

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION
6th Legislative Day
Thursday, April 10, 2025

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

Prayer by Pastor Warren Heath, Crossroads to Calvary, Morrill.

National Anthem by Kendra Winson, Mexico.

Pledge of Allegiance.

Medical Provider of the Day, Dr. Robert Rousseau, PA-C, EM-CAQ, Sidney.

The Journal of Tuesday, April 8, 2025 was read and approved.

SENATE PAPERS

Bill "An Act to Expand Reporting Requirements for Legislators and Lobbyists"

(S.P. 558) (L.D. 1415)

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

Came from the Senate, **REFERRED** to the Committee on **VETERANS AND LEGAL AFFAIRS** and ordered printed.

REFERRED to the Committee on **VETERANS AND LEGAL AFFAIRS** in concurrence.

Non-Concurrent Matter

Bill "An Act to Establish 'Welcome Home' as the Official State Anthem"

(S.P. 165) (L.D. 373)

Majority (8) **OUGHT TO PASS** Report of the Committee on **STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT READ** and **ACCEPTED** and the Bill **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED** in the House on April 1, 2025.

Came from the Senate with that Body having **INSISTED** on its former action whereby the Minority (4) **OUGHT NOT TO PASS** Report of the Committee on **STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT** was **READ** and **ACCEPTED** in **NON-CONCURRENCE**.

Speaker FECTEAU of Biddeford moved that the House **RECEDE AND CONCUR**.

Representative FAULKINGHAM of Winter Harbor moved that the Bill be **TABLED** until later in today's session pending **FURTHER CONSIDERATION**.

Representative MOONEN of Portland **REQUESTED** a roll call on the motion to **TABLE** the Bill until later in today's session pending **FURTHER CONSIDERATION**.

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 **Table** until later in today's session pending **Further Consideration**. All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

ROLL CALL NO. 76

YEA - Adams, Albert, Ankeles, Arata, Ardell, Arford, Babin, Bagshaw, Bell, Bishop, Blier, Boyer D, Boyer M, Campbell, Carlow, Caruso, Cimino, Collamore, Collins, Cooper, Crafts, Cray, Daigle, Doudera, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eder, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foley, Foster, Fredericks, Fredette, Friedmann, Frost, Gifford, Greenwood, Griffin, Guerrette, Haggan, Hall, Hasenfus, Henderson, Hepler, Hymes, Jackson, Javner, Lance, Lavigne, Lee, Lemelin, Lyman, Mason,

Mathieson, Matlack, McIntyre, Mingo, Morris, Nutting, Olsen, Parry, Paul, Perkins, Poirier, Pomerleau, Pugh, Quint, Rollins, Rudnicki, Sayre, Schmersal-Burgess, Simmons, Skold, Smith, Soboleski, Strout, Swallow, Thorne, Underwood, Wadsworth, Walker, White J, White R, Wood S, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

NAY - Abdi, Beck, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Chapman, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crockett, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Eaton, Farrin, Gattine, Geiger, Gere, Golek, Graham, Gramlich, Julia, Kessler, Kuhn, Lajoie, Lookner, Macias, Malon, Mastraccio, McCabe, Meyer, Milliken, Mitchell, Montell, Moonen, Murphy, O'Halloran, Osher, Pluecker, Rana, Ray, Rielly, Roberts, Roeder, Runte, Sachs, Salisbury, Sargent, Sato, Shagoury, Sinclair, Stover, Supica, Terry, Tuell, Warren, Webb, Yusuf.

ABSENT - Archer, Faircloth, Lanigan, Wood P, Woodsome.

RESTRICTED - Libby.

Yes, 86; No, 59; Absent, 5; Excused, 0; Restricted, 1.

86 having voted in the affirmative and 59 voted in the negative, with 5 being absent and 1 restricted, and accordingly the Bill was **TABLED** pending **FURTHER CONSIDERATION** and later today assigned.

Non-Concurrent Matter

Bill "An Act Regarding Dam Repair"

(H.P. 904) (L.D. 1382)

REFERRED to the Committee on **ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES** in the House on April 1, 2025.

Came from the Senate **REFERRED** to the Committee on **CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY** in **NON-CONCURRENCE**.

The House voted to **RECEDE AND CONCUR**.

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

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

CONSENT CALENDAR

First Day

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

(S.P. 395) (L.D. 906) Bill "An Act to Update the Solar Energy Development Reporting Date Deadline" Committee on **ENERGY, UTILITIES AND TECHNOLOGY** reporting **Ought to Pass**

(S.P. 29) (L.D. 1) Bill "An Act to Increase Storm Preparedness for Maine's Communities, Homes and Infrastructure" (EMERGENCY) Committee on **HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-9)**

(S.P. 206) (L.D. 468) Bill "An Act to Address Food Insecurity by Helping Maine Residents Access Locally Produced Food" Committee on **AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-10)**

(H.P. 59) (L.D. 94) Bill "An Act to Eliminate Miscarriage Reporting Requirements" Committee on **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES** reporting **Ought to Pass**

(H.P. 269) (L.D. 415) Bill "An Act to Support Hunger Prevention in Maine" Committee on **AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-42)**

(H.P. 388) (L.D. 620) Bill "An Act to Provide Support Services for Military Members Transitioning to Civilian Life in Maine" Committee on **VETERANS AND LEGAL AFFAIRS** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-43)**

(H.P. 522) (L.D. 815) Bill "An Act to Provide Funding for Respite Care and Supplemental Services Provided by the Family Caregiver Support Program" Committee on **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-45)**

(H.P. 561) (L.D. 875) Bill "An Act to Fund Essential Services for Victims of Domestic Violence" (EMERGENCY) Committee on **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-44)**

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

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

(S.P. 462) (L.D. 1101) Bill "An Act to Address the Limited Availability of Counsel in Courts to Represent Indigent Parties in Matters Affecting Their Fundamental Rights" (EMERGENCY) Committee on **JUDICIARY** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-11)**

On motion of Representative FREDETTE of Newport, was **REMOVED** from the First Day Consent Calendar.

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

The Bill was **READ ONCE**. **Committee Amendment "A" (S-11)** was **READ** by the Clerk.

Representative FREDETTE of Newport **PRESENTED House Amendment "A" (H-47) to Committee Amendment "A" (S-11)**, which was **READ** by the Clerk.

The same Representative **REQUESTED** a roll call on **ADOPTION of House Amendment "A" (H-47) to Committee Amendment "A" (S-11)**.

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 Newport, Representative Fredette.

Representative **FREDETTE**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House, first of all, I want to thank the Committee for their hard work on the bill. This is an issue of our time and many of us are aware of what's been going on in the Judicial Branch. But I do want to speak briefly to my understanding of it and the purpose of my Amendment.

I would first start by saying that I've practiced law for about 32 years now, both in small courts and in big courts, meaning the district courts and the superior courts, handling both civil and criminal cases. And the purpose of this bill is to address what many have heard in regards to some people; essentially, that are sitting in jail and are awaiting appointment of counsel. And under our Constitution, people that may go to jail are entitled to appointment of counsel. And some people have been sitting there for so long, there was a case that was brought by Andrew Robbins, and Justice Murphy has handed down a decision on that. And I suspect that that's the impetus for this piece of

legislation, but I think it's important to have the background on what has been happening over a period of time.

So, importantly, when I left the Legislature back in 2018, sort of the concept of a public defender system was slowly gaining traction, and at the time, the budget for this system was \$17 million and they had roughly 12 staffers. That system is now \$51 million in six years. So, if anybody wants to talk about growth in government, we can certainly talk about a program that has grown from \$17 million to \$51 million, and from 12 staffers to 75 staffers. Now, for folks on my side of the aisle, you should support the original bill if you want to add eight more positions to State government; which are unionized positions; and add \$3.2 million to the baseline budget. That's what you should do, because that's what this bill does.

Now, interestingly, Mr. Speaker, I had a chance to talk to the Chief Executive this morning, and the Chief Executive and I are on the same page on this bill. And in fact, she spoke in Committee; or her representative spoke in Committee; about addressing this problem and how it should be fixed, because that's what we do here, right? We find issues; we figure out how to fix them. And so, I spoke to the Chief Executive this morning about this particular bill, and my understanding is the Chief Executive had an amendment and what this Floor Amendment does, Mr. Speaker, is that it takes away the eight positions. And so, if you want to add the eight positions, don't support my Amendment. It also takes away the funding of \$3.2 million. So, if you want to spend \$3.2 million, don't support my Amendment.

Now, again, I'm not criticizing the work of the Committee, but the essence of this case and what this particular issue is, is how do we fix the problem? And everyone wants to say, let's go back to the decision of Justice Murphy, because that's what's driving this issue. And this decision dated; it is a 44-page decision, 45 pages; dated March 7, 2025. So, it's roughly 30 days old. And what it says is, you have to get people appointed to represent people that are sitting in prison, and if we don't, we're going to let them out. Well, I'm not quite sure they'll let them out, but they might. But the issue is before us is, is how do we address that problem? How do we fix the problem? And so, in classic fashion, what we do in Augusta is, right, we spend more money, we add new positions and we say, all right, that should fix the problem. But I think it was important when I read the decision; again, a 45-page decision, Justice Murphy certainly did her homework; on page six of the decision, and I won't read the whole thing, I promise, Mr. Speaker; but she says in her decision on page six, here are the numbers of cases that have been selected by four of the five district defenders for assignment to their assistant defenders and themselves. In Aroostook County; where I was born, Mr. Speaker; the Aroostook County defender personally handles no adult criminal cases on his own. Instead, he handles, quote, "'a few juvenile cases' and 'acts as 'Lawyer of the Day' in Fort Kent and sometimes maybe Madawaska," and he supervises two public defenders. And so, that's Aroostook County. And I won't read through all of them, but in Highlands Region; which is Penobscot/Piscataquis County; the defender personally handles no adult cases, so, again, that means no adults, people not in jail, they're not getting this guy or gal, they handle no cases. Instead, he supervises one public defender who has 11 cases, and another one who has 20 cases. In the Downeast Region; Hancock/Washington Counties; the defender "has 14 cases of his own, two of which are on deferred dispositions." I handled hundreds of cases. And in many times, these people are being paid more than the prosecutors. The district attorneys, the assistant district attorneys who are handling hundreds of cases, and these folks are handling 14 cases.

And I could go on; it is *Andrew Robbins v. James Billings et al.*, it's Docket No. CV-22-054; but I don't want to talk about just what the judge is saying in regards to these number of positions or what they're doing, but the most important part of the decision; which I find important and is relevant to my floor amendment, Mr. Speaker, is found on page 23 of the decision. And I'm going to read the paragraph, which I think is relevant, Mr. Speaker. It says, "the Court cannot and does not expect miracles. The Defendants can only do what is possible. But it's clear the Defendants have not been prioritizing finding or providing counsel for incarcerated" criminals who are waiting for somebody to do just that. "Each and every one of these individuals have been found indigent by the Court;" meaning they're entitled to an attorney; and "each of them appears to be in a subclass member. The Defendants must prioritize finding counsel for them and the Court believes;" this is the important operative sentence. Those of us that are lawyers always look for what's the kernel, what's the important sentence in this decision, 45 pages long. "The defendants must prioritize finding counsel for them and the Court believes that the Defendants can do so using existing resources." Now, for our folks on this side of the aisle, that means we don't have to spend more money. How they choose to do that is up to them. The Court is confident that they can do it in a way that provides counsel for some and, if not for all of the incarcerated plaintiffs.

And so, when I was talking with the Chief Executive this morning, she agrees that this can be done within existing resources. In my Floor Amendment; which is in essence a work off of the Amendment that she provided to the Committee, which reported out a unanimous decision; my Floor Amendment says; as the Chief Executive was proposing; let's go in and do some caseload management. Now, if you're in the private sector, I'm sure that's pretty common stuff, right? Caseload management. What that means is that we want to make sure everybody's doing their fair share. As Republicans, we sometimes call that accountability. So, if someone's handling 11 cases, maybe that's not really fair. And so, what this bill says; my bill says; is that we use some metrics. We use some metrics, and we say who's handling what cases, and is it enough cases; is it too few cases? But again, that goes to this question of, can we do this within existing resources, and with management and accountability, the answer is yes, and the Chief Executive would agree with that; I would say; Mr. Speaker. It's up to her, she'll have to say that on her own, but in my conversation today, I understand not only did she put this Amendment before the Committee, it's what she told me this morning.

So, understand what will happen to this bill if we report this bill out; especially for people on this side of the aisle; you need to understand what will happen is when this gets passed, this will go down to Appropriations, and they will ask that it get exempted from the Table. Well, what's that mean? What that means is that we're going to spend the money right away. We're not going to try to prioritize about all these other spending initiatives that are still to be debated; we're going to exempt it from the Table, spend the \$3.2 million, add the eight new positions. Instead of looking at it holistically in terms of prioritizing within the budget, which is what people on this side of the aisle have been talking about for three months.

So, I would only submit, Mr. Speaker, that I understand this came out of committee unanimous, but I don't agree that we should be spending \$3.2 million, I don't agree that we should be adding eight new unionized positions to State government when the State already wants to add 250 new positions. I just don't understand it, and I don't get it. And everyone will say, well, what about Justice Murphy's decision? Well, in her own

decision, I'm going to read the sentence one more time; "the Defendants must prioritize finding counsel for them," and we believe that they "can do so within existing resources." And "within existing resources" means, you know, we all sort of laugh sometimes, right, when we go by the construction site where they're doing road construction, right? And there's eight people there, right, and seven of them are standing, watching one guy work. I mean, that's kind of sometimes what people talk about. And what we're doing is we're creating the same system here, where we got administrators and managers and whatnot, and you've got maybe one or two people working, but their caseload is 10 cases, 15 cases. In a program that's grown from \$17 million to \$51 million, which will only continue to grow if we don't ask for accountability; which even the judge in this case says we can do within existing resources. So, Mr. Speaker, I would ask that we support this Amendment, and thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Representative KUHN of Falmouth moved that **House Amendment "A" (H-47) to Committee Amendment "A" (S-11) be INDEFINITELY POSTPONED.**

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Falmouth, Representative Kuhn.

Representative KUHN: Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Member will defer. The Chair provided some latitude on the previous remarks from the Representative from Newport, but generally speaking, the Chair will enforce that we don't speculate on the position of the Chief Executive or what the Chief Executive may have said or not said. Certainly, speaking to what occurred in Committee, appropriate conversations that we can't verify, I will call out of order in the future. The Member may proceed.

Representative KUHN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to clarify that every concern that has been raised this morning and every item in the Amendment was considered thoroughly through multiple work sessions by the Judiciary Committee and was rejected in our unanimous Report. This was a compromise. There are components of the bill that were hard for some Members to swallow. There were other parts that Members desperately wanted in and didn't make it. That's how a compromise works. And we did that work because we understood the urgency of our work to address this critical; and I would say nonpartisan; issue.

The State of Maine has been found in violation of certain defendants' constitutional right to counsel under the Sixth Amendment, and on March 7th, we received the judge's proposed remedies. This includes imminently releasing anyone who has been in custody without an attorney for more than two weeks and dismissing the charges of anyone with pending charges without an attorney for more than 60 days. It is essential that the State provide this constitutionally required counsel, so that the criminal justice system can work.

I would just like to talk for a moment about the public defense system that we are building. It is working. Four out of the five public defender offices that have been set up are less than one year old, and already the unrepresented cases are dropping. The system is working. Also, addressing the question of investment, it has been shown that paying for public defense services through the Commission is vastly less expensive than paying for contract counsel. So, this investment in additional resources is actually less expensive than our alternative; which is to pay contract counsel. The entire Judiciary Committee saw the need for this and acted accordingly and in good faith to develop a bipartisan solution, and I would urge the Body to support that work. Thank you.

Representative FREDETTE of Newport **REQUESTED** a roll call on the motion to **INDEFINITELY POSTPONE House Amendment "A" (H-47) to Committee Amendment "A" (S-11)**.

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 Buxton, Representative Blier.

