D. 673) (Sponsored by Senator BALDACCI of Penobscot)

Bill "An Act to Support Higher Education in Maine by Providing Funds to Maine's Community Colleges" (S.P. 295) (L.D. 680) (Sponsored by President DAUGHTRY of Cumberland) (Cosponsored by Representative CARLOW of Buxton and Senators: PIERCE of Cumberland, MOORE of Washington, RAFFERTY of York, LIBBY of Cumberland, Representatives: Speaker FECTEAU of Biddeford, SARGENT of York, SAYRE of Kennebunk)

Bill "An Act Regarding Public Higher Education Funding in the State" (S.P. 296) (L.D. 681) (Sponsored by Senator GROHOSKI of Hancock) (Cosponsored by Representative FOSTER of Dexter and Senators: President DAUGHTRY of Cumberland, RAFFERTY of York, RENY of Lincoln, LIBBY of Cumberland, Representatives: STOVER of Boothbay, FAULKINGHAM of Winter Harbor, MILLIKEN of Blue Hill, BISHOP of Bucksport)

Bill "An Act to Increase Support for Statewide Emergency Broadcast Messaging" (S.P. 309) (L.D. 692) (Sponsored by Senator PIERCE of Cumberland) (Cosponsored by Representative CLOUTIER of Lewiston and Senators: RAFFERTY of York, DUSON of Cumberland, LIBBY of Cumberland, Representative: BRENNAN of Portland)

Bill "An Act to Bolster the Maine Teacher Residency Program" (S.P. 313) (L.D. 696) (Sponsored by Senator PIERCE of Cumberland) (Cosponsored by Representative MURPHY of Scarborough and Senators: RAFFERTY of York, LIBBY of Cumberland, Representative: CLOUTIER of Lewiston)

Bill "An Act to Promote Student Enrollment and Degree Completion in the University of Maine System by Awarding Waivers of Tuition and Fees to Eligible Students" (S.P. 317) (L.D. 700) (Sponsored by Senator TIPPING of Penobscot) (Cosponsored by Senators: MOORE of Washington, DUSON of Cumberland, BICKFORD of Androscoggin, Representative: DILL of Old Town)

Energy, Utilities and Technology

Bill "An Act to Require Petitions for Interstate Transmission Lines to Include Provisions for Conservation Funding" (S.P. 311) (L.D. 694) (Sponsored by Senator PIERCE of Cumberland) (Cosponsored by Representative SACHS of Freeport and Senator: BRENNER of Cumberland, Representatives: Speaker FECTEAU of Biddeford, KUHN of Falmouth)

Health and Human Services

Bill "An Act to Support the Northern New England Poison Center" (S.P. 306) (L.D. 689) (Sponsored by Senator NANGLE of Cumberland) (Cosponsored by Representative STOVER of Boothbay and Senators: INGWERSEN of York, BALDACCI of Penobscot, CURRY of Waldo, BRENNER of Cumberland, RAFFERTY of York, Representatives: ZAGER of Portland, CRAFTS of Newcastle)

Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services

Bill "An Act to Protect Consumers by Increasing Transparency and Accountability in the Pharmaceutical Industry" (S.P. 288) (L.D. 675) (Sponsored by Senator BALDACCI of Penobscot)

Bill "An Act to Direct the Maine Prescription Drug Affordability Board to Assess Strategies to Reduce Prescription Drug Costs and to Take Steps to Implement Reference-based Pricing" (S.P. 314) (L.D. 697) (Sponsored by Senator RENY of Lincoln) (Cosponsored by Representative MATHIESON of Kittery and Senators: TEPLER of Sagadahoc, BAILEY of York, INGWERSEN of York, RAFFERTY of York, Representative: MASTRACCIO of Sanford)

Housing and Economic Development

Bill "An Act to Provide for the 2025 and 2026 Allocations of the State Ceiling on Private Activity Bonds" (EMERGENCY) (S.P. 293) (L.D. 678) (Sponsored by Senator CURRY of Waldo) (Submitted by the Finance Authority of Maine pursuant to Joint Rule 204.)

Bill "An Act to Sustain Emergency Homeless Shelters in Maine" (S.P. 315) (L.D. 698) (Sponsored by Senator TALBOT ROSS of Cumberland) (Cosponsored by Representative ROEDER of Bangor, Representative GATTINE of Westbrook and Senators: President DAUGHTRY of Cumberland, INGWERSEN of York, CURRY of Waldo, TIPPING of Penobscot, ROTUNDO of Androscoggin, Representatives: Speaker FECTEAU of Biddeford, MEYER of Eliot, GERE of Kennebunkport)

Judiciary

Bill "An Act to Update the Statutory Definition of 'Machine Gun' and Prohibit Possession of a Rapid-fire Device" (S.P. 292) (L.D. 677) (Sponsored by Senator CARNEY of Cumberland) (Cosponsored by Representative LEE of Auburn and Senators: RAFFERTY of York, DUSON of Cumberland, ROTUNDO of Androscoggin, LAWRENCE of York, Representatives: GRAMLICH of Old Orchard Beach, DOUDERA of Camden, SACHS of Freeport, BECK of South Portland)

Bill "An Act to Amend Certain Laws Regarding Abortions" (S.P. 297) (L.D. 682) (Sponsored by Senator HAGGAN of Penobscot) (Cosponsored by Representative SMITH of Palermo and Senators: GUERIN of Penobscot, HARRINGTON of York, BERNARD of Aroostook, Representatives: GRIFFIN of Levant, CARLOW of Buxton, QUINT of Hodgdon, PAUL of Winterport, HAGGAN of Hampden)

Bill "An Act to Authorize Department of the Secretary of State Law Enforcement Officers to Initiate a Libel Proceeding Regarding Catalytic Converters" (S.P. 305) (L.D. 688) (Sponsored by Senator NANGLE of Cumberland) (Submitted by the Secretary of State pursuant to Joint Rule 204.)

Marine Resources

Bill "An Act to Assert State Ownership over Ocean Waters up to 12 Nautical Miles and Submerged Lands and Marine Resources up to 24 Nautical Miles off the State's Coast and to Direct the Attorney General to Study That Ownership" (S.P. 304) (L.D. 687) (Sponsored by Senator MARTIN of Oxford) (Cosponsored by Representative FAULKINGHAM of Winter Harbor and Senators: BEEBE-CENTER of Knox, CYRWAY of Kennebec, MOORE of Washington, Representative: SOBOLESKI of Phillips)

State and Local Government

Bill "An Act to Create a History Education and Learning Mobile Unit Within the Maine State Archives" (S.P. 287) (L.D. 674) (Sponsored by Senator BALDACCI of Penobscot)

Bill "An Act to Support the Department of the Secretary of State, Bureau of Corporations, Elections and Commissions" (S.P. 310) (L.D. 693) (Sponsored by Senator PIERCE of Cumberland) (Cosponsored by Speaker FECTEAU of Biddeford and Senators: HICKMAN of Kennebec, BAILEY of York, Representative: KUHN of Falmouth)