Representative **BLIER**: Good morning. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for allowing me to rise here today. The only reason I rise here today specifically is, where's the money? I'm an Appropriations member; we just passed a current services budget, which just keeps the lights on; which had to sweep \$100 million in order to do so, and not fund MaineCare for the year 2027. These bills coming forward add new positions but add \$3.2 million to the State's budget, where there's no resources to pay for it. So, before we continue to create bills in this legislative Body; bring them down to Appropriations; we need to know where we're going to get the money to fund them. And if it's removing other programs within our State to do so, then let's bring those forward. But until that point, we shouldn't be passing any legislation that creates resources to come out of our coffers that we don't have. Thank you.

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

Representative **POIRIER**: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm rising today because I do support the position of my colleague across the aisle.

The Judiciary Committee did work together for not just one day, but weeks, to gather a legislation that both parties could agree with. There were concessions made on both sides. We did take into account the ask of the Chief Executive. We've chosen to be able to become unified on this bill, because we do see the great need for this. We're talking about peoples' Constitutional Amendments not being taken seriously. When you talk about using existing resources; if that was the solution, this would've taken place months ago. The fact is, rostered attorneys are not willing to take these cases.

What we've come with, in our unanimous-decision Report, is to allow for limited new positions, not the total ask. We've included that judges can appoint attorneys. This isn't something PDS was on board with, but we worked it out to make it happen, so, we can have all hands on deck to take care of this issue and make sure that people have the counsel that they're entitled to. We've also recorded things like a report back from both the Judicial Branch and PDS, so we can see how these efforts are playing out as of January 1st. We can make changes at that time if we need to. It's important to note; too; that these new positions that are in this bill are dedicated for these cases where constitutional rights are being violated. I know it's money, and I know we have to figure out where it's coming from, but this has to be a priority. People deserve justice, they're entitled to it in the Constitution and we need to make that happen here.

I think it's important that; you know; this is Judiciary Committee we're talking about, we don't often come on board and see eye to eye on a lot of things, but we all see that this is direly important. This is issues that we've been dealing with in this Committee since my tenure here, and the fact that we have a ruling from the judge that we need to see this clearly and make something happen, the fact that we were able to come to a consensus in the Committee is huge and that should speak for itself on this Floor. So, I want to thank my colleagues, both in my own caucus and the other side of the aisle, for making those agreements. No, the bill does not have all of the wants of the Chief Executive, but we are actually preparing to take those on

in other forms. There's a bill coming through to address one concern and the report back will address another. Those are the two issues that were in the Chief Executive's proposal that aren't in the current bill. So, I would ask everybody to join the unanimous Judiciary consent to put the bill through as is and not this Amendment. Thank you.

The **SPEAKER**: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Rumford, Representative Henderson.

Representative **HENDERSON**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, if there's anybody in this room that ever listens in to the Judiciary Committee, I think at times, you would hear me maybe make jokes about how dense I can be, how I'm not a lawyer, and I think both of those things are true in some respect. But I can read and write, and I read the Calendar this morning that said this was on the Consent Calendar. And anybody with half a brain in this room knows that the Consent Calendar means that it was unanimous out of Committee. Maybe I should withdraw my half-a-brain comment, I did see Mr. Hunt turn around to speak with you, Mr. Speaker.

The **SPEAKER**: The Chair appreciates your commitment to decorum.

Representative **HENDERSON**: Thank you. It's a unanimous Committee Report. Conversations have been happening for weeks now on how we got here, and this is consensus language. A compromise bill; which 'compromise' is not a four-letter word, and sometimes it's used as a four-letter word in this building. Compromise, it's not a four-letter word; it's necessary to pass important and valuable laws that positively impact the people of the State of Maine. I won by a landslide in my last campaign. I'm not worried about '26. And I'm not insinuating that others are, but I'm saying I'm not worried about it, but even still, my constituents want me to work together across the aisle to create good policy, and that's what's in front of you today.

If we have a little bit of a history of how we got here and what the compromise was, the first version of this bill had 13 new positions; and I think maybe a \$6 million price tag; where maybe a little over half of those were actual lawyers, the rest were administrative positions. Through respectful dialogue filled with trust and understanding where both sides were coming from, we were able to whittle it down to eight positions: five attorneys, two paralegals, and one administrative piece. We all know; I believe we should all know; that March 7th, what Justice Murphy's decision was and the real implications of what that could be on the safety of Maine. And yes, you know what, we do need to have a conversation about PDS and should they be unionized, should they not be unionized. We have a parity bill in front of us that would discuss, you know, pay between ADAs, the AG's office and PDS, and how there's a discrepancy. Should one be unionized and the other not? That is valuable dialogue that should happen in this building, but not at the sake of railroading a very valuable bill.

The **SPEAKER**: The Member will defer. It is very difficult to hear the Member who is trying to speak to this Body when there are many side conversations happening. If folks want to have side conversations, there's a hallway. The Member may proceed.

Representative **HENDERSON**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The few statements made; one of which I find concerning; that in the decision that it was quoted to say the courts believe that what needs to be done, that they can do with PDS's existing resources. Well, again, if anyone in this room has been listening to the Judiciary Committee, the Judicial Branch has been pulpitting separation of powers across many pieces of

legislation. The Legislature has the authority to spend the money the way they want.

I guess I would end by just asking the Members in this room to respect the unanimous Committee Report, the work that went in to getting here, understanding that there are more and there are important conversations to come, but let's move forward and actually effectuate some real good change for the people of Maine and ensure that we're upholding our constitutional responsibility, not only for the right to counsel and a right to a speedy trial, but also the constitutional responsibility to provide a safe society, which this bill is going to address. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Representative **MOONEN**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Colleagues of the House, although I am not on the Judiciary Committee, I was for many years and have a lot of history and context with this issue.

I appreciate the concerns raised by the Representative from Newport, but I think there's some context missing on some of those concerns that might be helpful for folks to understand. One is that for many, many years, Maine was the only State in the country without a public defender system. And there were suggestions many times over the years that we should stop being the outlier on that and make a change. And I've got to admit, we tried everything else there is to try. There were multiple times that we raised the hourly rate for contract counsel. I want everybody to understand that because we didn't have a public defense system, we were relying on private counsel to take these cases, and then the State would pay them through a voucher system to pay them for their work on these cases. We raised that pay many times. When I first arrived here, the hourly pay was \$50 an hour. A few years ago, we raised it to \$150 an hour, because we were so desperate to find a way to get people to take more of these cases, so that people could be represented. There were suggestions at one point that we move to a contract system similar to what Somerset County was doing a few years ago, but there were numerous flaws in that proposal as well. And so, finally, a few years ago, after everything else had been tried and failed, we did reach bipartisan agreement to stop being the only State without a public defender system.

The Representative from Newport mentioned that a few years ago, the Public Defense Commission had 12 positions and now it has 75. That is right, because a few years ago, when we were relying entirely on private counsel, the Commission just needed a small base of administrative staffers to deal with processing vouchers, processing payments to those private counsel. Now, we're moving towards public defenders, which are public employees; and yes, it does cost money to hire public employees, but I've got to tell you, we're already seeing reductions in the amount that we're paying out in vouchers, because we're paying public employees their salary and benefits, and that cost is actually a lot lower than paying \$150 an hour to private counsel. So, as we increase our public defenders, we're going to continue to see the cost of private vouchers go down, and I look forward to seeing that savings as we continue to do that.

The Representative from Newport also mentioned that our public defenders are not taking enough cases. I think it's important to understand that the public defense system is being set up on a parallel track to our district attorney system. So, each prosecutorial district, there are eight of them; in the long run, we need to have eight public defense districts that match those same prosecutorial districts. Right now, we only have five. So, the idea that we can handle all of our public defense cases

around the State within existing resources is simply not true, because we only have public defense offices in five out of our eight districts. We need to make sure that every part of Maine has a working public defense system.

As for the caseloads of the public defenders, those folks are set up to be the equivalent of the District Attorney. And I've got to tell you, Mr. Speaker, our district attorneys are not taking full caseloads and appearing in court every day, because they have a staff of assistant district attorneys who they are responsible for managing, supervising, training, making sure that they're staying on top of their caseloads. That's what our public defenders are doing. They are managing their assistant defenders that we are hiring. So, it is not surprising and should not be concerning that our public defenders themselves; the equivalent of the District Attorney; is not taking a full caseload.

It's been mentioned that our public defense offices, four out of the five are less than a year old. The one in Penobscot County, actually, it just finished getting staffed up about four or five weeks ago. It's important to understand that our public defense positions are not super well paid. The Representative from Newport is correct that we have a disparity in the pay between our public defenders and our assistant district attorneys. There's legislation pending to address that disparity. But these brand-new public defenders, many of them are brand-new lawyers. They're just out of law school. They are not prepared to take full caseloads on every type of criminal case that there is. They need a little time to get trained up and more experience, and their caseloads will grow as they gain that experience.

I want to emphasize that our public defender offices are working. Last fall, at the height of this crisis, there were more than 1,500 people across the State of Maine unrepresented for long periods of time. The last I checked a couple weeks ago, that number was about 500. So, we've reduced that number by 1,000 in just the two, three, four short months that these public defender offices have been open. We need to give them time to continue working, and we need to make sure that public defenders exist where they currently don't.

I've certainly heard the concern about money and spending and priorities. I just want to echo what everyone else has said, that this is constitutionally required by the Sixth Amendment of the United States Constitution. It's constitutionally required by the Maine Constitution. And I fully think that there's plenty of other spending that is not constitutionally required, and if we need to take money out of something that's not constitutionally required in order to pay what is, then that's what we should do.

I want to thank the Judiciary Committee for their hard work. This was quite a sight to watch them come together around this. I also want to say that the Representative from Skowhegan mentioned the emergency authority for judges to appoint. That's a really critical piece of this bill. If the Judicial Branch really thought that everything could be handled within existing resources, they wouldn't've asked for that. They really want that authority and the spending that would come with it in order to get people attorneys quickly.

Finally, I will say Justice Murphy has been clear that hearings are coming on releasing people, and she did say she wouldn't release anyone facing homicide charges; that's great to hear; but there are other very serious charges that some people are facing that present genuine public safety concerns and potentially public safety risks. I want to be clear that I don't think everyone is a public safety concern; in fact, I think a lot of people won't be; but there are people facing very serious domestic violence charges, I think we all know the data about

offenders who go back and inflict further harm or even death on their victims. I think we should take it very seriously that some of those folks might be released if we don't take action.

So, I've been talking for a while now; I appreciate your patience, Mr. Speaker. Really appreciate the Committee's work. We need to come together and show that we understand the seriousness and the severity of the potential that some very dangerous people will be released not next year, not five years from now, but in a few weeks. This is our opportunity to take action, get the courts the authority they've asked for to get people attorneys and get a little bit more widespread coverage of our public defender system, and I ask everyone to support it. Thank you.

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

Representative **FREDETTE**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I want to start by saying I'm disappointed in the Good Representative from Rumford, who made some sort of reference to the Consent Calendar and having a brain and someone shouldn't have the opportunity or the ability to question or challenge something on the Consent Calendar. This building is premised upon the issue of debate. So, I only want to start by saying that anybody in this room should feel they have an opportunity to speak; including the Good Representative from Auburn; on issues, whether they're on the Consent Calendar or Divided Report. If we can't do it in this building, we can't do it anywhere. So, frankly, I find the statement offensive, and there are people in the balcony that heard that and I think they should understand that this is a Body where people have a right to debate.

Now, in response to a quote which says that the constitutional rights are being violated. Okay, again, it's great to throw around these words, right? Constitutional rights are being violated, people; we're going to release prisoners. And I just want to go back to the simple decision, where the judge in this case says this can be done within existing resources. That doesn't mean that the Committee is right, but I don't want to hear this misnomer that we have to do this, we are required to do this. We're not required to do it. It can be done within existing resources with a balancing of caseloads, and frankly, adding eight new positions and giving \$3.2 million away without having it to compete for other issues when, frankly, we had a Revenue Forecasting Committee report the other day that says our revenues are going down, they're not going up, and so, if we're going to be looking at a supplemental budget, now we're going to take another \$3.2 million away. I don't want to hear people on this side of the aisle saying we're going to have to raise taxes, because that's what this bill does. This bill essentially is raising taxes. It's adding positions and it's spending money.

And Mr. Speaker, I just want to close by asking, my understanding in the motion on the floor is for Indefinite Postponement, and my understanding would be that, if we do not want to Indefinitely Postpone this, we would vote no, and I just ask some clarification from the Speaker in regards to our vote coming up.

The SPEAKER: An affirmative vote would Indefinitely Postpone House Amendment "A," presented by the Representative from Newport. A no vote would be against the Indefinite Postponement of House Amendment "A."

The Chair recognizes the Representative from Auburn, Representative Lee.

Representative **LEE**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I live in Auburn, as you just said. As you can probably tell by the delegation that Auburn sends here, I don't talk to the same people every time I go to a door. But they agree on one thing;

that when we come here, they want us to work together. They don't understand why we can't work together. They say, go there, talk to people who don't agree with you, come to a consensus on things.

My good friend from Rumford got it absolutely right. This is a bipartisan deal that depended on a few things: trust and a belief in good faith between the individuals who were negotiating it. That's how we got here. We got to a compromise through trust and a belief in good faith. We destroy that trust, that belief in good faith, that foundation for bipartisanship when we don't trust the individuals who work towards it. And when we reject it at an 11th-hour argument by folks who were not at the Committee's public hearing; who were not at any of the work sessions that the group of Judiciary Committee Members did on the bill; and we vote for an Amendment that tries to strip out that good work; to try to destroy that good work. I ask you, please, nobody works harder in this building than the Judiciary Committee. This was the product of our good work, all of our good work. I ask you to please vote with the Committee against the Amendment; which would be for the motion to Indefinitely Postpone. Vote for that, because that's what the Judiciary Committee, all of us, supports. Thank you.

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

Representative **BOYER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not on the Judiciary Committee, I'm not a lawyer, but I will be voting to Indefinitely Postpone this Amendment.

We need lawyers. We need lawyers to defend, we need lawyers to prosecute; we don't have them, there's a backlog and violent criminals are already being let out, it happened in my community in Auburn last year. Under the Sixth Amendment, a judge lowered the bail there, and the person was able to make bail. That weekend, they went out, burned a couple houses down; someone was in one of the houses; they died, and then that person was killed in a shootout with police; that person that was let out of jail there in Androscoggin County. So, it's already happening. The judges shouldn't be put in this untenable position of balancing constitutional rights and public safety, and that's where they are now. One way or another, that's where we are, and I think funding defense attorneys is a good use of our tax dollars. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Rumford, Representative Henderson.

Representative **HENDERSON**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. Just two quick points. I think there are many points that the Representative from Newport made that I do agree with, and I think are valuable and worthy of debate. One area in which I very much agree with is that this is a building of debate, and that every Member in this room should have the ability to question a bill that's coming before them that they're going to vote on and that their name is going to be on, without question. I will state that debate on this specific bill began weeks ago, and although there are times, yes, where items on the Consent Calendar can and should be questioned, I also realize that my comments were made in irritation of being blindsided by an Amendment I didn't know was coming. I know we haven't served together long, but I've really prided myself on being thoughtful and deliberate when I stand before this Body and speak, and no comments that I make are intended to offend or wound people, and I do believe that we can disagree; passionately disagree; while remaining respectful.

So, with that being said, although my comment and my statement about half-a-brain was withdrawn, and I thought I had done it in a somewhat humorous way; if there's anybody else in this room and building that felt personally attacked or offended

by those statements, please know that was not my intention. My intention is to vote on this bill, move forward in unity and find a way to continue to work together for the people of the State of Maine. Thank you.

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

Representative **DUCHARME**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A couple of weeks ago, I stood before this Body and said we're at a point in time where we have to define what our priorities are. Now, over the course of my time here, I've been very supportive of the public defender system and continue to be. I think it's something that we've needed to do for a long time, and we should do this. The only problem is, is that we've spent more money than we're projected to have; number one; already, in the continuing services budget, and we're being asked for more money, plus we're getting a revenue forecast that's coming in May first that, my guess is it's going to be less than what we were operating with from the December '24 forecast.

So, I would remind folks that, if this is going to be our priority, there are going to be some other areas that we're not going to be able to do. I think this public defender piece is a really good thing to do, it's helpful, it's something we should do; but there's a whole lot of other things that \$3.2 million is going to have to come away from in order for us to do that. So, I would just ask us to remember, regardless of how this vote goes today, that we just added \$3.2 million to that 11.4, and we've got to figure out a way to pay for it because we don't have the money. It's that simple. If you don't have the money, you can't do it. Thank you.

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

Representative **UNDERWOOD**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I heard the term 'trust and good faith' this morning, and if anybody wants to know what trust and good faith is, just remember the budget fight that we had; or discussions we had. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: A roll call has been ordered. The pending question before the House is Indefinite Postponement of House Amendment "A" (H-47) to Committee Amendment "A" (S-11). All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

ROLL CALL NO. 77

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

NAY - Adams, Albert, Ardell, Bagshaw, Blier, Campbell, Chapman, Cimino, Collamore, Collins, Cooper, Cray, Daigle, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eder, Faulkingham, Flynn, Fredericks, Fredette, Gifford, Greenwood, Griffin, Guerrette, Haggan, Hall, Jackson, Javner, Lance, Lavigne, Lemelin, Lyman, Mason, McIntyre, Mingo, Morris, Nutting, Olsen, Parry, Paul, Perkins, Quint, Rudnicki, Schmersal-Burgess, Smith, Soboleski, Swallow, Thorne, Underwood, Wadsworth, Walker, White J, Wood S.

ABSENT - Archer, Faircloth, Foster, Lanigan, Wood P, Woodsome.

RESTRICTED - Libby.

Yes, 91; No, 53; Absent, 6; Excused, 0; Restricted, 1. 91 having voted in the affirmative and 53 voted in the negative, with 6 being absent and 1 restricted, and accordingly **House Amendment "A" (H-47) to Committee Amendment "A" (S-11) was INDEFINITELY POSTPONED.**

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

Representative **FREDETTE**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd ask that the bill be held.

The SPEAKER: The Chair would inform the Member that this is not the current moment in which that request would be made.

Subsequently, **Committee Amendment "A" (S-11) was ADOPTED.**

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

Representative MOONEN of Portland **REQUESTED** a roll call on **PASSAGE TO BE ENGROSSED as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-11).**

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 Guilford, Representative White.

Representative **WHITE**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to ask a question through the Chair.

The SPEAKER: The Member may proceed.

Representative **WHITE**: This bill that we're voting on would grow the public defender's office that has been in place for around 10 years. And prior to the establishment of this, the system that had previously been in place had been working successfully; however, many people in the State wanted to shift to a public defender's office instead; and that is my understanding, and if it's incorrect, would anyone care to enlighten me? Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Representative from Guilford, Representative White, has posed a question through the Chair to any Member who wishes to answer. The Chair recognizes the Representative from Portland, Representative Moonen.

Representative **MOONEN**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to answer the question.

I would not agree, and I will venture to say that it would be bipartisan agreement amongst the folks on the Judiciary Committee that the previous system was not working. We had a private contract system where the staff of the Commission; the very small staff; dealt with vouchers and paying private counsel, most recently; currently \$150 per hour to take these cases. And despite our efforts to raise the pay over the years from \$50 an hour to \$150 an hour, fewer and fewer private attorneys stayed on the roster. And that is how we got to the crisis point that was at its worst last fall, where we had more than 1,500 people across the State unrepresented and who we could not find a lawyer to assign to them.

You know, as I said before, we tried everything. We considered the contract system, we considered increasing the pay for private counsel and, you know, it just never stopped the bleeding. And that's how we got to the crisis point, and it was at that point last year; last session; that we came together in a bipartisan, unanimous way in the Judiciary Committee and said, we've tried everything else, it's time to try the one thing we haven't tried, which led to our public defender system. I will argue; and I hope there's agreement amongst folks on the Committee; that that is working, but it's had very little time. We've had four offices that have only been open for less than a

year, some of them just finished getting staffed up in January and February. And yet, despite how little time they've had, the numbers are coming down; we're seeing real progress. I think it's our hope that we'll continue to see progress. I hope that's helpful to answer the question.

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

Representative **ARATA**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Although I'm not on the Judiciary Committee, I've been on the Appropriations Committee since my freshman term, and we've been working on this issue for many, many years. We started off paying Maine Indigent Defense lawyers \$60 an hour, and we've increased it every year and it wasn't enough. As a former member of the Government Oversight Committee, we also studied this issue. We tried to find out what other things we can do to attract more lawyers.

I'd like to read to you a story. This refers to what the Representative from Poland; the story he referred to. It says, "Maine's shortage of public defenders allowed a man with a violent criminal history to be released on bail three days before he went to his former girlfriend's Auburn home, where another man was killed before an hours-long standoff with police in which shots were exchanged, two houses burned to the ground and the assailant was eventually killed by tactical team." So, as you vote on this, I'd like you to keep that in mind and that that could just be the tip of the iceberg. Thank you.

The **SPEAKER**: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Auburn, Representative Lee.

Representative **LEE**: I appreciate what my colleagues from Portland and New Gloucester had to say. I would just add as part of that answer that the pre-existing system subjected the State of Maine to a lawsuit that has found us to be in violation of the Sixth Amendment for providing ineffective assistance of counsel; which in large part is the prompt for this bill.

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

Representative **FREDETTE**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. You know, there's always what we call the horrible; tragedy what happened. The issue here, though, is not whether or not somebody got released. The question and the case is; in this matter; is can the current system; which is now I guess what we'd call a baby system, because it's just starting to grow; because it's gone from \$17 million to \$51 million, from 12 staffers to 75 staffers and the Good Representative from Portland indicated that we still have two more counties to go, so, we know we're going to be spending more money, we're going to be adding more positions. And what this Floor Amendment does is it says, let's make sure what we have now is working. It isn't a question of whether or not we're going to release somebody from jail; the question is, are we going to have someone who's paid by the State to represent them, or is it going to be a public defender that currently is existing that has nine cases, can they take number 10? That's the question. Before, inevitably, we start adding new positions to go to the other two counties where we haven't started the system and we're going to be looking at a two-year budget of \$100 million for this.

This is what we're creating, folks. This is the nose under the tent, we start it and then it grows. We started debating whether or not we should have free lunch for kids in school; which is a great program; started out at like \$5 million, now we're spending \$25 million on that program. Where does it end? And we're not here to say this is not important, this isn't good policy; it's just a question of, how are we going to design the system? Are we going to design the system by continuing to add people

and spending more money, money that the Good Representative from Madison said we don't have? And I beg his question; I don't think he actually said it correctly; because what he said was, is well, if we spend this \$3.2 million, Mr. Speaker, we're going to have to take it out of somewhere else. I don't think that's the right answer, Mr. Speaker, because the question is going to be, is what are we going to tax? What fee are we going to add? Because we're not going to not spend the \$3.2 million. That's the issue.

Now, the Good Representative from Presque Isle asked a great question. You know, I think it's important to compromise, I think it's important to work together, but we just passed an \$11.4 billion budget, two-year budget, without any Republican support. Was that compromise? But boy, when compromise is good, it's good; but when it's bad, it's bad. So, people are going to have to make a judgment about this, but the judge who has been involved in this case for years indicated in it, and I will only read it one more time: the Court believes they can do this within existing resources. This is a baby program. And what I mean by that is it's just starting out. The Good Representative indicated over there it's just starting out. Let's give it some time to work, see what's working, see what's not working, before we start throwing more money at it and more people at it. I don't think that's unreasonable.

And I want to respond to the statement that was said earlier, that the Good Representative was blindsided by this. I had a conversation with her and the Chair of the Committee for half an hour this morning. Nobody was blindsided by this; that's not the truth. This is a bill that will require an emergency vote, and I ask people to stay with their lights and defeat this Amendment.

The **SPEAKER**: The Chair would remind Members to address their comments through the Chair.

The Chair reminded all Members to address their comments toward the Speaker.

The **SPEAKER**: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Falmouth, Representative Kuhn.

Representative **KUHN**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just wanted to rise and reiterate that every concern we have heard today, every question about long-term and short-term investment, every question about tradeoffs, of risks, of benefits; all of them were thoroughly considered by the Committee of jurisdiction, with expertise and background in this area, and we arrived at a unanimous, bipartisan Report, so that we could, together, address this urgent need. And I would ask this Body to respect that work and respect the many compromises that were made on all sides to get us to this point. Thank you.

The **SPEAKER**: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Rumford, Representative Henderson.

Representative **HENDERSON**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would say I would love to have this back-and-forth dialogue not on the House Floor. But in response to a statement that I had lied earlier when I said that I was blindsided by this Amendment; yes, the Representative from Newport, the Representative from Skowhegan and myself did meet, and the first dialogue we've had about this after weeks of debate was at 9:45 this morning. We had a very cordial conversation, we asked each other questions, I felt like we'd flushed some things out and we actually walked out of the room, I had made a joke; surprisingly; and unsurprisingly, he had laughed about it, because I'm rather funny.

The piece that I was blindsided by was that at no point was there an indication; or maybe there was an indication that I didn't pick up on; that there was going to be a Floor Amendment, that there was going to be an objection to this item that was on the

Consent Calendar, that this consensus bill was going to turn into very lengthy debate and what seems to have become an internal debate, which I always love to not happen publicly here on the House Floor. So, I would just say my earlier statements were, in fact, not a lie. I try very hard to make sure that that does not happen, and it does not happen, but my blindsided was that I did not know that this Amendment was coming forward. Thank you.

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

Representative **POIRIER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to just clarify a couple of different things that have been said by the Good Representative from Newport in regards to this bill.

First of all, saying that we can do this within existing resources is impractical. We have folks up in Aroostook that are new into this position that cannot possibly go to southern Maine to handle cases there. For one; what, are we going to pay \$150 an hour for travel for that? I mean, that's just a ridiculous thought. We need to have people in the specific areas where these cases are needing to be heard. Secondly, people hired under this bill are hired specifically to deal with these Sixth Amendment cases. When we get report back in January to see if all cases have been dealt with, if there are any more still pending, we have a list; a list of criteria that we want information on from both the Judicial Branch and PDS. When we see that, we will then evaluate where are these people going to meet the need and keep this going in the positive direction that it has been going in. We just need this inch more to make sure that these Sixth Amendment cases are taken care of. So, just to keep those in mind.

As far as Appropriations; I know money is tight, but I know that our Appropriations Committee Members will see that this is a constitutional need. We have other needs and wants on the Table that might have to take the back burner, unfortunately, but this is a constitutional concern that we here are obligated to deal with. So, I ask everybody to please follow the unanimous Committee Report and pass this bill so we can be in compliance. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Berwick, Representative Lavigne.

Representative **LAVIGNE**: Well, I've had to listen to all of you; now, you have to listen to me. We talk about spending millions every single day. Silly things: nicotine pouches, moths on trees; I just stand to remind you all the other side of this issue, the potential for human tragedy.

An individual, due to an experiment in the state of New Hampshire, earned an early release, and about two and a half weeks after his probation ended, this individual broke into my house and attempted to kill my son. He stabbed him four times, my son was in emergency surgery for about seven and a half hours. Let's not forget who we're protecting here. You know, this individual has been sitting in jail, awaiting trial, sometimes the delays were associated with the availability of public defenders, other times, it was really just a prisoner; or resident, whatever you want to call them; playing the system. Not to reveal a lot, I have a lot of security cameras around my home, and the DA is in possession of this individual standing at my door, verbalizing he's going to kill my son because he wanted to be with my son's fiancée. I was not home that night. Otherwise, I would've saved the justice system a lot of money.

When this judge made the decision of potentially releasing prisoners because their constitutional rights were potentially set up to be violated, I wish the judge had said nonviolent. I wish the judge had said, well, these are the guys that are serving 25 years for violating a marijuana law in 1982. That was the right

thing to say. But to paint with a broad brush; that because there's a lack of public defenders, we're going to release this guy; that leaves someone like me with little choice but to defend my family.

This is a repeat offender. In high school, he mercilessly beat up his teacher, a female teacher. He was a juvenile, so, I think he did community service for that. She never taught again. His second offense; 2015; he attacked a 16-year-old girl in the breakroom at Market Basket. He punched her 14 times in the face and stabbed her in the neck with a plastic knife. He sat in jail for about a year and a half, awaiting trial. He was sentenced to three years and given credit for time served. And to circle back, two weeks after his probation ended, he was at my house to kill my son. So, while we talk about all the money we spend; I want to say silly, and I know it's not appropriate, but some of these things that come through, they're not lifesaving.

But in closing, I just want to say, if you think what happened in my home can't happen to you, you're wrong. You're absolutely wrong. I have years of security experience, I was a police officer, I have probably more guns than my police department. I was unable to stop this that night. So, think about when you're spending money for nicotine pouches, moths on trees, think who might be next when this guy gets out. And I'll just close in saying, I shared with the DA that I'm aware the justice system is broken, more than fractured, and if this gentleman needs a ride home from jail, I'll be there.

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

Representative **MOONEN**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Colleagues of the House. I've heard the question asked multiple times now by the Representative from Newport of where the money to pay for this is going to come from. I feel like I answered it once, but I'll give it another try.

We are paying for the public defense system right now in two ways. One is for the public defenders that we just hired in the last year to get up and running; they have been funded in five out of the eight districts, there are three districts that have no public defender's office yet. But we are also paying \$150 an hour for private counsel to take these cases. And so, when you ask where's the money going to come from, I just want to re-emphasize that when we hire a public defender who is on a flat salary from the State, it is very clear to see where the money is going to come from. I want to have everybody think about a homicide case. Those take, on average, nearly two years, but they can certainly go much longer than that. If we are paying private counsel \$150 per hour to work on a homicide case for two or three years; or four or five years; that is way more expensive than paying the flat salary of a public defender for those two or three years. So, as we invest in public defenders, we have already seen the number of; as they take on more cases, we've already seen that that means fewer cases have to go to private counsel that we are paying \$150 an hour. It is unfortunate that we are in a situation right now where we are paying for both, but the way to stop paying for both is to pay for the public defenders and reduce the amount of \$150-an-hour vouchers that are coming in.

I also heard the Representative from Newport make reference several times to Justice Murphy suggesting that this could be done within existing resources. Again, I want to re-emphasize that there are three districts that have no public defender office at all. I hadn't thought about it till she said it, but the Representative from Skowhegan just absolutely nailed it, because right now, we are paying private counsel \$150 per hour to drive to the three places that don't have public defense offices. And when we hire more public defenders, we can stop

paying people \$150 an hour to drive to court. That would be a huge amount of savings.

I will also say that while I certainly respect Justice Murphy, she does not speak for the Judicial Branch when she said this could be done within existing resources. The Chief Justice speaks for the Judicial Branch. The Chief Justice brought this bill that asks for emergency authority for the court system to appoint attorneys. The Representative from Skowhegan made reference to that portion of this bill. It's really, really important, the Judicial Branch is behind it, they think it's necessary.

Finally, I will say that Justice Murphy said when she issued her decision in March that hearings on releasing people would start in April. Mr. Speaker, it is April, the next hearing is on Monday; today is Thursday; now is our time to act, before we come to regret it. Thank you.

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

Representative **FREDETTE**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll be very brief. I'm from the government, and I'm here to help. That's the statement; is that the private sector can't do this, we're going to create a government system to fix it and we're going to solve the problem that way. I look forward to the debate. There's a report today in the *Portland Press Herald* about Maine hospitals are in dire financial shape. I can't wait to see the bill that we're going to start taking over medical care in the State; let the government do it, because we're here and we're here to help.