Bill "An Act Regarding the Laws of the State of Maine" (S.P. 312) (L.D. 695) (Sponsored by Senator PIERCE of Cumberland)

Transportation

Resolve, to Rename the Salmon Falls Bridge Between Buxton and Hollis the Salmon Falls Veterans Memorial Bridge (S.P. 285) (L.D. 672) (Sponsored by Senator BAILEY of York) (Cosponsored by Representative BLIER of Buxton and Senator: INGWERSEN of York, Representative: CARLOW of Buxton)

Bill "An Act to Fund the Recommendations of the Mountain Division Rail Use Advisory Council" (S.P. 289) (L.D. 676) (Sponsored by Senator BENNETT of Oxford) (Cosponsored by Senators: BRENNER of Cumberland, NANGLE of Cumberland, Representatives: WADSWORTH of Hiram, POMERLEAU of Standish, COOPER of Windham, TERRY of Gorham)

Resolve, to Rename the Mill Pond Bridge the Sebago Veterans Memorial Bridge (S.P. 302) (L.D. 685) (Sponsored by Senator LIBBY of Cumberland) (Cosponsored by Representative WALKER of Naples)

Resolve, to Rename the Kezar Falls Bridge Between Porter and Parsonsfield the Kezar Falls Veterans Memorial Bridge (S.P. 303) (L.D. 686) (Sponsored by Senator LIBBY of Cumberland) (Cosponsored by Representative WOODSOME of Waterboro and Representative: WADSWORTH of Hiram)

Veterans and Legal Affairs

Bill "An Act to Clarify the Law Governing the Minimum Indirect Financial Interest Disclosure Requirement for Liquor Licenses" (S.P. 299) (L.D. 683) (Sponsored by Senator HICKMAN of Kennebec)

Bill "An Act to Amend the Laws Governing Liquor and Lottery Operations" (S.P. 300) (L.D. 684) (Sponsored by Senator HICKMAN of Kennebec)

Sincerely,

S/Darek M. Grant

Secretary of the Senate

S/Robert B. Hunt

Clerk of the House

Came from the Senate, **READ** and **ORDERED PLACED ON FILE**.

READ and **ORDERED PLACED ON FILE** in concurrence.

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

The Chair laid before the House the following item which was **TABLED** earlier in today's session:

An Act to Make Supplemental Appropriations and Allocations from the General Fund and Other Funds for the Expenditures of State Government and to Change Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2025

(H.P. 131) (L.D. 209)

(C. "A" H-1)

Which was **TABLED** by Representative MOONEN of Portland pending **RECONSIDERATION** whereby the Bill **FAILED PASSAGE TO BE ENACTED**.

Representative FAULKINGHAM of Winter Harbor **REQUESTED** a roll call on the motion to **RECONSIDER** the House's action whereby the Bill **FAILED PASSAGE TO BE ENACTED**.

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

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

ROLL CALL NO. 14

YEA - Abdi, Ankeles, Archer, Arford, Bell, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, Crockett, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Eaton, Farrin, Friedmann, Frost, Gattine, Geiger, Gere, Graham, Gramlich, Hasenfus, Hepler, Julia, Kessler, Kuhn, Lajoie, Lee, Lookner, Macias, Malon, Mastraccio, Mathieson, Matlack, McCabe, Meyer, Milliken, Mitchell, Montell, Moonen, Murphy, O'Halloran, Osher, Pluecker, Pugh, Rana, Ray, Rielly, Roberts, Roeder, Rollins, Runte, Sachs, Salisbury, Sargent, Sato, Sayre, Shagoury, Sinclair, Skold, Stover, Supica, Terry, Warren, Webb, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

NAY - Albert, Arata, Ardell, Babin, Bagshaw, Bishop, Blier, Boyer D, Carlow, Caruso, Chapman, Cimino, Collamore, Collins, Cooper, Cray, Daigle, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eder, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foley, Foster, Fredette, Gifford, Griffin, Guerrette, Haggan, Hall, Henderson, Hymes, Javner, Lance, Lanigan, Lavigne, Lemelin, Libby, Mason, McIntyre, Mingo, Morris, Nutting, Olsen, Parry, Paul, Perkins, Poirier, Pomerleau, Quint, Rudnicki, Schmearsal-Burgess, Simmons, Smith, Soboleski, Strout, Swallow, Thorne, Tuell, Underwood,

Wadsworth, Walker, White J, White R, Wood P, Wood S, Woodsome.

ABSENT - Adams, Beck, Campbell, Fredericks, Golek, Greenwood, Jackson, Lyman.

Yes, 75; No, 67; Absent, 8; Vacant, 1; Excused, 0.

75 having voted in the affirmative and 67 voted in the negative, 1 vacancy with 8 being absent, and accordingly the House **RECONSIDERED** its action whereby the Bill **FAILED PASSAGE TO BE ENACTED**.

On motion of the Representative GATTINE of Westbrook, the House **RECONSIDERED** its action whereby the Bill was **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-1)**.

On further motion of the same Representative, the House **RECONSIDERED** its action whereby **Committee Amendment "A" (H-1)** was **ADOPTED**.

The same Representative **PRESENTED House Amendment "H" (H-9) to Committee Amendment "A" (H-1)**, which was **READ** by the Clerk

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Westbrook, Representative Gattine.

Representative **GATTINE**: Mr. Speaker, again, very briefly, I'm just going to read the summary of the amendment, so the Members know what it is. "This amendment removes the emergency preamble and the emergency clause from Committee Amendment 'A.'"

Subsequently, **House Amendment "H" (H-9) to Committee Amendment "A" (H-1)** was **ADOPTED**.

Representative FAULKINGHAM of Winter Harbor **REQUESTED** a roll call on **ADOPTION** of **Committee Amendment "A" (H-1) as Amended by House Amendment "H" (H-9)** thereto.

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

The SPEAKER: A roll call has been ordered. The pending question before the House is Adoption of Committee Amendment "A" (H-1) as Amended by House Amendment "H" (H-9) thereto. All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

ROLL CALL NO. 15

YEA - Abdi, Ankeles, Archer, Arford, Bell, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, Crockett, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Eaton, Farrin, Friedmann, Frost, Gattine, Geiger, Gere, Graham, Gramlich, Hasenfus, Hepler, Julia, Kessler, Kuhn, Lajoie, Lee, Lookner, Macias, Malon, Mastraccio, Mathieson, Matlack, McCabe, Meyer, Milliken, Mitchell, Montell, Moonen, Murphy, O'Halloran, Osher, Pluecker, Pugh, Rana, Ray, Rielly, Roberts, Roeder, Rollins, Runte, Sachs, Salisbury, Sargent, Sato, Sayre, Shagoury, Sinclair, Skold, Stover, Supica, Terry, Warren, Webb, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

NAY - Albert, Arata, Ardell, Babin, Bagshaw, Bishop, Blier, Boyer D, Carlow, Caruso, Chapman, Cimino, Collamore, Collins, Cooper, Cray, Daigle, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eder, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foley, Foster, Fredericks, Fredette, Gifford, Griffin, Guerrette, Haggan, Hall, Henderson, Hymes, Javner, Lance, Lanigan, Lavigne, Lemelin, Libby, Mason, McIntyre, Mingo, Morris, Nutting, Olsen, Parry, Paul, Perkins, Poirier, Pomerleau, Quint, Rudnicki, Schmearsal-Burgess, Simmons, Smith, Soboleski, Strout, Swallow, Thorne, Tuell, Underwood, Wadsworth, Walker, White J, White R, Wood P, Wood S, Woodsome.