The SPEAKER: A roll call has been ordered. The pending question before the House is Passage to be Engrossed as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-11). All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

ROLL CALL NO. 78

YEA - Abdi, Ankeles, Arata, Arford, Babin, Beck, Bell, Bishop, Boyer D, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Campbell, Carlow, Caruso, Cloutier, Cluchey, Collamore, Copeland, Crafts, Cray, Crockett, Daigle, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Ducharme, Eaton, Eder, Farrin, Faulkingham, Foley, Friedmann, Frost, Gattine, Geiger, Gere, Golek, Graham, Gramlich, Greenwood, Griffin, Guerrette, Hall, Hasenfus, Henderson, Hepler, Hymes, Javner, Julia, Kessler, Kuhn, Lajoie, Lavigne, Lee, Lemelin, Lookner, Macias, Malon, Mastraccio, Mathieson, Matlack, McCabe, McIntyre, Meyer, Milliken, Mitchell, Montell, Moonen, Morris, Murphy, Nutting, O'Halloran, Olsen, Osher, Parry, Pluecker, Poirier, Pomerleau, Pugh, Rana, Ray, Rielly, Roberts, Roeder, Rollins, Runte, Sachs, Salisbury, Sargent, Sato, Sayre, Shagoury, Simmons, Sinclair, Skold, Smith, Stover, Strout, Supica, Swallow, Terry, Tuell, Walker, Warren, Webb, White R, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

NAY - Adams, Albert, Ardell, Bagshaw, Blier, Chapman, Cimino, Collins, Cooper, Drinkwater, Flynn, Foster, Fredericks, Fredette, Gifford, Haggan, Jackson, Lance, Lyman, Mason, Mingo, Paul, Perkins, Quint, Rudnicki, Schmersal-Burgess, Soboleski, Thorne, Underwood, Wadsworth, White J, Wood S.

ABSENT - Archer, Faircloth, Lanigan, Wood P, Woodsome.

RESTRICTED - Libby.

Yes, 113; No, 32; Absent, 5; Excused, 0; Restricted, 1.

113 having voted in the affirmative and 32 voted in the negative, with 5 being absent and 1 restricted, and accordingly the Bill was **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-11)** in concurrence.

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

PETITIONS, BILLS AND RESOLVES REQUIRING REFERENCE

Bill "An Act to Create Parity in Poultry Processing and Farming Licenses and Inspections"

(H.P. 1059) (L.D. 1601)

Sponsored by Representative COLLAMORE of Pittsfield.

Committee on **AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY** suggested and ordered printed.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Fairfield, Representative Rudnicki.

Representative **RUDNICKI**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Before we get too far into it; I actually expected to do this a lot earlier; I wanted to ask again. We are in our third week of special session, and it's not my intention to impugn anyone's character or question their motives, but I am going to state a few facts. We are in an emergency special session called by the Chief Executive Office --

The SPEAKER: The Member will defer. Is the Member speaking to the items that are being Referenced to Committee?

Representative **RUDNICKI**: Yes, it's all part of that, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Member may proceed.

Representative **RUDNICKI**: So, Mr. Speaker, I'm still questioning why we're in special session, and when I questioned this a week ago today, you made the comment that it was the Chief Executive that called us back. So, my question to you, Mr. Speaker, is you used to work for the Chief Executive's policy office, the Appropriations Chair is married to the current employee in the Chief Executive's policy office --

Representative **MALON**: Point of Order.

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

Representative **MALON**: Mr. Speaker, the remarks of the Good Representative from Fairfield are in no way germane to the question of referencing item 3-2 on today's Calendar.

On **POINT OF ORDER**, Representative MALON of Biddeford asked the Chair if the remarks of Representative RUDNICKI of Fairfield were germane to the pending question.

The SPEAKER: The Chair would ask the Member to state whether or not she has an objection or if she has something she'd like to say about item 3-2; which is "An Act to Create Parity in Poultry Processing and Farming Licenses and Inspections," which is being Referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry?

The Chair reminded Representative RUDNICKI of Fairfield to stay as close as possible to the pending question.

Representative **RUDNICKI**: Mr. Speaker, I was trying to question earlier, again, why we're in special session, because this all goes to that. Because if we weren't in special session, we would not be referencing. If I can finish my statement, you can answer my question and I can sit down.

The SPEAKER: The Chair would inquire whether or not the question is relevant to whether this bill should or should not be Referenced to the Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry.

Representative **RUDNICKI**: Mr. Speaker, no bill should be referenced at this point. We are in special session without anyone having said what the extraordinary circumstance is. Mr. Speaker, the Chief Executive Office's constitutional amendment says extraordinary occasion. I have been asking for weeks what

that extraordinary occasion is. What I am referencing now is the fact that why are we still referencing any bill, regardless of what it is, when we have not even declared what the emergency session or the extraordinary situation is. And when the Speaker last week said it's the Chief Executive Officer, my point being, Sir, is why are we still referencing and doing these things when we have a connection; many connections, obviously, based on what I was trying to get across; with the Chief Executor, including the Majority Leader's spouse being the Chief Executive's Office --

The SPEAKER: The Member will defer. The question before us is Referencing this bill to the Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry. The Chair would ask the Member; perhaps the question that she's trying to pose might be better directed to the sponsor of the bill that's before us, because it was not withdrawn, so, clearly the sponsor of this bill feels it is important to be heard during this First Special Session of the 132nd Legislature. So, if the Member is questioning why this bill is before us for Reference, I would ask the Member to have a private conversation with the sponsor of this bill. The Member may proceed.

Representative **RUDNICKI**: I am just asking, why we are referencing any bills in this special session? That is my question, considering you specifically said that it was the Chief Executive Officer, why haven't we gone back, why haven't you or the Majority Leader or the Appropriations Leader; all who have connections; asked that question? No bill should be referenced in this special session after this point. That's all I'm asking, Mr. Speaker, is what is the extraordinary occasion? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Would the Member like to offer a motion to Indefinitely Postpone this reference?

Representative **RUDNICKI**: No, Mr. Speaker, it's --.

Subsequently, the Bill was **REFERRED** to the Committee on **AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY** and ordered printed.

Sent for concurrence.

Bill "An Act to Ensure Uniformity in the Regulation of Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances in Pesticides"

(H.P. 1015) (L.D. 1557)

Sponsored by Representative ARATA of New Gloucester.

Cosponsored by Representatives: COOPER of Windham, CRAY of Palmyra, DILL of Old Town, GUERRETTE of Caribou, HEPLER of Woolwich, JACKSON of Oxford, Senator: BERNARD of Aroostook.

Committee on **AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY** suggested.

Representative PLUECKER of Warren moved that the Bill be **REFERRED** to the Committee on **ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES** and ordered printed.

On motion of Representative ARATA of New Gloucester, **TABLED** pending **REFERENCE** and later today assigned.

Bill "An Act to Establish the Maine Emergency Medical Services Commission"

(H.P. 1057) (L.D. 1599)

Sponsored by Representative SALISBURY of Westbrook.

Cosponsored by Senator TALBOT ROSS of Cumberland and Representatives: BLIER of Buxton, DUCHARME of Madison, Senator: CURRY of Waldo.

Bill "An Act to Provide Regional Support Funding for Municipal Police Departments to Support Special Response Teams"

(H.P. 1058) (L.D. 1600)

Sponsored by Representative ANKELES of Brunswick.

Cosponsored by Representatives: CROCKETT of Portland, FAIRCLOTH of Bangor, MASTRACCIO of Sanford, MOONEN of Portland, MURPHY of Scarborough, ROEDER of Bangor, ROLLINS of Augusta.

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.

Resolve, Establishing the Commission to Update Maine's Public Policy on Higher Education

(H.P. 1016) (L.D. 1558)

Sponsored by Representative SARGENT of York.

Cosponsored by Senator PIERCE of Cumberland and Representatives: DEBRITO of Waterville, DODGE of Belfast, MITCHELL of Cumberland, MURPHY of Scarborough, Senators: LIBBY of Cumberland, RAFFERTY of York.

Bill "An Act to Modify Certification Standards for Full-time Teachers in Public Charter Schools and for Educational Technicians"

(H.P. 1029) (L.D. 1571)

Sponsored by Representative CROCKETT of Portland.

Bill "An Act to Abolish School Budget Referenda"

(H.P. 1037) (L.D. 1579)

Sponsored by Representative ABDI of Lewiston.

Cosponsored by Representatives: CLOUTIER of Lewiston, LAJOIE of Lewiston, MCCABE of Lewiston, MURPHY of Scarborough, SALISBURY of Westbrook.

Bill "An Act to Amend the Regional School Unit Budget Validation Referendum Law"

(H.P. 1044) (L.D. 1586)

Sponsored by Representative BAGSHAW of Windham.

Cosponsored by Senator HARRINGTON of York and Representatives: CIMINO of Bridgton, COLLINS of Sidney, GRIFFIN of Levant, QUINT of Hodgdon, RUDNICKI of Fairfield, SCHMERSAL-BURGESS of Mexico, SOBOLESKI of Phillips, Senator: MOORE of Washington.

Bill "An Act to Ensure Transparency in Student Transfer Requests"

(H.P. 1046) (L.D. 1588)

Sponsored by Representative BAGSHAW of Windham.

Cosponsored by Senator STEWART of Aroostook and Representatives: ALBERT of Madawaska, COLLINS of Sidney, GRIFFIN of Levant, SCHMERSAL-BURGESS of Mexico, SOBOLESKI of Phillips, Senators: HARRINGTON of York, LIBBY of Cumberland, MOORE of Washington.

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 Reduce Energy Costs by Permitting the Ownership of Generation by Investor-owned Transmission and Distribution Utilities"

(H.P. 1050) (L.D. 1592)

Sponsored by Representative FAULKINGHAM of Winter Harbor.

Cosponsored by Senator HARRINGTON of York and Representatives: FOSTER of Dexter, MCINTYRE of Lowell.

Committee on **ENERGY, UTILITIES AND TECHNOLOGY** suggested and ordered printed.

REFERRED to the Committee on **ENERGY, UTILITIES AND TECHNOLOGY** and ordered printed.

Sent for concurrence.

Bill "An Act to Delay Implementation of Recent Changes to Maine's Beverage Container Redemption Law" (EMERGENCY)

(H.P. 1022) (L.D. 1564)

Sponsored by Representative SOBOLESKI of Phillips.

Bill "An Act to Clarify the Prohibition on the Sale of Beverages in Plastic Containers"

(H.P. 1040) (L.D. 1582)

Sponsored by Representative CLOUTIER of Lewiston.

Cosponsored by President DAUGHTRY of Cumberland and Representatives: GRAMLICH of Old Orchard Beach, MOONEN of Portland, RIELLY of Westbrook, SCHMERSAL-BURGESS of Mexico, Senators: BICKFORD of Androscoggin, BRENNER of Cumberland, MARTIN of Oxford, PIERCE of Cumberland.

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 Prohibit Fluoridation of the Public Water Supply"

(H.P. 1028) (L.D. 1570)

Sponsored by Representative POIRIER of Skowhegan.

Bill "An Act to Require the Department of Health and Human Services to Review Disruption to or Removal of Health Services"

(H.P. 1036) (L.D. 1578)

Sponsored by Representative DODGE of Belfast.

Cosponsored by Senator GROHOSKI of Hancock and Representatives: DEBRITO of Waterville, EATON of Deer Isle, FRIEDMANN of Bar Harbor, MILLIKEN of Blue Hill, Senators: BRENNER of Cumberland, CURRY of Waldo, TEPLER of Sagadahoc.

Bill "An Act Regarding Home Health Care and Hospice Services Ordered by a Health Care Provider Outside of Maine"

(H.P. 1041) (L.D. 1583)

Sponsored by Representative CLOUTIER of Lewiston.

Cosponsored by Senator ROTUNDO of Androscoggin and Representatives: GATTINE of Westbrook, MATHIESON of Kittery, MCCABE of Lewiston, SARGENT of York, SHAGOURY of Hallowell, WADSWORTH of Hiram, Senators: LAWRENCE of York, LIBBY of Cumberland.

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 Prohibit Pharmacy Benefits Managers from Imposing Certain Fees and Pricing"

(H.P. 1038) (L.D. 1580)

Sponsored by Representative NUTTING of Oakland.

Cosponsored by Representatives: BRIDGEO of Augusta, CLUCHEY of Bowdoinham, COLLAMORE of Pittsfield, DUCHARME of Madison, FOLEY of Wells, HENDERSON of Rumford, MORRIS of Turner, OLSEN of Raymond.

Bill "An Act to Improve Parity in Insurance Coverage for Outpatient Counseling Services in Maine"

(H.P. 1047) (L.D. 1589)

Sponsored by Representative CRAFTS of Newcastle.

Bill "An Act to Reduce the Counselor and Social Worker Shortage by Amending Reciprocity Requirements for Those Professionals from Other Jurisdictions"

(H.P. 1048) (L.D. 1590)

Sponsored by Representative CRAFTS of Newcastle.

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.

Resolve, to Direct the Department of Economic and Community Development to Form a Stakeholder Group to Analyze and Improve Home Repair Funding Programs in the State (EMERGENCY)

(H.P. 1027) (L.D. 1569)

Sponsored by Representative KESSLER of South Portland.

Resolve, to Direct the Maine State Housing Authority to Amend Its Rules Governing the Fuel Assistance Program Regarding Benefit Payments for Wood Fuel

(H.P. 1043) (L.D. 1585)

Sponsored by Representative DRINKWATER of Milford.

Cosponsored by Representative: ROEDER of Bangor.

Bill "An Act to Prohibit the Use of Dynamic Pricing for Certain Consumer Goods"

(H.P. 1055) (L.D. 1597)

Sponsored by Representative MALON of Biddeford.

Cosponsored by Representatives: BUNKER of Farmington, CLUCHEY of Bowdoinham, EATON of Deer Isle, FARRIN of Jefferson, TERRY of Gorham, WEBB of Durham.

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 to Allow the Use of Certain All-terrain Vehicles on Snowmobile Trails"

(H.P. 1023) (L.D. 1565)

Sponsored by Representative HYMES of Waldo.

Cosponsored by Representative: GUERRETTE of Caribou.

Committee on **INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE** suggested and ordered printed.

REFERRED to the Committee on **INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE** and ordered printed.

Sent for concurrence.

Bill "An Act Regarding Prosecution Standards for Nonfatal Strangulation or Suffocation in Domestic Violence Cases"
(H.P. 1030) (L.D. 1572)

Sponsored by Representative STOVER of Boothbay.
Cosponsored by Senator NANGLE of Cumberland and Representatives: GRAMLICH of Old Orchard Beach, MALON of Biddeford, MASTRACCIO of Sanford, MEYER of Eliot, MOONEN of Portland, PLUECKER of Warren, SAYRE of Kennebunk, Senator: ROTUNDO of Androscoggin.

Bill "An Act to Provide Relocation Assistance to Victims of Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault and Sex Trafficking"
(H.P. 1056) (L.D. 1598)

Sponsored by Representative STOVER of Boothbay.
Cosponsored by Representatives: GRAMLICH of Old Orchard Beach, MEYER of Eliot, PLUECKER of Warren, RANA of Bangor, SATO of Gorham, Senator: RENY of Lincoln.

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

REFERRED to the Committee on **JUDICIARY** and ordered printed.
Sent for concurrence.

Bill "An Act to Require Sexual Harassment Prevention Training for Restaurant Employees"
(H.P. 1012) (L.D. 1554)

Sponsored by Representative SATO of Gorham.
Cosponsored by Senator DUSON of Cumberland and Representatives: BECK of South Portland, CLOUTIER of Lewiston, SALISBURY of Westbrook, SAYRE of Kennebunk, STOVER of Boothbay, SUPICA of Bangor, Senators: BENNETT of Oxford, President DAUGHTRY of Cumberland.

Bill "An Act to Establish Greater Alignment of Penalties for Certain Labor Law Violations"
(H.P. 1045) (L.D. 1587)

Sponsored by Representative BECK of South Portland.
Cosponsored by Senator CARNEY of Cumberland and Representatives: ABDI of Lewiston, DHALAC of South Portland, FAIRCLOTH of Bangor, Speaker FECTEAU of Biddeford, MACIAS of Topsham, MALON of Biddeford, ROEDER of Bangor, SATO of Gorham.

Committee on **LABOR** suggested and ordered printed.
REFERRED to the Committee on **LABOR** and ordered printed.
Sent for concurrence.

Resolve, Regarding the Percentage of a Lobster and Crab Fishing Licensee's Lobster Traps That May Be Fished in a Lobster Management Zone Listed on the License as a Secondary Zone
(H.P. 1019) (L.D. 1561)

Sponsored by Representative HEPLER of Woolwich.
Cosponsored by Senator MOORE of Washington and Representatives: EATON of Deer Isle, FAULKINGHAM of Winter Harbor, STOVER of Boothbay, Senator: TEPLER of Sagadahoc.