ABSENT - Adams, Beck, Campbell, Golek, Greenwood, Jackson, Lyman.

Yes, 75; No, 68; Absent, 7; Vacant, 1; Excused, 0.

75 having voted in the affirmative and 68 voted in the negative, 1 vacancy with 7 being absent, and accordingly **Committee Amendment "A" (H-1) as Amended by House Amendment "H" (H-9)** thereto was **ADOPTED**.

The Bill was **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-1) as Amended by House Amendment "H" (H-9)** thereto in **NON-CONCURRENCE** and sent for concurrence.

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

SENATE PAPERS

The following Joint Order: (S.P. 323)

ORDERED, the House concurring, that when the Senate and House adjourn, they do so until Tuesday, March 4, 2025, at 10:00 in the morning, or until the call of the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House, respectively.

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

READ and **PASSED** in concurrence.

ORDERS

On motion of Representative MOONEN of Portland, the following House Resolution: (H.R. 1)

HOUSE RESOLUTION RELATING TO THE CENSURE OF REPRESENTATIVE LAUREL D. LIBBY OF AUBURN BY THE MAINE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

WHEREAS, on or about February 17, 2025, Representative Laurel D. Libby of Auburn posted on her Facebook page photos of a high school athlete, a minor, who won a girls' track championship this year; and

WHEREAS, in that same post, Representative Libby identified the student athlete by name and shared pictures showing the minor in an athletic uniform with the school name clearly legible and blurred the faces of other student athletes to protect their privacy, while intentionally and deliberately leaving the named student's face exposed; and

WHEREAS, accompanying the pictures, Representative Libby posted a statement criticizing the participation of transgender students in high school sports; and

WHEREAS, Representative Libby's post has received national attention that she has amplified by appearing on national television and radio broadcasts to discuss; and

WHEREAS, a recent study from the Williams Institute at UCLA found that transgender people are over four times more likely to be victims of violence; and

WHEREAS, numerous replies to Representative Libby's post suggested that harm should come to the young athlete; and

WHEREAS, Representative Libby's post named the minor and used photos of the minor without that minor's consent, in an effort to advance her political agenda; and

WHEREAS, when it was brought to her attention that her post may endanger the minor, Representative Libby refused to take down the post and instead continued to bring media attention to the minor; and

WHEREAS, it is a basic tenet of politics and good moral character that children should not be targeted by adult politicians, especially when that targeting could result in serious harm; and

WHEREAS, the school district, as a result of Representative Libby's actions, has had to increase security at the school causing unnecessary stress and disruption to other students, parents, teachers and school support staff and the entire community; and

WHEREAS, the Legislative Code of Ethics expressly states that "a Legislator is entrusted with the security, safety, health, prosperity, respect and general well-being of those the Legislator serves and with whom the Legislator serves" and that "The Maine Legislator will be ever mindful of the ordinary citizen who might otherwise be unrepresented and will endeavor conscientiously to pursue the highest standards of legislative conduct inside and outside of the State House"; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Article IV, Part Third, Section 4 of the Constitution of Maine, which states that each House may "punish its members for disorderly behavior," and pursuant to Section 561, subsection 1 of Mason's Manual of Legislative Procedure, which states that "A legislative body has the right to regulate the conduct of its members and may discipline a member as it deems appropriate, including reprimand, censure or expulsion," the House is the judge of its own membership; and

WHEREAS, the House finds the conduct of Representative Laurel D. Libby to be reprehensible and in direct violation of our code of ethics; and

WHEREAS, the House finds that Representative Laurel D. Libby has conducted herself in a manner incompatible with her duty and responsibilities as a Member of this House and the public trust and high standards incumbent in that office; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That We, the Members of the House of Representatives of the One Hundred and Thirty-second Legislature now assembled in the First Regular Session, on behalf of the people we represent, take this opportunity to declare that Representative Laurel D. Libby should be and hereby is censured by the House of Representatives for just cause; and be it further

RESOLVED: That Representative Laurel D. Libby must accept full responsibility for the incident and publicly apologize to the House and to the people of the State of Maine; and be it further

RESOLVED: That Representative Laurel D. Libby must comport herself in a manner that pursues the highest standards of legislative conduct; and be it further

RESOLVED: That this resolution must be entered on the Journal of the House of Representatives.

READ.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Portland, Representative Moonen.

Representative **MOONEN**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, and Honorable Members of the House, serving as an elected Member of the House of Representatives is both a profound privilege and a solemn responsibility. In order to ensure that that responsibility is consistently upheld, every Member of this Chamber is required to abide by the Legislative Code of Ethics, which states that each of us must engage in "civility and responsible conduct inside and outside of the State House commensurate with the trust placed in that legislator by the electorate." It further states that every Member is "entrusted with the security, safety, health, prosperity, respect and general well-being of those the Legislator serves."

Last week, a Member of this Body, the Representative from Auburn, Representative Laurel Libby, created an intentionally inflammatory post on social media about a Maine high school athlete, who is a minor, at a recent track event. The

post included photos of the student, as well as the first name, without their consent. The faces of other student athletes were blurred to protect their privacy, while the named student's face was deliberately left exposed. The post then went viral online and generated 10s of thousands of comments, many of which suggested that harm should come to that student. When the Representative from Auburn, Representative Libby, was made aware that her post could endanger the life and health of the student, she was subsequently asked to take it down and she refused. Instead, she continued to bring national media attention to the student, callously disregarding the threats of harm and the serious concerns for their safety and well-being. These actions have made it unequivocally clear that the Representative from Auburn, Representative Libby, has violated the Legislative Code of Ethics.

Recognizing the gravity of these harmful actions should not be a partisan issue, and I'm grateful that it has not been so far. Jason Savage, the Executive Director of the Maine Republican Party, called for those sharing Representative Libby's post to have, quote, "a dose of humanity." He went on to say, quote, "some of the kids that are being put in the middle of these controversies are dealing with a lot. I think if you're a young person who is struggling with identity, I don't think we need to be placing you at the center of anything and making you a focal point for an entire state or nation." I couldn't agree more.

As legislators, we can have disagreements about policy, we can have disagreements about the best way to move Maine forward, but we should be able to agree on how we conduct ourselves as elected officials and on what behavior is egregious and unacceptable. The people of Maine deserve elected leaders who are held to the highest standards of conduct; leaders who treat others with decency, civility and respect. Over the last week, the Representative from Auburn, Representative Libby, has shown a deeply disturbing lack of each of these qualities, and she has irreparably broken the trust that has been placed in her as an elected official serving in this House of Representatives. This institution and all of Maine, deserve better. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Representative FAULKINGHAM of Winter Harbor **REQUESTED** a roll call on **PASSAGE**.

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

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

Representative **FAULKINGHAM**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, whether you agree with the Representative from Auburn's post or disagree with the post, the Legislative Code of Ethics has no guidelines referring to online or social media posts. The post in question does not even violate Facebook's community standards.

So, Mr. Speaker, putting that post aside, this censure motion makes a mockery of the censure process. It sets a standard that says that the majority party, when they're displeased with a social media post that upsets them, can censure a Member of the minority party and, by a majority vote, censure them and, without them giving an apology, keep them out of the Legislature. I think that does a disservice. There have only been three censures in the history of the State of Maine, and all three times those happened, it was over an incident that took place here in the State House. This would set the precedent that anywhere out there, if the majority party is upset with something that a Member of the minority party does, a censure can happen, and the Member can be removed. Mr. Speaker, I do not think this is the road we should go down. I think this makes a mockery of it. I think that the Members should

think carefully before they vote on this emotionally charged issue and not vote on what their pleasure or displeasure with the post, and think about the standard that this sets for the future of this Legislature, and it's a path that we don't want to go down, Mr. Speaker. Please join me in voting no on the motion.

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

Representative **GRAHAM**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker and Honorable Members of the House, I stand before you in support of the pending motion.

It is difficult to put into words how disheartened and disappointed I am that we are in this position today. Sharing personally identifying information online about an individual to score political points is never acceptable, but doing it to a child is even more harmful. This behavior, especially from an elected official, simply cannot be condoned.

Over the last week, this entire situation has really hit close to home for me. My family has lived in my home for over 30 years. I am the mother of three of the students who graduated from that high school. My husband has taught there and coached there for many, many years. My community has demonstrated a lot of support for this impacted student and their family, and I am incredibly proud and grateful to see us come together and rally behind one of our children. But as a mother, I can't even begin to fathom what it would be like to have one of my kids thrust into the national spotlight because a politician wants to take advantage of them for their own personal gain. My heart truly goes out to the student, their family and everyone who has had their lives turned upside down by this situation.

To everyone who has had; experienced threats and fear from being targeted in this manner, to all of us in this Body, I want to ask one simple question as we consider this motion. How would you feel if this happened to your child? I'll ask it again. How would you feel if this happened to your child? Please keep this in mind as you take this vote today. All Maine children have a right to privacy, a right to respect and a right to not be used for political fodder by elected officials who should be held to a higher standard of conduct. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Skowhegan, Representative Poirier.

Representative **POIRIER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I stand in strong opposition to this motion.

The Good Representative from Auburn has shed light on an issue that's been stewing in our State for years. Whether or not you or I would've posted something similar on social media is not the question. What we need to be asking ourselves is whether Representative Libby is afforded freedom of speech. The fact is, this youth's name and picture, similar to those used in her post, could be found easily with a simple Google search on track sites and other sport sites throughout Maine well before she posted to social media. If Representative Libby had posted the same picture, the same name, with sentiments of congratulations, would we be here doing this censure right now? I think we know the answer to that.

Mr. Speaker, our State has been placing gender dysphoria on a pedestal, and these --

Representative **MOONEN**: Point of Order.

The SPEAKER: The Member will defer. The Representative from Portland has raised a Point of Order. Can the Member please state his Point of Order?

Representative **MOONEN**: I believe the Representative from Skowhegan is delving into policy debate around gender identity and not sticking to the terms of the Order, which is the conduct in question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

On **POINT OF ORDER**, Representative MOONEN of Portland asked the Chair if the remarks of Representative POIRIER of Skowhegan were germane to the pending question.

The SPEAKER: The Chair will remind Members that the Order before us is related to the conduct associated with the post and not the policy issue at large.

The Chair reminded Representative POIRIER of Skowhegan to stay as close as possible to the pending question.

The SPEAKER: The Member may proceed.

Representative **POIRIER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I believe her post was shedding light on this issue. This issue is about safety and fairness, and she speaks for so many people in Maine and beyond and that's why we're seeing national attention.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage you to look at the bigger picture. She's actually practicing freedom of speech and standing up for girls in Maine that are now coming out and speaking as well. They hadn't had a voice before; she's given them that voice. To admonish her for that, in my opinion, is wrong and sets a very dangerous precedent, Mr. Speaker. Pictures and names were already available and published online, so, I ask you, is this actually about this post, or is it about a differing political opinion that is behind this censure? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Poland, Representative Boyer.

Representative **BOYER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think my colleagues' action were cruel, callous and reprehensible. I think she made an error in her judgment. I will be voting no on this censure for the reasons that the Good Representative from Winter Harbor brought up. I have concerns about regulating Members' conduct on social media. I think the previous censures are for things that happened on this House Floor; at least, the last two that I was a part of last session, Mr. Speaker. I have grave concerns about regulating Members' speech online, where the line is, and so, I'll be voting no on this censure, but I did want to put on the record that what she did was gross. Thank you.

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

Representative **SACHS**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in support of the pending motion, because my community has seen firsthand how harmful the behavior that is outlined in this Resolution and the actions of my colleague here in the House can be on a child and their family.

Last year, an adult in Maine viciously targeted a student in Freeport through relentless social media posts, website content and interviews. This adult who lived hours away from my community posted repeatedly and negatively about this child and her family, and the resulting coverage went not only national, but international. In my discussion with the Maine Attorney General's Office --

Representative **CIMINO**: Point of Order.

The SPEAKER: The Member will defer. The Chair recognizes the Representative from Bridgton, Representative Cimino, and requests what her Point of Order is.

Representative **CIMINO**: I'm wondering if this is pertinent to what we're talking about as far as the censure, or if this is just again pontificating on some political agenda.

On **POINT OF ORDER**, Representative CIMINO of Bridgton asked the Chair if the remarks of Representative SACHS of Freeport were germane to the pending question.

The SPEAKER: The Chair would remind the Member that the purpose of the speech must be related to the underlying matter.

The Chair reminded Representative SACHS of Freeport to stay as close as possible to the pending question.

The SPEAKER: The Member may proceed.

Representative **FAULKINGHAM**: Point of Order.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Winter Harbor, Representative Faulkingham, and requests to his Point of Order.

Representative **FAULKINGHAM**: Referring to the Representative from Auburn as ignorant is questioning the character of the Representative from Auburn.

On **POINT OF ORDER**, Representative FAULKINGHAM of Winter Harbor objected to the comments of Representative SACHS of Freeport because she was questioning the motives of other Members of the House.

The SPEAKER: The Chair will remind Members to not impugn the character of other Members.

The Chair reminded all Members that it was inappropriate to question the motives of other Members of the House.

The SPEAKER: The Member may proceed.

Representative **SACHS**: And if I do so, Mr. Speaker, of course you may admonish me.