Bill "An Act to Strengthen Working Waterfronts Against Nuisance Complaints Regarding Aquaculture"
(H.P. 1053) (L.D. 1595)

Sponsored by Representative RIELLY of Westbrook.
Cosponsored by Representatives: ANKELES of Brunswick, HASENFUS of Readfield, LOOKNER of Portland, MILLIKEN of Blue Hill, PLUECKER of Warren, SIMMONS of Waldoboro, TERRY of Gorham.

Bill "An Act to Support Maine's Sea Farmers"
(H.P. 1054) (L.D. 1596)

Sponsored by Representative RIELLY of Westbrook.
Cosponsored by Senator BRENNER of Cumberland and Representatives: ANKELES of Brunswick, BELL of Yarmouth, CRAFTS of Newcastle, PLUECKER of Warren, SIMMONS of Waldoboro, Senators: HICKMAN of Kennebec, TEPLER of Sagadahoc.

Committee on **MARINE RESOURCES** suggested and ordered printed.

REFERRED to the Committee on **MARINE RESOURCES** and ordered printed.
Sent for concurrence.

Resolve, Regarding Increasing the Number of Kennebec County Commissioners
(H.P. 1014) (L.D. 1556)

Sponsored by Representative COLLINS of Sidney.
Bill "An Act to Address Conflicts of Interest with Municipal Contracts"
(H.P. 1018) (L.D. 1560)

Sponsored by Representative HYMES of Waldo.
Bill "An Act to Establish Content Standards for Legislation"
(H.P. 1021) (L.D. 1563)

Sponsored by Representative LIBBY of Auburn.
Bill "An Act to Provide Compensation to Individuals with Lived Experience Serving on Advisory Boards, Commissions, Councils and Similar Groups"
(H.P. 1024) (L.D. 1566)

Sponsored by Representative DEBRITO of Waterville.
Cosponsored by Representatives: DODGE of Belfast, GRAHAM of North Yarmouth, MCCABE of Lewiston, MITCHELL of Cumberland, MURPHY of Scarborough, SARGENT of York.

Bill "An Act to Require Legislative Approval for Certain Emergency Powers of the Governor"
(H.P. 1031) (L.D. 1573)

Sponsored by Representative PAUL of Winterport.
Cosponsored by Senator HARRINGTON of York and Representatives: BISHOP of Bucksport, HYMES of Waldo, MORRIS of Turner, SMITH of Palermo, WHITE of Guilford, WHITE of Ellsworth, Senators: MARTIN of Oxford, STEWART of Aroostook.

Bill "An Act to Allow a Legislator to Choose to Be Paid on an Annual Basis" (EMERGENCY)
(H.P. 1033) (L.D. 1575)

Sponsored by Representative MILLIKEN of Blue Hill.
Cosponsored by Senator MARTIN of Oxford and Representatives: BRIDGEO of Augusta, CLUCHEY of Bowdoinham, GREENWOOD of Wales, SALISBURY of Westbrook.

Resolve, to Establish the Commission to Study and Recommend Solutions for Modernizing the Maine Legislature
(H.P. 1035) (L.D. 1577)

Sponsored by Representative RIELLY of Westbrook.
Cosponsored by Senator STEWART of Aroostook and Representatives: BOYER of Poland, CARLOW of Buxton, EATON of Deer Isle, FAULKINGHAM of Winter Harbor, SUPICA of Bangor, Senators: BENNETT of Oxford, BRENNER of Cumberland, HICKMAN of Kennebec.

Bill "An Act to Require Certain Public Entities to Define Their Use of the Term 'Equity'"

(H.P. 1051) (L.D. 1593)

Sponsored by Representative FAULKINGHAM of Winter Harbor.

Cosponsored by Senator MOORE of Washington and Representatives: ARDELL of Monticello, MINGO of Calais, POIRIER of Skowhegan, SMITH of Palermo, STROUT of Harrington, TUELL of East Machias, WADSWORTH of Hiram.

Bill "An Act to Change the Appropriation for the Governor's Expense Account and Create Transparency in Expenditures Made from That Account"

(H.P. 1052) (L.D. 1594)

Sponsored by Representative TUELL of East Machias.

Cosponsored by Senator: MOORE of Washington.

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 Establish an Employer Tax Credit for Qualifying Child Care Costs"

(H.P. 1013) (L.D. 1555)

Sponsored by Representative HASENFUS of Readfield.

Bill "An Act to Amend the Credit for Educational Opportunity and Student Loan Repayment Tax Credit"

(H.P. 1032) (L.D. 1574)

Sponsored by Representative JACKSON of Oxford.

Cosponsored by Representatives: ARATA of New Gloucester, COOPER of Windham, CRAY of Palmyra, DILL of Old Town, GUERRETTE of Caribou, HALL of Wilton.

Bill "An Act to Establish Municipal Cost Components for Unorganized Territory Services to Be Rendered in Fiscal Year 2025-26" (EMERGENCY)

(H.P. 1042) (L.D. 1584)

Sponsored by Representative CLOUTIER of Lewiston.

Approved for introduction by a majority of the Legislative Council pursuant to Joint Rule 205.

Bill "An Act to Grant a Municipality Authority to Tax Property According to Use"

(H.P. 1049) (L.D. 1591)

Sponsored by Representative ANKELES of Brunswick.

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

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

Sent for concurrence.

RESOLUTION, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine to Require a Supermajority of the Legislature to Approve Raising Taxes

(H.P. 1011) (L.D. 1553)

Sponsored by Representative HENDERSON of Rumford.

Cosponsored by Senator BICKFORD of Androscoggin and Representatives: ARDELL of Monticello, FAULKINGHAM of Winter Harbor, GREENWOOD of Wales, LAVIGNE of Berwick, MCINTYRE of Lowell, MINGO of Calais, QUINT of Hodgdon, RUDNICKI of Fairfield.

Committee on **TAXATION** suggested.

On motion of Representative CLOUTIER of Lewiston, the Bill was **REFERRED** to the Committee on **STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT**, ordered printed and sent for concurrence.

Bill "An Act Regarding the Motor Vehicle Excise Tax Exemption for Certain Veterans"

(H.P. 1039) (L.D. 1581)

Sponsored by Representative NUTTING of Oakland.

Cosponsored by Representative GREENWOOD of Wales, Senator CYRWAY of Kennebec and Representatives: BRIDGEO of Augusta, COLLINS of Sidney, PARRY of Arundel.

Committee on **TAXATION** suggested.

On motion of Representative CLOUTIER of Lewiston, the Bill was **REFERRED** to the Committee on **TRANSPORTATION**, ordered printed and sent for concurrence.

Bill "An Act Regarding Municipal Road Standards"

(H.P. 1020) (L.D. 1562)

Sponsored by Representative MCINTYRE of Lowell.

Cosponsored by Representatives: BABIN of Fort Fairfield, DRINKWATER of Milford, LAJOIE of Lewiston.

Bill "An Act to Allow the Use of a Siren in a Vehicle Used by a Harbor Master or Deputy Harbor Master" (EMERGENCY)

(H.P. 1026) (L.D. 1568)

Sponsored by Representative ANKELES of Brunswick.

Cosponsored by Senator TEPLER of Sagadahoc and Representative: RIELLY of Westbrook.

Approved for introduction by a majority of the Legislative Council pursuant to Joint Rule 205.

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

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

Sent for concurrence.

Bill "An Act to Authorize Medical Cannabis Farmers' Markets"

(H.P. 1017) (L.D. 1559)

Sponsored by Representative CHAPMAN of Auburn.

Cosponsored by Senator BICKFORD of Androscoggin and Representatives: BISHOP of Bucksport, BOYER of Poland, EDER of Waterboro, FREDERICKS of Sanford, LANCE of Paris, SUPICA of Bangor, Senator: HICKMAN of Kennebec.

Bill "An Act to Require Labeling of Radiation Treatment and Ozonation of Adult Use Cannabis and Inspection and Registration of Associated Equipment"

(H.P. 1025) (L.D. 1567)

Sponsored by Representative BOYER of Poland.

Cosponsored by Representatives: CHAPMAN of Auburn, FREDERICKS of Sanford, GEIGER of Rockland, MALON of Biddeford, MONTELL of Gardiner, ROEDER of Bangor, SUPICA of Bangor, WARREN of Scarborough.

Bill "An Act to Extend a One-year Lobbying Prohibition to Partisan and Nonpartisan Staff of the Legislature"

(H.P. 1034) (L.D. 1576)

Sponsored by Representative RIELLY of Westbrook.

Cosponsored by Senator BENNETT of Oxford and Representatives: ANKELES of Brunswick, BOYER of Poland, CARLOW of Buxton, FROST of Belgrade, GRAHAM of North Yarmouth, HYMES of Waldo, SUPICA of Bangor, Senator: HICKMAN of Kennebec.

Committee on **VETERANS AND LEGAL AFFAIRS** suggested and ordered printed.

REFERRED to the Committee on **VETERANS AND LEGAL AFFAIRS** and ordered printed.

Sent for concurrence.

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

ORDERS

On motion of Representative LAJOIE of Lewiston, the following House Order: (H.O. 23)

ORDERED, that Representative Randall C. Hall of Wilton be excused Apr 3 for personal reasons.

AND BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that Representative Benjamin C. Hymes of Waldo be excused Apr 3 for personal reasons.

AND BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that Representative Sheila A. Lyman of Livermore Falls be excused Apr 1 and 3 for health reasons.

AND BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that Representative Joseph F. Underwood of Presque Isle be excused Apr 8 for health reasons.

AND BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that Representative Mark Walker of Naples be excused Mar 25 for health reasons.

READ and PASSED.

SPECIAL SENTIMENT CALENDAR

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

Recognizing:

Diane Steward, of Augusta, on her retirement after many years of public service. Ms. Steward has served in a variety of roles at the Legislature since 1993, after having previously worked in the Maine State Development Office and the Bureau of Motor Vehicles. She served as a Legislative Aide in the Senate Majority Office and was briefly a Special Assistant in the President's Office and in the Senate Majority Office. She continued her service as a Legislative Aide for a number of years and also worked as a Committee Clerk, a Special Assistant and the Senate Board Operator. Ms. Steward served as the Fiscal Administrator of the Department of Audit for a time before she returned to the Legislature, where she worked as a Committee Clerk for various committees from 2013 to 2020 and with the Senate Chamber staff from 2022 to the present. We extend our appreciation to Ms. Steward for her service and offer her our best wishes;

(SLS 358)

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 and Members of the House. I cannot let the opportunity go by without saying a few words about Diane Steward, a wonderful resident of my district and just a delightful human being. She has set the gold standard, I think, for staff service in this institution. I remember coming back to Maine in 1998 as City Manager of Augusta, and being over here; seems pretty continuously for one reason or another ever since; and Diane being a presence, seemingly, throughout that last 26 years or so, for me. So, please know, everyone, that this is a wonderful individual, she's going to be missed by this institution and I'm sure that we all wish her a long, healthy, and happy retirement. Thank you.

The **SPEAKER**: The Chair would also like to extend his congratulations to Ms. Steward. She was the Committee Clerk when I Chaired the Committee on Labor, Commerce, Research

and Economic Development in my second term. I told her last week that I don't think she'll be gone for very long. She has a way of returning back to this institution, and I hope that she does at some point, at least to say hello, and I wish her a happy retirement.

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

Recognizing:

49 Franklin, of Rumford, which has been named Business of the Year by the River Valley Chamber of Commerce. We extend our congratulations and best wishes;

(HLS 178)

Presented by Representative HENDERSON of Rumford.

Cosponsored by Senator MARTIN of Oxford.

On **OBJECTION** of Representative HENDERSON of Rumford, was **REMOVED** from the Special Sentiment Calendar.

READ.

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

Recognizing:

Glenn Martin, of Rumford, an employee of Black Mountain of Maine, who has been named Employee of the Year by the River Valley Chamber of Commerce. We extend our congratulations and best wishes;

(HLS 179)

Presented by Representative HENDERSON of Rumford.

Cosponsored by Senator MARTIN of Oxford.

On **OBJECTION** of Representative HENDERSON of Rumford, was **REMOVED** from the Special Sentiment Calendar.

READ.

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

Recognizing:

Shannon Glover, of Mexico, who has been named Volunteer of the Year by the River Valley Chamber of Commerce. We extend our congratulations and best wishes;

(HLS 180)

Presented by Representative HENDERSON of Rumford.

Cosponsored by Senator MARTIN of Oxford, Representative SCHMERSAL-BURGESS of Mexico.

On **OBJECTION** of Representative HENDERSON of Rumford, was **REMOVED** from the Special Sentiment Calendar.

READ.

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

Recognizing:

the Central High School Drama Club, which won the Class B Maine Principals' Association Drama Festival and State Championship. We extend our congratulations and best wishes;

(HLS 181)

Presented by Representative DRINKWATER of Milford.

Cosponsored by Senator GUERIN of Penobscot.

On **OBJECTION** of Representative FAULKINGHAM of Winter Harbor, was **REMOVED** from the Special Sentiment Calendar.

READ.

On motion of Representative SMITH of Palermo, **TABLED** pending **PASSAGE** and later today assigned.

Recognizing:

Esme Filippo, of Orland, a seventh-grade student at The Bay School, who won the State of Maine Spelling Bee. We extend our congratulations and best wishes;

(HLS 183)

Presented by Representative BISHOP of Bucksport.

Cosponsored by Senator GROHOSKI of Hancock.

On **OBJECTION** of Representative BISHOP of Bucksport, was **REMOVED** from the Special Sentiment Calendar.

READ.

The **SPEAKER**: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Bucksport, Representative Bishop.

Representative **BISHOP**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. District 17 and the Town of Orland are honored to house the State Spelling Bee Champion. Esme Filippo won spelling 'domesticity.' Mr. Speaker, in my life as a police officer, I took part in several large-scale official documents, such as warrants presented to judges, and I've never been so nervous as to present an official written document to a seventh-grade Spelling Bee Champion. I sincerely hope everything is spelled correctly, and I congratulate Esme. Thank you.

The **SPEAKER**: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Blue Hill, Representative Milliken.

Representative **MILLIKEN**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just wanted to rise and send my added heartfelt congratulations to Esme, a brilliant, hardworking and multitalented young woman whom I've had the pleasure of knowing for many years. I was quietly following Esme's journey to the top in the Spelling Bee and was excited when the news broke that she is the Maine State Champ.

Esme's been an insatiable reader from the start. She began reading *Harry Potter* books in kindergarten and since then, she's always had her nose in a book. While most young people can't look up from their phones, Esme's Mom insists that if Esme is looking at her phone, she's usually reading teen romance novels. And she's always been a theater nerd, too. She's been in many productions, such as *Newsies*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Annie*, *Sister Act*, *Matilda*, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, and *Elf: The Musical*. She's currently working on her first community-based performance on the Blue Hill Peninsula, and that will take place after she returns from the National Spelling Bee, hopefully as the Champion. Esme isn't just smart, she's also musically talented. She sings, plays piano and is hoping to learn to play the guitar soon. She co-hosts the show *Daydream Nation* on the Blue Hill Peninsula's famous WERU radio, where she curates some awesome indie-pop playlists.

Esme is one of the kindest, most well-rounded young people I know. She's an awesome friend, an awesome sister and, as you can see, an awesome speller. This girl's going places. Big congratulations to Esme on a job well done. We can't wait to have you back in this Chamber when you're the National Champion. I'm proud of you, your community is proud of you and the State of Maine is proud of you. Go, Esme.

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

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

REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

Report of the Chair-Pursuant to Joint Rule 308.2

Report of the Committee on **EDUCATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS** on Bill "An Act to Fund the Operations of the University of Maine Cooperative Extension Tick Laboratory" (S.P. 429) (L.D. 1012)

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

Came from the Senate with the Report **READ** and **ACCEPTED** and the Bill and accompanying papers were **REFERRED** to the Committee on **VETERANS AND LEGAL AFFAIRS**.

The Report was **READ** and **ACCEPTED** and the Bill and accompanying papers were **REFERRED** to the Committee on **VETERANS AND LEGAL AFFAIRS** in concurrence.