In my discussion with the Maine Attorney General's Office about that conduct which mirrors the conduct of the Representative from Auburn, doxing is the word to use to describe this behavior. Her behavior is defined as the knowing disclosure of the personally-identifying information of a person without that person's consent and the disclosure is intended to cause, and in fact, directly or indirectly cause things such as physical harm to that person, serious damage of property to that person or reasonably causes fear for their own physical safety or the physical safety of a family member, friend or loved one.

I was deeply distressed to see this behavior, doxing a child, perpetrated last week by an elected official of this Body. It is different than just posting a picture that is publicly available. As an editorial in the *Portland Press Herald* noted just this weekend, Mr. Speaker, disagreement over policy is par for the course. Indeed, we'd be nowhere without it. Disagreement on principle is a different matter. To single out a minor for clicks in this way is reprehensible. An elected Representative should know that.

Representative **CIMINO**: Point of Order.

The SPEAKER: The Chair will ask the Member to defer. The Member from Bridgton has a Point of Order, the Member may state her Point of Order.

Representative **CIMINO**: Again, I think that intent is being questioned, and how does anybody know what the Good Representative's intent was when she posted that?

On **POINT OF ORDER**, Representative CIMINO of Bridgton objected to the comments of Representative SACHS of Freeport because she was questioning the motives of other Members of the House.

The SPEAKER: The Chair will remind Members to keep their comments to the Order at hand and to not try to portray the motives of other Members.

The Chair reminded all Members that it was inappropriate to question the motives of other Members of the House.

The SPEAKER: The Member may proceed.

Representative **SACHS**: However, as I described, this op-ed is describing the actions of said Representative, which is outlined in the Order. So, to double down on such a decision; again, quoting the op-ed regarding this Representative's actions; on such a decision once its callousness has been revealed to you, that's more reprehensible again, unquote.

These are my words, Mr. Speaker: It is unequivocally clear that a line was crossed on this principle, and I am fine setting this precedent. This Body should not disagree that targeting

minors, doxing children, is wrong; plain and simple. This Body should say so loudly, with one voice and without reservation, and support the pending motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Auburn, Representative Libby.

Representative **LIBBY**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My speech does include some background to this post and the events thereafter, so, I hope I will not be silenced during the middle of my speech.

Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House, over the last six years, the Chief Executive and legislative Democrats have done as they pleased, ignoring the will of the Maine people.

Representative **MOONEN**: Point of Order.

The SPEAKER: The Member will defer. The Chair recognizes the Representative from Portland, Representative Moonen, and inquires to his Point of Order.

Representative **MOONEN**: The remarks thus far bear no resemblance whatsoever to the words in this Order, Mr. Speaker.

On **POINT OF ORDER**, Representative **MOONEN** of Portland asked the Chair if the remarks of Representative **LIBBY** of Auburn were germane to the pending question.

The SPEAKER: The Chair will remind the Member to keep the comments to the Order at hand.

The Chair reminded Representative **LIBBY** of Auburn to stay as close as possible to the pending question.

The SPEAKER: The Member may proceed.

Representative **LIBBY**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Order at hand is to silence me, censure me, and my comments are regarding silencing. So, I think they're quite pertinent, if I may proceed?

Whether it was the handling of COVID, passing a late-term abortion bill --

The SPEAKER: The Member will defer. The Chair will remind the Member that the Order before us is related to a post that the Member made on Facebook related to a minor and their photo being shared on Facebook. I don't recall the post having anything to do with the pandemic or the Chief Executive. So, the Chair may provide the Member with the courtesy of coming back to her when she has her remarks refined to not include comments about things that are not before the Body.

Representative **BOYER**: Point of Order.

The SPEAKER: The Member will state his point of order.

Representative **BOYER**: Mr. Speaker, I think we all agree that this is a serious order and a serious issue, censoring our colleague, and I would request just a little latitude for the Member to defend themselves.

The SPEAKER: The Chair is trying to provide the latitude for the Member to provide remarks. If I have to hold this entire Body to a standard related to the comments at hand, which has been requested by Members on this side already related to comments, the Member will also be held to that standard.

The Chair reminded Representative **LIBBY** of Auburn to stay as close as possible to the pending question.

The SPEAKER: The Member may proceed.

Representative **LIBBY**: I'll fast forward. Let me paint the picture for you, Mr. Speaker.

Last Monday, Maine girls walked into an arena, excited to compete in the State Championship for pole vault. What an honor, after years of hard work, that hard work pays off to be competing at this level. But that excitement was quickly dashed as they learned that there was a biological male participating and that their hard work didn't matter. Can you imagine, just for a minute, their extreme disappointment and their sense of betrayal? Can you imagine trying to put your best foot forward,

but knowing that the outcome was already predetermined by natural biological advantages?

The SPEAKER: The Member will defer. Is the Member attempting to provide comment about why the Member was justified in posting a photo of a minor?

Representative **LIBBY**: The Speaker is; not justifying, no; explaining the silencing of Maine girls, the canceling of girls' sports.

Representative **MOONEN**: Point of Order.

The SPEAKER: The Member will defer. The Chair recognizes the Representative from Portland, Representative Moonen, and inquires as to his point of order.

Representative **MOONEN**: The Representative is trying to make this a policy debate, there is legislation pending on that policy that is not currently on the Floor of the House and I request that you direct her to restrict her comments to the Order that is on the Floor of the House.

On **POINT OF ORDER**, Representative **MOONEN** of Portland asked the Chair if the remarks of Representative **LIBBY** of Auburn were germane to the pending question.

The SPEAKER: The Chair will remind the Member again; the Resolution that's before us is related to whether or not the posting of a photo of a minor is appropriate conduct for a Member of this Body. The Member may proceed, but the Member is beginning to skate on thin ice as it relates to the course of debate in this Chamber.

The Chair reminded Representative **LIBBY** of Auburn to stay as close as possible to the pending question.

The SPEAKER: The Member may proceed.

Representative **LIBBY**: I'm not surprised, Mr. Speaker. I'm not surprised.

Since I don't know how many more sentences I'll be allowed to speak, let me put this; boys participating in girls' sports is not fair.

The SPEAKER: The Member will defer.

The Chair recognizes the Representative from Auburn, Representative Libby.

Representative **LIBBY**: Mr. Speaker, the State Championship was a public event. The individual in question determined of his own free will to participate, and his photos are posted publicly on multiple websites. The reason that folks are upset about this post is that it exposed truth and now, people are mad that, indeed, after being told that this is not happening and it doesn't matter, that there are boys participating in girls' sports, boys taking the place of girls.

The SPEAKER: The Chair would remind the Member, I think we just had a pause in the course of this debate for comments that were exactly like the comments that are being made now. I would ask the Member to try to get back to a course of debate that is similar to what Members on what her side of the aisle had already spoken to, as it relates to whether or not it is appropriate to post photos of a child on Facebook as part of a political post.

The Chair reminded Representative **LIBBY** of Auburn to stay as close as possible to the pending question.

The SPEAKER: The Member may proceed.

Representative **LIBBY**: The day after I made my post; the post of photos of an individual who had multiple photos online with their name on them on multiple websites; you emailed and called me to ask that I take my post down. I expected that. After all, when you shine a spotlight on the truth, you can expect opposition.

Mr. Speaker, may I finish? It is becoming abundantly clear Maine girls will not get fairness in Maine, and when the woke left can't silence women, they cancel them.

The SPEAKER: The Representative will defer. The Chair recognizes the Representative from Augusta, Representative Bridgeo.

Representative **BRIDGEO**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've only been an elected State Representative for a couple of years now, but in my prior life, I was a City Manager; a very public official; for 40 years. In that time, I learned, sometimes painfully, how being the subject of controversial media attention, including and maybe especially social media, can be a deeply upsetting experience for anyone, as well as for their families. It's tough to endure such harsh and aggressive treatment, even as a mature, battle-hardened professional.

The SPEAKER: The Member will defer. The Chair is familiar with the Point of Order. The Chair will remind the Member to keep his comments related to the post at hand and the Order that's before us related to the conduct of the Representative from Auburn.

The Chair reminded Representative **BIRDGEO** of Augusta to stay as close as possible to the pending question.

The SPEAKER: The Member may proceed.

Representative **BRIDGEO**: Apologies. It can be devastating and psychologically irreparable for a young person, especially a child who might be coping with challenges of being somehow different. Wherever I have served in public life, the unwritten but universal rule that, quote, we leave the kids out of it, closed quote, has been the norm. Of any place, that should be the case in Maine.

I respect that the issue of transgender kids participating in interscholastic sports can be complex, that good people can see it differently and that the associated policy questions are legitimate. But I draw the line at making innocent minors the subject, or for that matter, the object of the debate. No child designed these rules, and no child deserves to be targeted by any adults who are upset about them. Keep the kids out of it is a good principle.

Representative **LAVIGNE**: Point of Order.

The SPEAKER: The Member will defer. The Member may state his Point of Order.

Representative **LAVIGNE**: I just need a little clarification on our colleague. Is he making a floor speech, or is this a Point of Order that he generated?

The SPEAKER: No, he's making a floor speech.

Representative **LAVIGNE**: She was already speaking.

The SPEAKER: Excuse me?

Representative **LAVIGNE**: She was speaking.

The SPEAKER: The Representative from Auburn had finished her speech. The Member may proceed.

Representative **BRIDGEO**: Keep the kids out of it is a good principle, and before social media coarsened our civic discourse, it was pretty much universally accepted. A determined effort to ignore or undermine that principle is unacceptable and it does need to be condemned. I support the Resolution.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Newport, Representative Fredette.

Representative **FREDETTE**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. This is a solemn occasion. Censure of a person in this Body is a significant and substantial event. And as I look at this issue and I grapple with the different issues at stake; right to privacy, right to free speech, the right of a public official to talk about policy; the world that we live in today is difficult. Snapchat, LinkedIn, Facebook, email. And when we talk about the conduct of the Good Representative from Auburn, we have to look at it in the world that we live in today, because the world we live in today was not the world that we lived in 25

years ago. And when this Body seeks to establish guidelines and standards on rights and interests, it becomes difficult. Because what is the right to privacy? Who has the right to privacy? Does a minor child have the right to privacy? We have all sought to be elected to this Body, and as such, Mr. Speaker, you give up a certain amount of privacy, because you have chosen to become a public person. Someone in this Body may have a different right to privacy than someone who is the President of the United States. And I would argue that it's a matter of degree; if somebody's a Selectman in their town; a State Representative. But the issue is, is that we have a right to privacy, we have a right to free speech and when we have these competing issues, it's tough to get our arms around them.

And so, as I look at this issue today, and I felt compelled to speak about this as an attorney, as a father, as a public figure and as someone who cares about our great state of the State of Maine. And so, when I look at this issue today and I'm looking for guidance, and I look at the proposed Order on censure, and I would like to read one paragraph of that, Mr. Speaker; on page two, the fifth paragraph, it talks, "WHEREAS, pursuant to Article IV Part Third, Section 4 of the Constitution of Maine, which states that each House may 'punish its members for disorderly behavior,' and pursuant to Section 561, subsection 1 of Mason's Manual of Legislative Procedure, which states that 'A legislative body has the right to regulate the conduct of its members and may discipline a member as it deems appropriate, including reprimand, censure or expulsion.'" That's the Constitution of the State of Maine, and Mr. Speaker, I would submit that that is the highest order in our State in terms of the standards that we have to live up to; not House Rules, not State Statute; the State Constitution.

And so, when I look at this issue before me today, Mr. Speaker, I look at it and I will say again, quote, "a legislative Body has a right to regulate the conduct of its members." And I agree with that, Mr. Speaker. But regulating free speech is not an easy issue, it's not an easy subject, because as lawyers on the other side would understand, there's the word 'and' in there. And it says, "and may discipline a member as it deems appropriate, including reprimand, censure or expulsion." So, there are two standards in that that I think are important, Mr. Speaker. There is the conduct, and then there is the question of discipline. And I think in order to vote in the affirmative on this, you have to agree in regards to the conduct of what the Good Representative from Auburn did, and whether or not she should be disciplined.

Now, I will say this, Mr. Speaker; I've lived in this State my entire life. Grew up in a small town up in Northern Maine; poor, French kid; first in my family to go to college. I know what it felt like to be picked on. I know what it felt like to be bullied. So, when we're talking about conduct, I take that personal. And I take it more personal when we're talking about children. I have chosen to be State Representative. My children, my stepchildren, my grandson, have not made that choice. They are not part of the public debate. They should not be on Facebook spread around as Ken Fredette's children or son or whatever. If we're talking about conduct in this Body, no, we should not be using photos, images, statements of somebody else's children to make a point. I think that's dead wrong, and it shakes me to think that we would do that.

So, in regards to the issue before this Body tonight, and I look at the conduct, I say the conduct is wrong. I then look at the word 'and,' and I look at whether or not the Member should be disciplined, and that's a much more difficult question for me to answer in the world of Facebook and Twitter and Fox News and Max News and whatever it is today, Mr. Speaker, where one

person says one thing and it blows up; goes all over the world. Now, I don't know what the Good Representative from Auburn did or didn't do in terms of; I don't know how she got 10,000 posts. I do know that we live in a world today where if you say one thing or do one thing, something can blow up. This certainly blew up. Now, whether or not I can attribute the conduct and the discipline to the Good Representative from Auburn; I'm not sure that I can, given the world that we live in today. This censure Order talks about her conduct and what it has done to this minor child. I think children have a difficult world to live in today, Mr. Speaker. That thing right there; that phone.

The SPEAKER: The Member will defer. The Chair will remind Members to not use props during the course of debate.

The Chair reminded Representative FREDETTE of Newport that no props were allowed during the floor debate.

The SPEAKER: The Member may proceed.