Change of Committee

Report of the Committee on **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES** on Bill "An Act to Provide Funding for Essential Services for Victims of Crimes" (EMERGENCY) (S.P. 470) (L.D. 1139)

Reporting that it be **REFERRED** to the Committee on **JUDICIARY**.

Came from the Senate with the Report **READ** and **ACCEPTED** and the Bill **REFERRED** to the Committee on **JUDICIARY**.

The Report was **READ** and **ACCEPTED** and the Bill was **REFERRED** to the Committee on **JUDICIARY** in concurrence.

Divided Reports

Majority Report of the Committee on **HEALTH COVERAGE, INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES** reporting **Ought to Pass** on Bill "An Act to Clarify the Law Regarding Prior Authorization for Air Ambulances" (EMERGENCY) (S.P. 14) (L.D. 5)

Signed:

Senators:

- BAILEY of York
- BALDACCI of Penobscot
- HAGGAN of Penobscot

Representatives:

- MATHIESON of Kittery
- ARFORD of Brunswick
- BOYER of Cape Elizabeth
- CLUCHEY of Bowdoinham
- FOLEY of Wells
- MASTRACCIO of Sanford
- MORRIS of Turner

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-7)** on same Bill.

Signed:

Representatives:

- CIMINO of Bridgton
- FLYNN of Albion
- OLSEN of Raymond

Came from the Senate with the Majority **OUGHT TO PASS** Report **READ** and **ACCEPTED** and the Bill **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED**.

READ.

Representative MATHIESON of Kittery moved that the House **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought to Pass** Report.

The same Representative **REQUESTED** a roll call on her motion to **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought to Pass** Report.

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

The **SPEAKER**: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Kittery, Representative Mathieson.

Representative **MATHIESON**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Esteemed Colleagues of the House. This bill is a very simple bill. There was an inadvertent omission from public law from our last session, when we passed the bill that established that prior authorizations were not required for nonprofit services for air ambulance services. The nonprofit language was inadvertently left out. This bill; all it does is add that back into our language and applies it retroactively to August ninth of 2024. I ask you to support this Majority Ought to Pass Report. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Representative **MORRIS**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would concur with everything that the Representative from Kittery just said. I agree, all this bill does is it really deals mostly with an insurance contract between LifeFlight and the insurance company. We're just making sure that the language is back in that it has to be a nonprofit for them not to have to receive prior authorization from the insurance company and making it retroactive to last August, just simply for the fact of keeping it in compliance with what we had intended and what I believe has been going on. So, I would encourage this Body to support the pending motion. Thank you.

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

Representative **FAULKINGHAM**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in support of the pending motion. I agree with everything that the Representative from Turner just said. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The **SPEAKER**: A roll call has been ordered. The pending question before the House is Acceptance of the Majority Ought to Pass Report. All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

ROLL CALL NO. 79

YEA - Abdi, Adams, Albert, Ankeles, Arata, Ardell, Arford, Babin, Bagshaw, Beck, Bell, Bishop, Blier, Boyer D, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Campbell, Carlow, Caruso, Chapman, Cimino, Cloutier, Cluchey, Collins, Cooper, Copeland, Crafts, Cray, Crockett, Daigle, DeBrito, Dhalaco, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eaton, Eder, Farrin, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foley, Foster, Fredericks, Fredette, Friedmann, Frost, Gattine, Geiger, Gere, Gifford, Golek, Graham, Gramlich, Greenwood, Griffin, Guerrette, Haggan, Hall, Hasenfus, Henderson, Hepler, Hymes, Jackson, Javner, Julia, Kessler, Kuhn, Lajoie, Lance, Lavigne, Lee, Lemelin, Lookner, Lyman, Macias, Malon, Mason, Mastraccio, Mathieson, Matlack, McCabe, McIntyre, Meyer, Milliken, Mingo, Mitchell, Montell, Moonen, Morris, Murphy, Nutting, O'Halloran, Olsen, Osher, Parry, Paul, Perkins, Pluecker, Poirier, Pomerleau, Pugh, Quint, Rana, Ray, Rielly, Roberts, Roeder, Rollins, Rudnicki, Runte, Sachs, Salisbury, Sargent, Sato, Sayre, Schmursal-Burgess, Shagoury, Simmons, Sinclair, Skold, Smith, Soboleski, Stover, Strout, Supica, Swallow, Terry, Thorne, Tuell, Underwood, Wadsworth, Walker, Warren, Webb, White J, White R, Wood S, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

NAY - NONE.

ABSENT - Archer, Collamore, Faircloth, Lanigan, Wood P, Woodsome.

RESTRICTED - Libby.

Yes, 144; No, 0; Absent, 6; Excused, 0; Restricted, 1.

144 having voted in the affirmative and 0 voted in the negative, with 6 being absent and 1 restricted, and accordingly the Majority **Ought to Pass** Report was **ACCEPTED**.

The Bill was **READ ONCE**.

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

Under further suspension of the rules the Bill was **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED** in concurrence.

Majority Report of the Committee on **HEALTH COVERAGE, INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-8)** on 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)

Signed:

Senators:

BAILEY of York
BALDACCI of Penobscot

Representatives:

GRAMLICH of Old Orchard Beach
ARFORD of Brunswick
BOYER of Cape Elizabeth
CLUCHEY of Bowdoinham
MASTRACCIO of Sanford

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

Signed:

Senator:

HAGGAN of Penobscot

Representatives:

CIMINO of Bridgton
FLYNN of Albion
FOLEY of Wells
MORRIS of Turner
OLSEN of Raymond

Came from the Senate with the Majority **OUGHT TO PASS AS AMENDED** Report **READ** and **ACCEPTED** and the Bill **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED AS AMENDED BY COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" (S-8)**.

READ.

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

The same Representative **REQUESTED** a roll call on her motion to **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended** Report.

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

The **SPEAKER**: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Kittery, Representative Mathieson.

Representative **MATHIESON**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Esteemed Colleagues of the House. This bill came to us from an elderly constituent from our community. They came to us and told us that they were feeling like they were getting nickel-and-dimed by an institution for statement costs from an institution. We learned that they had to opt out of getting

e-statements and instead wanted to get paper statements sent to them. We learned in Committee that it costs the institution 75 cents to get a paper statement sent to this constituent, but they were being charged anywhere from \$1.99 to \$5.00 to get this statement sent to them. We felt in the Committee that it was not appropriate that our elderly citizens in Maine, or those that had inconsistent internet service were charged this fee. So, I ask that you follow my light and vote Ought to Pass as Amended. Thank you so much.

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

Representative **MORRIS**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As you look at the Report, you'll see that myself and others are on the Ought Not to Pass Report. This was voted a few weeks ago. Over the last few weeks, certainly, as I've talked to some of my constituents, the Representative is right; they are getting nickel-and-dimed. I hear constantly about being nickel-and-dimed by the new payroll tax, I hear constantly about them being nickel-and-dimed in their electricity bill to pay for solar subsidies and constantly about being nickel-and-dimed at the grocery stores to pay for a packaging tax and as well as paper bags. So, I do support this because I do think, you know, forcing the banks not to charge \$5.00 is really going to make a difference, so, I would encourage this Body to support this motion. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Bridgton, Representative Cimino.

Representative **CIMINO**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. I rise in opposition to LD 580; or as on today's Calendar, 6-4; "An Act to Protect Maine Consumers by Prohibiting Fees Charged for Receiving Paper Statements from Financial Institutions and Credit Card Issuers."

Some banks and credit unions charge this fee to reduce expenses and reduce paper waste. This fee is disclosed in advance to consumers. Many Maine banks and credit unions do not charge these fees. Some that do also make allowances in certain cases, like for the elderly, who may not be comfortable navigating the World Wide Web. Currently, a consumer not wishing to pay the fee can opt for an electronic statement or cancel and shop for another bank where the terms are more suited to their needs. My main concern with this piece of legislation, however, is that it only applies to Maine banks and credit unions and does not apply to banks outside of Maine. We have no authority over banks operating outside of Maine. As such, this bill puts Maine banks and credit unions at a distinct disadvantage to compete with banks outside of Maine. For these reasons, I opposed LD 580 in Committee and I oppose it here. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Cape Elizabeth, Representative Boyer.

Representative **BOYER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Members of the House, this is a simple change that helps to protect seniors and those in our rural State who do not have reliable internet access. Depository institutions will no longer be able to charge a fee for paper statements. I know all of us in this Chamber are mindful of taxes and fees imposed on our constituents. This bill eliminates one of those. Thank you.

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

Representative **FAULKINGHAM**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in support of the pending motion. I rise to agree with many of the words my colleague from Turner said, and I would also like to add a few of my own.

I don't know if other people would consider my parents elderly, but I don't call them elderly yet; but they are of another generation, a generation ahead of mine, and my parents have never owned a computer, they have never sent or received an email. And I know in the last few years, as more and more things have moved to electronic communication, it has become extremely difficult; for example, my father, to just maintain his living as a lobster fisherman when things have to be sent electronically. And he can't do it the old way, they don't send paper to him anymore to fill out forms. I think this is incredibly unfair, and also, a lot of people of that generation get their checking account statements in the traditional way, where they can look at it and see things like that. So, I know that the banks will in some cases make special provisions, but that's very difficult for them to get that and it makes them go through another hoop. So, you know, maybe another generation down the road is the time for this, when everybody will already be on the electronic sort of system, but there are still way too many people receiving paper notifications and I don't think that we should, you know, allow the banks to penalize them for that.

So, for that reason, I am standing up in favor of the pending motion for our; not our elderly, but our people that are not yet; or are electronically challenged, maybe I shall say. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Representative **OLSEN**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The issue that we had with this bill is that it only addresses local banks, local institutions. It does not address anything, it's a statewide; it's not anything that's out of the State or whatnot, so, it doesn't really solve a big overall problem.

The secondary side of it is by imposing this down to the credit unions and things like that, it takes away a tool that they had, which is to offer a tailored plan to seniors and things like that, in which they would supply those free, but gives them an opportunity to market something a little bit differently and whatnot.

And the third thing is we do have other bills in front of the Committee at this time dealing with that and also dealing with incentives that could be offered for people opting out and things like that. So, for those reasons, it's better to delay until we get those better bills forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Chelsea, Representative Lemelin.

Representative **LEMELIN**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll be brief. I am in favor of the pending motion, mainly because I'm not a hypocrite. When somebody stands up and talks about nickel-and-diming and, like the Representative from Turner said, the five-cent bag fee, people don't mind nickel-and-diming seniors for five-cent bag fee, which can add up to quite a sum, but some people are not okay with nickel-and-diming them through paper statements. They're both wrong. We shouldn't be nickel-and-diming people for any reason, and I just hope that people realize the hypocrisy of their vote. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair will remind the Member to not question the motives of other Members.

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

The SPEAKER: A roll call has been ordered. The pending question before the House is Acceptance of the Majority Ought to Pass as Amended Report. All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

ROLL CALL NO. 80

YEA - Abdi, Albert, Ankeles, Arata, Ardell, Arford, Babin, Beck, Bell, Bishop, Blier, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Campbell, Carlow, Caruso, Cloutier, Cluchey, Collamore, Collins, Cooper, Copeland, Crafts, Crockett, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Eaton, Eder, Farrin, Faulkingham, Foley, Foster, Fredericks, Friedmann, Frost, Gattine, Geiger, Gere, Gifford, Golek, Graham, Gramlich, Greenwood, Griffin, Guerrette, Haggan, Hall, Hasenfus, Henderson, Hepler, Jackson, Javner, Julia, Kessler, Kuhn, Lajoie, Lee, Lemelin, Lookner, Lyman, Macias, Malon, Mason, Mastraccio, Mathieson, Matlack, McCabe, McIntyre, Meyer, Milliken, Mitchell, Montell, Moonen, Morris, Murphy, O'Halloran, Osher, Parry, Pluecker, Poirier, Pomerleau, Pugh, Quint, Rana, Ray, Rielly, Roberts, Roeder, Rollins, Runte, Sachs, Salisbury, Sargent, Sato, Sayre, Shagoury, Simmons, Sinclair, Skold, Stover, Strout, Supica, Terry, Thorne, Tuell, Warren, Webb, White R, Wood S, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

NAY - Adams, Bagshaw, Boyer D, Chapman, Cimino, Cray, Daigle, Ducharme, Flynn, Fredette, Hymes, Lance, Lavigne, Mingo, Nutting, Olsen, Paul, Perkins, Rudnicki, Schmersal-Burgess, Smith, Soboleski, Swallow, Underwood, Wadsworth, Walker, White J.

ABSENT - Archer, Drinkwater, Faircloth, Lanigan, Wood P, Woodsome.

RESTRICTED - Libby.

Yes, 117; No, 27; Absent, 6; Excused, 0; Restricted, 1.

117 having voted in the affirmative and 27 voted in the negative, with 6 being absent and 1 restricted, and accordingly the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended** Report was **ACCEPTED**.

The Bill was **READ ONCE**. **Committee Amendment "A" (S-8)** was **READ** by the Clerk and **ADOPTED**.

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

Under further suspension of the rules the Bill was **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-8)** in concurrence.

ENACTORS

Emergency Measure

An Act to Address the Limited Availability of Counsel in Courts to Represent Indigent Parties in Matters Affecting Their Fundamental Rights

(S.P. 462) (L.D. 1101)
(C. "A" S-11)

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

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Fairfield, Representative Rudnicki.

Representative **RUDNICKI**: Mr. Speaker, we haven't had quorum call yet, and we're voting on an emergency Enactor. Shouldn't we; I'm just questioning, because that's been questioned before.

The SPEAKER: The Chair would inform the Member that we took a series of matters out of order. Quorum call has been moved out of order, so there's not been a quorum call at this point.

This being an emergency measure, a two-thirds vote of all the members elected to the House being necessary, a total was taken. 105 voted in favor of the same and 24 against, and accordingly the Bill was **PASSED TO BE ENACTED**, signed by the Speaker and sent to the Senate.

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

REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

Divided Report

Majority Report of the Committee on **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES** reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on Bill "An Act to Prohibit State Agencies from Promoting the COVID-19 Vaccination to Children"

(H.P. 290) (L.D. 436)

Signed:

Senators:

INGWERSEN of York
NANGLE of Cumberland

Representatives:

MEYER of Eliot
DEBRITO of Waterville
GRAHAM of North Yarmouth
MCCABE of Lewiston
SHAGOURY of Hallowell
ZAGER of Portland

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought to Pass** on same Bill.

Signed:

Senator:

MOORE of Washington

Representatives:

DAIGLE of Fort Kent
GRIFFIN of Levant
JAVNER of Chester
LEMELIN of Chelsea

READ.

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

Representative JAVNER of Chester **REQUESTED** a roll call on the motion to **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report.

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

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

Representative **EDER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to speak in opposition to the pending motion.

The pandemic was declared over in 2023, and COVID has attenuated to the point where recent variants typically cause only mild cold or flu-type symptoms. The risk of severe illness in children was always extremely low, with a death rate of near statistical zero, even during the height of the pandemic, and it's always posed less danger to children compared to all other respiratory diseases. You'll recall that the rationale for mass vaccination of children was to prevent transmission to older relatives. However, it's now been well established that the COVID-19 vaccines never did prevent transmission. By this fact alone, continuing to recommend this vaccine, as our Maine CDC does, for children as young as six months; who have never faced

any serious illness; lacks any discernible ethical scientific foundation at this point.

You may recall that Operation Warp Speed marked a stark departure from traditional development of vaccines. The timeline; which typically would span from 10 to 15 years; took place in only months. And as a result, we resort now to post-marketing surveillance systems, like VAERS, the Vaccine Accident and Injury Report or V-safe, to identify long-term risk, even though the CDC acknowledges that only a small percentage of vaccine-related injuries are ever reported to VAERS. Analysis of the VAERS database revealed troubling data regarding severe adverse events among children several years ago, including death, anaphylaxis and myocarditis or pericarditis, particularly among adolescent males. These risks collected in the VAERS system are now acknowledged in the product information of Pfizer's COVID vaccine.