Representative FREDETTE: But children have enough on their plates today without any concern that they may become some sort of political football in a political debate. And if there should be anything that should come out of this debate tonight, it should be everybody in this Body should understand the use of any pictures of minors, reference to minors, children; I understand we can have policy debates, I think that's important, but specifics in regards to photographs, comments, that's out of bounds. We ought to be able to make that conduct and agree that that conduct is wrong. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Belfast, Representative Dodge.

Representative DODGE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in support of the pending motion.

I rise today not only as the State Representative for Belfast, Belmont and Northport, but also as a retired teacher with 31 years' experience as a music educator in Maine's public schools. As an educator, the well-being and safety of my students was integral. It was essential that my classroom provided students with a safe and supportive learning environment. As an educator, I recognize that the privacy of students is essential, too.

The recent actions of my colleague from Auburn are shocking. These actions put a target on the back of a vulnerable student; of a minor. Her choice to post photos and identifying information without the minor's consent and her refusal to remove them were directed toward a young human being with feelings; a human being deserving of protection. The Representative posted a narrative with more information than just a published photo. These actions most certainly disrupted the learning environment for that student and students at that school, and I suspect have been beyond upsetting for the student's parents and family. I believe it is beyond egregious.

I'd like to note, Mr. Speaker, that the Representative from Auburn had the forethought to blur the faces of some of the student athletes in the social media post, but not this athlete.

The actions of the Representative from Auburn have also disrupted the work of teachers and school staff. Teachers who already work around a myriad of distractions, vying for the attention of teenagers. The Representative's actions also made it necessary for the school district's superintendent to issue a letter to parents to let them know that the local police department would be increasing their presence when students return to school from vacation this week. Parents do not expect that the actions of a legislator could jeopardize the safety of their kids. It is unconscionable for a Member of this Body to publicly target a school student for any reason. A person does not need to spend three decades in a classroom to know that it is wrong for an elected official to take advantage of a student, a minor, for what

appears to be for her own political gain. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Representative MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today not only as the State Representative from Cumberland, Long Island and Chebeague; I rise as a teacher with more than 30 years of experience in Maine public schools, and I rise as a parent myself.

Mr. Speaker, I am appalled that a child in our great State has been used as a political pawn by a Member of this Esteemed Body. I am ashamed, Mr. Speaker, that a child within my school community, my town, has faced public threats and ridicule from adults due to the actions of one of our colleagues in this very Body. I am disappointed, Mr. Speaker, that when given the chance to reverse course and take down the social media post in question, the Representative from Auburn instead chose to double down. I believe, and many of my constituents have told me that they believe it is morally and ethically wrong, Mr. Speaker, to use children for one's own political gain. The students at our school in my community are saying they just want to have a normal day and go back to school. They were excited to see their friends again after break and they don't want all this attention from adults. You know teenagers. We were all teenagers once. They want to be left alone, not to be singled out. Teenagers are very squeamish that way. I've taught teens for years. They know if one is picked on, the others are easy targets.

Representative WOODSOME: Point of Order.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Waterboro and inquires as to his Point of Order.

Representative WOODSOME: We've had many interruptions here, Point of Orders, where you have said stick to what the censure is. And we have a litany of experiences which I, in the latest speaker, I question how it pertains personally, pertinently to this censure.

On POINT OF ORDER, Representative WOODSOME of Waterboro asked the Chair if the remarks of Representative MITCHELL of Cumberland were germane to the pending question.

The SPEAKER: The Chair would advise the Member; the Member speaking is from the community and speaking to the impact on students in the school where the student who's subject of this order attends.

The Chair advised Representative WOODSOME of Waterboro that the remarks of Representative MITCHELL of Cumberland were germane to the pending question.

The SPEAKER: The Member may proceed.

Representative MITCHELL: Thank you. Mr. Speaker, the kids just want to hang out with their friends, and they want to check out what each other did on break. They do not appreciate having trucks from national news outlets outside their school or all the extra police around. Mr. Speaker, this generation of kids is particularly sensitive about security, or the lack of it.

Representative CIMINO: Point of Order.

The SPEAKER: The Member will defer. The Chair would inquire as to the Point of Order from the Representative from Bridgton.

Representative CIMINO: Mr. Speaker, this is sounding more like a psychology class as opposed to an actual speech about the censure itself.

On POINT OF ORDER, Representative CIMINO of Bridgton asked the Chair if the remarks of Representative MITCHELL of Cumberland were germane to the pending question.

The SPEAKER: Again, the Chair just notified the Body that the Member is speaking to the impact at the school in which the student whose photo was posted on Facebook is experiencing. The Order speaks to the potential harm caused to this student, and I think the Member is speaking to that. The Member is in order.

The Chair advised Representative CIMINO of Bridgton that the remarks of Representative MITCHELL of Cumberland were germane to the pending question.

The SPEAKER: The Member may proceed.

Representative **MITCHELL**: Thank you. We adults need to be keenly aware of how the public threats stemming from the Representative from Auburn's social media post are victimizing and harming all of our children. No community is immune. Not mine, not yours. A lot of parents in Cumberland are completely on edge. They have messaged me, they've talked to me, they've called me, they want so badly to help out their kids, to protect them. They wanted to make signs of support. They wanted to bring the students comfort cookies. But the students, again, they didn't want the attention.

Mr. Speaker, these kids, they just want to be left alone to be kids. The principal of the high school reiterated in a letter to the parents over the weekend that the goal of the school has always been to provide a safe, welcoming and productive learning environment. He encouraged the community to come together to support everyone in the community. The Representative from Auburn's actions have directly harmed the school, the families and our children in my community, and it's all happening because one person, an adult, a legislator, chose to use a child to score political points.

Mr. Speaker, many things are complicated, especially here in this building. This is not complicated. You would not want this to happen to your child in your community. Mr. Speaker, I believe we need to protect everyone, especially the children, from very harmful actions like these. The House of Representatives has responsibility to condemn this conduct. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Waterboro, Representative Woodsome.

Representative **WOODSOME**: For my own clarification, this Order or censure that we're going to be voting on here, I question how is it going to affect me when I leave this Body and a private citizen? Is this Body going to dictate what I do outside in my own life? I need an answer before I vote. I don't want a threat hanging over my head that I may post something on Facebook or make a statement that happens to offend somebody. We all know there's enough issues out there that offends somebody. So, does this vote, this censure, affect myself and everyone else as a private citizen once we're outside? If it does, I want an honest and legal answer.

The SPEAKER: Is the Member posing a question to the Chair?

Representative **WOODSOME**: To the Chair or anyone who can answer.

The SPEAKER: The Chair would advise the Member; the Representative has been in this building for many years, as have I, and in the eight years I served previously, never has there been a censure Order brought forward because someone has posted something that someone disagreed with. I've never seen it. The question at hand is, will any of the Members, if this should pass, go forth and post photos of minors as part of political fodder, because that's never happened in the eight years I served here previously. So, I think it will be very clear that the standard is to not post photos of minors as part of political fodder, should this Resolution succeed.

The Chair recognizes the Representative from Chelsea, Representative Lemelin.

Representative **LEMELIN**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll be brief. I just want to make clarification on a couple things that I heard. One was the term doxing. The term doxing means the action or process of searching for and publishing private or identifying information about a particular individual on the internet with malice; maliciously. Malicious means the intent to do harm. It seems to me that people are assuming things, because when I spoke to the Representative from Auburn about this situation, she never indicated to me in any way, shape or form that her intent was to do harm. She indicated that her intent was to bring to light a situation in which she wanted the Maine people to have clarity on. That's not malice. So, there was no malice; nothing done intentionally to do harm to this young man. None. And that's what we're censuring her for.

I think people maybe should've thought about approaching the Good Representative, sitting down and talking to her before we do a lynching.

The SPEAKER: The Member will defer. The Member may proceed.

Representative **LEMELIN**: The second thing I want to bring up is, it seems to me like there's doublespeak here. The reason is, multiple people; including you, Mr. Speaker; have indicated that the Good Representative from Auburn is doing this specifically for political gain. I don't understand that. Here's why: Everybody has indicated that her actions are reprehensible. If her actions are so reprehensible, then that is called political suicide, not political gain. So, if we're censuring her for doing an action for politically suiciding herself, then, okay, I get it. But if we're moving forward because she is trying to get political gain, that's impossible, because everybody in this Chamber has indicated during their speeches that this is political suicide, it's a horrible thing. That's not political gain, Mr. Speaker.

So, the two things I want to clarify, and I'm going to say them one more time, is I spoke, I did what we're supposed to do, we're supposed to sit down; this is in the Bible; you and I are both Catholics, you know what I'm about to tell you. It says, sit down with the person and have a discussion with them. Let's find out what went on here, let's have a talk first. Give the person a chance to talk. That's not what happened here. This Representative had no chance at all. She got blindsided. We're not in this Chamber to do that. We should Table this motion, Mr. Speaker, and give everybody a chance, including you, to sit down with the young lady and have a talk. Because her intent was not to do harm. That was accidental. People can giggle all they want, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The House will be in order. The Member may proceed.

Representative **LEMELIN**: But I spoke to the Representative from Auburn. She wasn't BS'ing me. She has no reason to. I just asked her privately, what's going on, and I am telling you there was no intent to do harm, and I wish everybody else would've done due diligence and treat her like a human being. Because what we're doing here today is no different than what we're accusing her of doing. Just because she's an adult, she doesn't have the right? Why? She has the right to be heard. She can't be heard on the House Floor, but she should have been heard in your office or wherever. She wasn't given a chance, Mr. Speaker. That's shameful. We should all be ashamed here. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The House will be in order. The Chair would inform the Member that the Chair spoke to the

Representative on Monday of last week on the phone. She had her chance.

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

ROLL CALL NO. 16

YEA - Abdi, Ankeles, Archer, Arford, Bell, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, Crockett, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Eaton, Farrin, Friedmann, Frost, Gattine, Geiger, Gere, Graham, Gramlich, Hasenfus, Hepler, Julia, Kessler, Kuhn, Lajoie, Lee, Lookner, Macias, Malon, Mastraccio, Mathieson, Matlack, McCabe, Meyer, Milliken, Mitchell, Montell, Moonen, Murphy, O'Halloran, Osher, Pluecker, Pugh, Rana, Ray, Rielly, Roberts, Roeder, Rollins, Runte, Sachs, Salisbury, Sargent, Sato, Sayre, Shagoury, Sinclair, Skold, Stover, Supica, Terry, Warren, Webb, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

NAY - Adams, Albert, Arata, Ardell, Babin, Bagshaw, Bishop, Blier, Boyer D, Campbell, Carlow, Caruso, Chapman, Cimino, Collamore, Collins, Cooper, Cray, Daigle, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eder, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foley, Foster, Fredericks, Fredette, Gifford, Griffin, Guerrette, Haggan, Hall, Henderson, Hymes, Javner, Lance, Lanigan, Lavigne, Lemelin, Libby, Mason, McIntyre, Mingo, Morris, Nutting, Olsen, Parry, Paul, Perkins, Poirier, Pomerleau, Quint, Rudnicki, Schmearsal-Burgess, Simmons, Smith, Soboleski, Strout, Swallow, Thorne, Tuell, Underwood, Wadsworth, Walker, White J, White R, Wood P, Wood S, Woodsome.

ABSENT - Beck, Golek, Greenwood, Jackson, Lyman.

Yes, 75; No, 70; Absent, 5; Vacant, 1; Excused, 0.

75 having voted in the affirmative and 70 voted in the negative, 1 vacancy with 5 being absent, and accordingly the House Resolution was **ADOPTED**.

At this point, Representative LIBBY of Auburn was escorted to the well of the House to receive the pronouncement of censure from the Chair.

The SPEAKER: Representative Libby, the Legislative Code of Ethics states that "To work well, government requires a bond of trust and respect between citizens and their Legislators. With such a trust," the Code continues, quote, "high moral and ethical standards producing the public's confidence [...] should be observed," end quote. Sharing images of kids online without their consent is a clear violation of that trust.

There is a time and place; the Chair would inform the Member that recording is against the House Rules.

Sharing images of kids online without their consent is a clear violation of that trust. There is a time and place for policy debates. That time and place will never be a social media post attacking a Maine student. The Code continues, quote, "A Maine Legislator is charged with civility and responsible conduct inside and outside of the State House commensurate with the trust placed in that legislator by the electorate." I urge you, and indeed every Member of this Body, to recommit to keeping kids out of the political fray, as has long been observed in both our State and federal politic. Maine kids and all Maine people deserve better.

I will conclude with this last reminder from the Legislative Code of Ethics; quote, "The Maine Legislator will be ever mindful of the ordinary citizen who might otherwise be unrepresented and will endeavor conscientiously to pursue the highest

standards of legislative conduct inside and outside of the State House."

The Member will have an opportunity to provide an apology to this Body and to the public. We will be at ease, should the Member wish to produce an apology and submit it to the public record. We will be at ease until we reconvene.

The SPEAKER: The Chair understands that the Member does not intend to submit an apology to the Body. The Member will be in violation of House Rule 401, Part 11. The Member will not be able to cast a vote or speak on the Floor until the Member has come back into compliance with House Rule 401, Part 11. The Member may return to her seat.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Skowhegan, Representative Poirier.

Representative **POIRIER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I was hitting the button as you were speaking. Mr. Speaker, I just wish to pose a question through the Chair.

The SPEAKER: The Member may proceed.

Representative **POIRIER**: I would like clarification for other Members of the Body who may have reposted Representative Libby's social media post, do we expect censures to come forth on them as well?

The SPEAKER: I'm not aware of any other censures.

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

On motion of Representative McINTYRE of Lowell, the House adjourned at 7:12 p.m., until 10:00 a.m., Tuesday, March 4, 2025, or until the call of the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate, respectively, pursuant to the Joint Order (S.P. 323) and in honor and lasting tribute to Bruce Martin Curran of Lowell, William S. Buffington of South Paris, Barbara Hogate of Cornville, Alvin Hall of Whiting and Andrea Quaid of Lewiston.