Given the data, the risk-to-benefit analysis for children, especially infants as young as six months; who are recommended to have three shots at once; seems completely upside down. VAERS has reported hundreds of thousands of injuries. In fact, 38,000 deaths have been reported to VAERS. Now, remember, we're using VAERS as post-marketing surveillance for the work that was not done in the very truncated vaccine approval timeline. So, that is the system that the CDC uses. Yet despite all these deaths, 38,000 deaths and over a million reported adverse events in VAERS, and have in mind, again, that this is a very difficult form to fill out, and the CDC has always acknowledged that reports in that system are low. A recent study from Yale further highlighted that immune system differences continued with the presence of increasing spike protein in the injected individuals two years after vaccination. That spike protein that is causing their immune systems to eventually attack itself and is causing autoimmune difficulties in people. By these aforementioned metrics, it's neither safe or effective, especially for children. And not surprisingly, only 21% of the population has received their updated COVID-19 vaccine. People cited the well-known risks; I'm sure all of us know somebody who feels as though they've been injured by the vaccine; and the lack of need due to the attenuated virus.

Ultimately, the truth can't be censored. American adults are abstaining. But children, babies as young as six months old, rely on us and their parents rely on us for informed decisions based on the information that they get from us. Despite this, Maine CDC has contracted to promote confidence in the vaccine and promote it to parents for children and the contract itself, into 2027; and the contract itself is not an ethically sound reasoning for continuing to promote this vaccine to kids against the glaring evidence. No amount of gaslighting or claims of misinformation are moving the needle in the right direction of restoring trust in our public health agencies. We need a different approach. The absence of any emergency, the attenuated virus, the lack of transparency and informed consent when our own CDC continues to use phrases on the website like 'stop the spread;' which it does not; and 'safe and effective;' which it is not; or the fact that it doesn't prevent transmission undermines any basis for continued recommendations that children be vaccinated for COVID-19.

Many parents don't realize that they can't sue vaccine manufacturers, as those manufacturers are protected under the PREP Act. The childhood vaccines themselves remain under emergency use authorization. What emergency? Absent any emergency, implying that the manufacturers seek to shield themselves from risk. Unfortunately, we all know that deceptive marketing practices have been a hallmark of the pharmaceutical industry. The ongoing opioid crisis in our State; which has

devastated communities and for which we have only received a meager payout last year; was precipitated by pharma knowingly pushing the over-prescription of highly addictive OxyContin. Lawmakers back then shared some responsibility as agency watchdogs; we must not repeat their mistake. Six states have presently joined a lawsuit against Pfizer for claiming the vaccine stops transmission, when we know it does not, and withholding crucial safety data about pregnant women who suffered miscarriages after the shot. For many parents like myself, it's foreboding to see this vaccine recommended on top of the childhood vaccine schedule. Its presence there continues to erode the public's battered trust in our public health authorities, and it sows distrust between parents and providers at a time when our State is fast becoming a health care desert.

My sincere hope is that you will find it in your heart to follow my light and vote to stop us from promoting this vaccine to children. It seems that the plan; again, absent any emergency; is just to continue *ad infinitum* putting this shot into our infants and young children despite the known risk profile. We shouldn't be carrying water for pharma, we should be protecting our children. Please follow my light.

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

Representative **MEYER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Women and Men of the House. This bill would prohibit State agencies from promoting the COVID-19 vaccine to anyone under 18, including through public websites or educational materials. In effect, it would censor accurate science-based information and make it harder for Maine families to find trustworthy answers to their questions about COVID-19 vaccines. Empowering Maine families to make informed decisions about their health requires access to information that they can use. If we don't respond to people's questions with good, accessible information, we create voids that get filled with confusion, speculation and outright misinformation. Public agencies have a responsibility to provide the public with reliable, relevant resources, not to stay silent when people are looking for guidance around health, especially the health of Maine kids. Thank you.

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

Representative **QUINT**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This bill hits a little hard for me, because I put in a bill to prevent this vaccine from becoming mandated in our State when I was first elected, and you were Speaker at that time, and I was told it would never be mandated. Never be mandated. We don't need this bill; it will never be mandated. The bill was killed. Then, last session, I put in the bill questioning the safety of this vaccine, and it was just to do a moratorium that it not be mandated until safety tests were proven. Pfizer, technically, has admitted to lying. We can see in their paperwork that it did cause miscarriages, and that was one of the issues that I had questioned and why I wanted the moratorium to be had for five years, not forever.

So, now, our State agencies are promoting something where Pfizer itself has said it's not really safe, nor is it effective. And so, in the environment that we're in with our State right now, we're promoting; and this is the first I heard, like, on the different websites; how much money is our State spending to promote this vaccine to be given to children? Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Palermo, Representative Smith.

Representative **SMITH**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Members of the House, to promote the COVID vaccine to children is criminal. We all know people who have gotten the COVID vaccine, and we've all seen them get COVID over and

over and over again. And to put this as something that is even useful to our children just cannot be continued; it can't be continued with our tax dollars. We have seen also the rise of turbo cancers, of 13-year-olds with cancers that are consuming their bodies, colon cancers; just so many things including myocarditis, the things that we saw when children were actively; more actively; getting this vaccine, that we can't in good conscience continue to promote it. If a parent chooses that for their child, the parent can make that choice, but for us to go around saying that it is safe and, laughably, effective, cannot continue and I ask us to vote down the Ought Not to Pass. Thank you.

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

Representative **ZAGER**: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. I rise to support the pending motion to support the Majority Report of Ought Not to Pass on LD 436.

I will just remind the Chamber that this is not about a mandate; this is about whether the State should promote COVID vaccination, so that patients, and families of the patients in the case of children and adolescents, can decide for themselves. This isn't a question of whether anybody has ever suffered after having a vaccine. It's also not a question of whether the suffering of people that we know that are in our social orbits is different or more valid or more decision-worthy than other people's suffering. And my heart goes out to, and I have committed my professional life to reducing any form of, suffering from human disease. But regarding prevention, there's an inherent bias; a recall bias, if you will. We know if we experience something bad, we know if we experience something good; we don't know if something good or bad was prevented from happening to us in most cases, because it didn't happen, and so, how do we account for that? How do we decide the relative merits of something, because the people who benefitted from it are ignorant of it, at least on an individual basis?

The way that we can account for that when making decisions such as should this medicine or should this vaccine or should this intervention of any sort be implemented, does it pass muster in a scientific sense, is there a discernible scientific foundation; which was a question brought up in the debate so far; we have to study it. And the study isn't, 'hello, Mr./Madam Representative, do you know anybody who's suffered from this?' That's not how; I mean, a few centuries ago, that was the state of the art. We didn't have the scientific method, we didn't have the process by which we notice something, whether it be in VAERS; the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System; whether it be just notice it in the practice of health care, whether we notice it in our communities, you go from that noticing something, and then you ask a question and then you test the question. You subject it to a test and then you assess, you know, you analyze the findings. Then, after you come up with a conclusion or a finding, then you publish it, you share it with others, so that they can say, 'wait a second, I don't know if I believe you yet, let me follow your methodology and see if I come up with the same results.' And thereby, more and more populations; maybe one in Maine, maybe one in another country, maybe one in five different states, maybe one among people who have had cancer, maybe a population of people who are between certain ages; the consensus of having all of this information, different populations and checking and rechecking the same question, yields general consensus. That doesn't mean that the answers 100% of the time are going to be exactly the same thing, it just means that there's a general consensus.

And the general consensus among, you know, when people go through that process, the scientific method process of testing and retesting and getting peer reviewed on it, is pretty supportive; very supportive; of the vaccination. In 2023, it was pointed out in testimony from the Maine Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, 2023, a large study showed that the vaccine reduces a child's risk of hospitalization by 57%. This bill would say we don't think parents ought to know that. We don't think that the State should have a role in making sure parents know that the risks of their kid being hospitalized from COVID could be reduced by 57%. And the prevalence of the condition is relevant. We are not in a pandemic presently, but there are things like long COVID that can and often; too often, unfortunately; do follow from even mild illness. So, saying that the risk of hospitalization or death of a child is low in an absolute sense doesn't mean that there's not implications, health implications, long-term from it. And there's a graph in the testimony that folks can view online, if they'd like.

So, with regard to long COVID, there was another large study; and again, it's not just who we know in our own orbits, our social orbits, but it's, you know, they had over a million children in this study; and the question that they were testing there is, what is the implications of the vaccine for long COVID? Does it help? Does it hurt? Does it do nothing? Turns out that the vaccine cuts the risk of long COVID in half among children. Very pertinent to LD 436. And as I've said before, the scientific method calls for review and retesting. That's not to say that the findings will always be the same, because there could be new things, there could be a new virus that evolves, there could be other things in our society that are pertinent. So, the scientists, the doctors and other folks; public health officials who are interested in applying the scientific method to answer these very difficult questions about things that affect folks' lives, whether they know it or not, whether they were prevented from having something and are unknowledgeable of that or not; that is the process by which those professionals will continue to evaluate it. And as long as the very strong consensus among the scientific community that undergoes that very rigorous process is that this is beneficial, I think that it's very pertinent, very important, for the State to be pointing out things that can help not only individuals; not only families, not only folks that they go to school with and so forth; but the whole community. And for that, I ask folks to support the pending motion of Ought Not to Pass on LD 436.

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

Representative **BOYER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I guess I just want to raise to the Body that, you know, there's been cases in Maine and other states where children were vaccinated with the COVID-19 vaccine without their parents' consent. It was litigated, and the courts determined that the states and the federal government has immunity in this regard, because of the PREP Act. And that's really hard to understand and to process that the State can decide to inject your kid with whatever they want as long as there's consensus about it, and parental rights don't come into play, there's no repercussions, there's no restitution. Do we own our own bodies? Do we have parental rights in this State or this country?

And it's just, I appreciate the Good Representative from Portland, he's; I'm not a doctor, he is, and you can tell he's very passionate about it, but I'm not so trusting of Big Pharma. And I mean, this is the same organization that started and proliferated the opioid crisis in our country that's killed 10s of thousands; I don't know; millions of people in our country with getting them addicted to opioids, and we're just supposed to

trust them. So, we have a settlement money coming because of it, so; we're all fallible, you know, we're not perfect, but it feels like we're being told that if you don't trust Big Pharma, you're a bad parent, you're a bad neighbor, you're a bad relative. It's all we were told during the pandemic. Our former President said the unvaccinated are going to welcome into a winter of death or something like that. I mean, the powers that be told us, 'if you take the vaccine, you won't get sick.' Well, that didn't happen, so, they said, 'well, if you take the vaccine, you won't spread it.' Well, that didn't happen. The goal posts were moved month after month, year after year during the pandemic, and now we're in 2025. How much money are we spending on this? I, for one, would be happy to take this money and put it towards our lawyers that need to represent poor people. I'm for that. There's a start.

And I feel like there's some gaslighting, maybe not necessarily in this Chamber, but kind of writ large over the last couple years. If someone Googles something and does their own research, then, you know, they're not a scientist, they don't understand the scientific method, they don't know how to read data, they don't know how to read percentages or statistics. Yet the same powers that be that say that, elevate this guy Bill Gates; who, as far as I know, he's not a doctor. He made an operating system, but I don't know why, you know, he's the expert that we're supposed to listen to when it comes to public health, infectious disease and epidemics. But somebody who sees their kid radically change after they get the jab, their opinion doesn't count? Because their cousin, their mother or their friend, something happened to them after they got the COVID-19 vaccine and their life has permanently changed because of it; you know, we can't sue the vaccine manufacturers, they have liability. That's crazy. What other product do we mandate and then shield the makers of that product from any kind of liability or lawsuits? It doesn't make any sense, Mr. Speaker.

So, I'm sure we'll have some other COVID-19 bills, and I guess I would challenge folks that are ready to hit the green light, I wonder if they've got their booster. According to the CDC, if you're, you know, between 12 and 64, you're up to date if you had one dose of your 2024/2025 COVID-19 shot. Is everybody up to date here that's ready to hit the green button? I would challenge my colleagues to put their money where their mouth is, so to speak, and make sure that they protect themselves and our community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Paris, Representative Lance.

Representative **LANCE**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm the new guy here; one of them, I guess; and somehow, I managed to avoid the vaccination through my school district and through my fire department. I saw kids get vaccinated, I wore a mask for two years, I saw those kids get sick, I saw them get other kids sick and I couldn't understand what was going on. I pushed my desks apart, six feet here, six feet there, and I just thought it was a lot of wasted effort, and I saw kids continue to get sick and vaccinated, anyway. So, I just thought I would add that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Representative **EDER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What I'd like to point out is that this bill in no way attempts to hide any information from parents; it's the fact that the way that we are lending our hand as a State to carrying water for pharma and promoting this vaccine only in glowing terms, using erroneous language; again, like 'stop the spread,' 'safe and effective,' we all know it's just not safe and it's not effective. I can read for you

here all of the injuries; 5,175 miscarriages in VAERS; 22,247 heart attacks, 28,908 cases of myocarditis, pericarditis; 41,027 other life-threatening ailments, severe allergic reactions, 47,382; shingles, 16,367. This surveillance system, this post-marketing surveillance system, Mr. Speaker, is what we're supposed to be using to indicate a red flag on the vaccine. Clearly, many red flags have gone up. I mentioned to you one earlier that is now acknowledged on the vaccine, pericarditis and myocarditis, especially for adolescent young men, that is now acknowledged in the safety data sheet. But then there's all these other obvious signals using the tool, the post-marketing surveillance tool that we are supposed to be going by, because we didn't do this in a 15-year study, where essentially, studying it out in the open, in the wild, on ourselves and especially on our children. And I don't want to keep any information from parents; I want them to know all the information. I don't want them to just know the well-honed marketing terms of 'stop the spread' and 'safe and effective,' which I don't even know that pharma itself claims anymore. What they've basically come to say; and this is when they're talking really to elderly adults, many of whom who won't get the vaccine anymore; very few people, very few adults are getting the vaccine anymore due to the attenuated virus and the known risk. But the point being that we should not be promoting this vaccine to children, knowing the high-risk profile --

Representative **SALISBURY**: Point of Order.

The SPEAKER: The Member will defer. The Chair recognizes the Representative from Westbrook, Representative Salisbury, and inquires to her Point of Order.

Representative **SALISBURY**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm sorry, but I just have to finally speak up. If he can direct his comments directly to you and not to this side?

On **POINT OF ORDER**, Representative SALISBURY of Westbrook asked the Chair to remind Representative EDER of Waterboro to address the Speaker and not turn to the rest of the House.

The Chair reminded Representative EDER of Waterboro to address their comments toward the Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Yes. The Chair will remind the Member to direct his comments to the Chair. Thank you.

The Chair reminded Representative EDER of Waterboro to address their comments toward the Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Member may proceed.

Representative **EDER**: I'm not easy to look at, so, I'll subject you to it.

Yeah, so, again, the point isn't to hide any information from parents, they can get that from their doctor. The point is that we are putting our hand, Mr. Speaker, to promoting this vaccine and not giving true, informed consent when we only give well-honed marketing terms like 'safe and effective' and 'stop the spread', and I feel many people here know that this is a dangerous vaccine. I think it will be taken off the market, Mr. Speaker. And when that does happen, and when the injuries are atoned for and when this comes to full knowledge; like I said, six states are already in litigation against the maker; I would like to, with a good conscience, be able to say that we accepted the obvious red flags, we didn't wait or point our finger at some higher health authority and say, 'well, we just did what they told us.' Because we know better. I'd like us to protect Maine kids and do what's obvious and stop promoting this vaccine to children as young as six months old; infants; three doses up front, when we know how dangerous it is. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Representative **FAULKINGHAM**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in opposition to the pending motion.

Mr. Speaker, when we seek health care advice, who do we go to? Our doctors. When parents like myself seek health care advice for our children, who do we trust? We trust their pediatricians. Are we talking about our doctors? Are we talking about our pediatricians? No, Mr. Speaker, we're talking about State agencies. State agencies that don't need to be involved in this, especially something that I would consider as a highly controversial vaccine.

The fiscal impact on this says zero; I beg to differ. I beg to differ, Mr. Speaker. I've got an audit on my desk this thick full of no-bid contracts, so, I beg to differ that this has a fiscal impact of zero in promoting the vaccine.

The scientific method was mentioned. I agree with the scientific method, everybody on this side of the aisle agrees with it, I wish we would use it more often and more accurately. The problem is that we do not trust the same corporations that profit off of these vaccines to carry out those tests. That is the problem. And I have a question; and first, I'm going to answer it with a statement. The statistical mortality rate of children under the age of 18 from the COVID-19 virus is zero. The statistical mortality rate of healthy children under 18. I pose a question to the Chair. If I am wrong, stand up and correct that with the factual information. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Representative from Winter Harbor, Representative Faulkingham, has posed a question through the Chair to any Member who wishes to answer. The Chair recognizes the Representative from Fort Kent, Representative Daigle.

Representative **DAIGLE**: Good afternoon, Mr. Chair. In 1978, I was in dental school, and we took a course. The name of the course was 'How to Lie with Statistics.' Kind of an interesting course, and it suits me well, because I enjoy those things. But the premise of the course was that you have to be careful what you do with your stats. If we're looking for data to go for the vaccine, I can go find it. If I'm going to find data against it, I'm going to find it again; it all depends what I'm looking for. Many times, our bias directs our studies, as it should. But if I have an open mind, I'm willing to go on both sides.

So, the consensus on the vaccine is there is no consensus. You've got everything you could ever want on both sides. The data that says there's statistically zero chance of death is accurate, but there are a few there. Now, as a dentist, I spent my whole time through COVID treating patients without getting the virus. I stayed COVID-free. In this situation, I believe the best source for information is your doctor, as has been said. Take that conversation with them. If I want to go look at all the different government and world agencies that are for or against, I'm going to end up being very confused. So, I believe it's an individual thing, and as a State, do we legislate a direction that could put people at risk? If we do that, we do that at our own peril. So, I would caution how we vote on this issue. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Bridgton, Representative Cimino.

Representative **CIMINO**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The facts don't lie, and does anybody have an idea of how much total vaccine injury awards have gone out in the compensation program? \$5,256,660,556 have been awarded for people who have been hurt by vaccines. So, I'm just throwing that out there, because that's something for people that deny that there is no injury to this; there definitely is injury and there's definitely been compensation awarded. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Chelsea, Representative Lemelin.

Representative **LEMELIN**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll be brief. I just want to; being on the Health and Human Services Committee; I just want to be crystal clear on what this bill is all about because I think there's some confusion.

Most of the argument is, will parents still be able to get the disinformation online if they want it? The answer is yes. So, the Representative from Eliot, she's all concerned about people being able to get the information. Regardless of whether this bill passes or doesn't pass, that information is 100%; you can go online and you can get that information from the CDC. You can search all you want. So, this bill doesn't have anything to do with whether or not parents can get whatever information they want.

Two, parents can have their children vaxxed all they want. This bill does not prevent anyone from getting the COVID vaccine for their children or for doctors to give it out. It doesn't prevent it in any way, shape or form. But that's the argument that's been going on; they're worried about children not being vaxxed. Why? This bill has nothing to do with that. They're worried about information. This bill has nothing to do with that. This bill is about telling the government that they should not spend money promoting something, and that's it.

So, all this bill does is saves money; which in the Health and Human Services, everybody is coming to us begging for money. We have a shortfall of \$120,000,000. Well, here's a chance. Let's stop spending money promoting a questionable vaccine. We're not talking about polio, we're talking about COVID-19, which is gone. Why are we promoting something that's gone and spending taxpayer money on it? That's all it does. It doesn't harm any of the people that want their children vaxxed, does not harm this information that you want. It doesn't affect anybody across the aisle. Nobody. It just saves the State taxpayers money by not promoting a hoax. That's the way we feel. If you don't feel that way, go get it done. But this is about saving money, that's all, and about stopping a promotion, that's all. Thank you.

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

ROLL CALL NO. 81

YEA - Abdi, Ankeles, Arata, Arford, Beck, Bell, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Carlow, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, Cray, Crockett, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Eaton, Farrin, Friedmann, Frost, Gattine, Geiger, Gere, Golek, 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, Ardell, Babin, Bagshaw, Bishop, Blier, Boyer D, Campbell, Caruso, Chapman, Cimino, Collamore, Collins, Cooper, Daigle, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eder, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foley, Foster, Fredericks, Fredette, Gifford, Greenwood, Griffin, Guerrette, Haggan, Hall, Henderson, Hymes, Jackson, Javner, Lance, Lavigne, Lemelin, Lyman, Mason, McIntyre, Mingo, Morris, Nutting, Olsen, Parry, Paul, Perkins, Poirier, Pomerleau, Quint, Rudnicki, Schmersal-Burgess, Simmons, Smith, Soboleski, Strout,

Swallow, Thorne, Tuell, Underwood, Wadsworth, Walker, White J, White R, Wood S.

ABSENT - Archer, Faircloth, Lanigan, Wood P, Woodsome.

RESTRICTED - Libby.

Yes, 79; No, 66; Absent, 5; Excused, 0; Restricted, 1.

79 having voted in the affirmative and 66 voted in the negative, with 5 being absent and 1 restricted, and accordingly the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report was **ACCEPTED** and sent for 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:

Bill "An Act to Ensure Uniformity in the Regulation of Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances in Pesticides" (H.P. 1015) (L.D. 1557)

Which was **TABLED** by Representative ARATA of New Gloucester pending **REFERENCE**.

Subsequently, the Bill was **REFERRED** to the Committee on **ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES**, ordered printed and sent for concurrence.

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

Expression of Legislative Sentiment Recognizing the Central High School Drama Club

(HLS 181)

Which was **TABLED** by Representative SMITH of Palermo pending **PASSAGE**.

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

Representative **SOBOLESKI**: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, ladies and gentlemen. Unfortunately, the kids couldn't wait, they were getting hungry, so, they took off and they left. But what I would like to say is that the Maine Principal's Association and the Maine Drama Council put on the drama festival every year. This year, they had 42 Class A, 46 Class B; they get together in regions, nine different regions; they have nine 40-minute one-act plays in each one of them. I'm a judge most years and let me tell you, watching nine of them is a real chore sometimes. Some of them can be a little rough, that's for sure. But they pick a Class A and a Class B winner, and then they have the best of the best compete. The winners of those of the states go on to the New Englands, and Central High School was the winner of the Class B this year and congratulations to them, it's a great honor, and I really wish they could've stayed for this, but kids got to eat.

The SPEAKER: I can imagine it being pretty dramatic for the drama club to not have lunch.

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

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

ENACTORS

Emergency Measure

An Act to Update References to the United States Internal Revenue Code of 1986 Contained in the Maine Revised Statutes

(H.P. 12) (L.D. 48)
(C. "A" H-36)

Was reported by the Committee on **Engrossed Bills** as truly and strictly engrossed. This being an emergency measure, a two-thirds vote of all the members elected to the House being necessary, a total was taken. 119 voted in favor of the same and 0 against, and accordingly the Bill was **PASSED TO BE ENACTED**, signed by the Speaker and sent to the Senate.

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

Representative **UNDERWOOD**: I was just going to make a comment to what you just mentioned; the comment basically is, that was very punny, Mr. Speaker.

Emergency Measure

An Act to Amend the Hunting Laws Related to the Training of Dogs and Open Training Seasons

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

Was reported by the Committee on **Engrossed Bills** as truly and strictly engrossed. This being an emergency measure, a two-thirds vote of all the members elected to the House being necessary, a total was taken. 113 voted in favor of the same and 0 against, and accordingly the Bill was **PASSED TO BE ENACTED**, signed by the Speaker and sent to the Senate.

Emergency Measure

An Act Regarding the Emptying of Elver Fyke Nets

(H.P. 523) (L.D. 816)

Was reported by the Committee on **Engrossed Bills** as truly and strictly engrossed. This being an emergency measure, a two-thirds vote of all the members elected to the House being necessary, a total was taken. 115 voted in favor of the same and 0 against, and accordingly the Bill was **PASSED TO BE ENACTED**, signed by the Speaker and sent to the Senate.

Acts

An Act to Amend the Laws Governing the Commercial Large Game Shooting Area License Transfer Process

(H.P. 4) (L.D. 40)

An Act to Designate the Seppala Siberian Sleddog as the Maine State Dog

(H.P. 44) (L.D. 80)

An Act to Establish the Respite for ME Program

(H.P. 448) (L.D. 709)

An Act Regarding Charges to Uninsured Patients for COVID-19 Vaccines

(H.P. 582) (L.D. 917)

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

Resolves

Resolve, to Rename a Bridge in the Town of Waterboro the Waterboro Veterans Memorial Bridge

(H.P. 385) (L.D. 617)

Resolve, to Honor Scarborough Veterans by Renaming the Pine Point Crossing Bridge the Scarborough Veterans Memorial Bridge

(H.P. 548) (L.D. 862)

Were reported by the Committee on **Engrossed Bills** as truly and strictly engrossed, **FINALLY PASSED**, signed by the Speaker and sent to the Senate.

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

SENATE PAPERS

The following Joint Order: (S.P. 637)

ORDERED, the House concurring, that when the Senate and House adjourn, they do so until Tuesday, April 15, 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.

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

Bill "An Act to Establish the Maine Green Schools Network"

(S.P. 627) (L.D. 1543)

Came from the Senate, **REFERRED** to the Committee on **EDUCATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS** and ordered printed.

REFERRED to the Committee on **EDUCATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS** in concurrence.

Resolve, to Direct the Department of Health and Human Services, Office of MaineCare Services to Create the Complex Care Assistant Training Program (EMERGENCY)

(S.P. 624) (L.D. 1540)

Resolve, Directing the Department of Health and Human Services to Amend Its Rules to Protect Water Quality by Reducing Nutrient Pollution from Septic Systems

(S.P. 634) (L.D. 1550)

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

REFERRED to the Committee on **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES** in concurrence.

Bill "An Act to Prevent the Introduction or Transfer of Invasive Fish Species in Inland Waters of the State"

(S.P. 632) (L.D. 1548)

Came from the Senate, **REFERRED** to the Committee on **INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE** and ordered printed.

REFERRED to the Committee on **INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE** in concurrence.

Bill "An Act to Support Families by Improving the Court Process for Child Protection Cases"

(S.P. 628) (L.D. 1544)

Bill "An Act to Clarify the Maximum Value That a Small Estate May Be Under the Maine Uniform Probate Code to Permit Collection of Personal Property by Affidavit"

(S.P. 629) (L.D. 1545)

Bill "An Act to Prohibit Landlords from Setting Rents Through the Use of Artificial Intelligence"

(S.P. 636) (L.D. 1552)

Came from the Senate, **REFERRED** to the Committee on **JUDICIARY** and ordered printed.

REFERRED to the Committee on **JUDICIARY** in concurrence.

Bill "An Act to Amend the Membership of the Washington County Budget Advisory Committee"

(S.P. 626) (L.D. 1542)

Bill "An Act to Require Recommendations from Study Commissions to Be Printed as Legislative Documents"

(S.P. 630) (L.D. 1546)

Came from the Senate, **REFERRED** to the Committee on **STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT** and ordered printed.

REFERRED to the Committee on **STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT** in concurrence.

Bill "An Act to Provide Property Tax Relief for Senior Residents"

(S.P. 625) (L.D. 1541)

Bill "An Act to Use a Portion of the Sales Tax on Snowmobiles to Fund Maine's Snowmobile Trail Programs"

(S.P. 631) (L.D. 1547)

Came from the Senate, **REFERRED** to the Committee on **TAXATION** and ordered printed.

REFERRED to the Committee on **TAXATION** in concurrence.

RESOLUTION, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine Regarding the Use and Oversight of Transportation-related Revenues

(S.P. 633) (L.D. 1549)

Came from the Senate, **REFERRED** to the Committee on **TRANSPORTATION** and ordered printed.

REFERRED to the Committee on **TRANSPORTATION** in concurrence.

Bill "An Act to Support Maine Eating and Drinking Establishments by Allowing Vendors to Operate on the Premises of an Establishment with a Liquor License"

(S.P. 635) (L.D. 1551)

Came from the Senate, **REFERRED** to the Committee on **VETERANS AND LEGAL AFFAIRS** and ordered printed.

REFERRED to the Committee on **VETERANS AND LEGAL AFFAIRS** in concurrence.

Bill "An Act to Protect Groundwater and Surface Waters from Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances from Landfill Leachate"

(S.P. 641) (L.D. 1604)

Came from the Senate, **REFERRED** to the Committee on **ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES** and ordered printed.

REFERRED to the Committee on **ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES** in concurrence.

Bill "An Act to Remove the Exemption from Sales and Use Tax for Automobiles Purchased for Use as Rentals"

(S.P. 639) (L.D. 1602)

Bill "An Act to Eliminate the Property Tax on Business Equipment With a Value of No More Than \$50,000"

(S.P. 640) (L.D. 1603)

Came from the Senate, **REFERRED** to the Committee on **TAXATION** and ordered printed.

REFERRED to the Committee on **TAXATION** in concurrence.

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

COMMUNICATIONS

The Following Communication: (H.C. 129)

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

April 7, 2025

Honorable Robert B. Hunt

Clerk of the House

2 State House Station

Augusta, ME 04333

Dear Clerk Hunt,

Pursuant to my authority under Resolves Chapter 126, I am pleased to appoint Elizabeth Bischof of Gorham to the *Maine Semiquincentennial Commission*, effective immediately.

Ms. Bischof will serve on this commission as a member representing a statewide humanities organization that uses humanities as a tool for positive change in the State's communities.

If you have any questions regarding this appointment, 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. 130)

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

April 10, 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 following Joint Standing Committees have voted unanimously to report the following bills out "Ought Not to Pass:"

Taxation

L.D. 559 An Act to Provide Property Tax Stabilization for Older Maine Residents

L.D. 652 An Act to Provide Qualifying Downtown Businesses and Developments with Assistance Paying Flood Insurance Premiums

Transportation

L.D. 348 Resolve, to Study the Effect of High-intensity Headlights on Drivers

Sincerely,

S/Robert B. Hunt

Clerk of the House

READ and with accompanying papers ORDERED PLACED ON FILE.

The Following Communication: (H.C. 131)

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

April 10, 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 Taxation has approved the request by the sponsor, Representative Cloutier of Lewiston, to report the following "Leave to Withdraw:"

L.D. 106 An Act Regarding the Taxation of Paid Family and Medical Leave Benefits

Sincerely,

S/Robert B. Hunt

Clerk of the House

READ and with accompanying papers ORDERED PLACED ON FILE.

The Following Communication: (S.C. 248)

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

April 8, 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 Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry:

- Donald A. Tardie of Ashland for appointment, to the Maine Land Use Planning Commission,
- Jenny Lea Ward of Harfords Point for appointment, to the Maine Land Use Planning Commission.

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

- Hailey Fardon of Standish for appointment, to the Maine Maritime Academy, Board of Trustees.

Upon the recommendation of the Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology:

- Philip Bartlett II, Esq. of Portland for reappointment, to the Public Utilities Commission.

Upon the recommendation of the Committee on Marine Resources:

- Carl Wilson of Alna for appointment, as the Commissioner of the Department of Marine Resources.

Upon the recommendation of the Committee on Transportation:

- Andre J. Briere of New Hampshire for appointment, as the Executive Director of the Maine Turnpike Authority.

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.**

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Wells, Representative Foley.

Representative **FOLEY**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Permission to speak on the Record?

The SPEAKER: The Representative from Wells, Representative Foley, has requested unanimous consent to address the House on the record. Hearing no objection, it is so ordered. The Member may proceed.

Representative **FOLEY**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On April 10, 1963, the USS *Thresher*, a Kittery-built shipyard submarine, was lost at sea. One hundred and twenty-nine lives were lost that day; many of those were fathers of my friends. I grew up in Kittery. I was 11 years old when that occurred; now you know my age; but I was fortunate that day. My father, who was on the submarine when it left Kittery, got off the day before in Connecticut, but many of my friends' fathers never came back. So, as we leave here today, please remember those souls, 129; most of them Maine residents in the southern Maine area; never came home and we think of them today. Thank you.

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

On motion of Representative MATHIESON of Kittery, the House adjourned at 2:22 p.m., until 10:00 a.m., Tuesday, April 15, 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. 637) and in honor and lasting tribute to Michael Francis Thompson of Kittery.