

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION
13th Legislative Day
Wednesday, April 30, 2025

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

Prayer by Colonel Earl Weigelt, State Chaplain, Maine National Guard, Winslow.

Colors presented by Maine Army National Guard Honor Guard.

National Anthem by Master Sergeant Joel Crowley, 265th Combat Communications Squadron, Maine Air National Guard, Westbrook.

Pledge of Allegiance.

Medical Provider of the Day, Lisa Lucas, DO, Cumberland.

The Journal of yesterday was read and approved.

COMMUNICATIONS

The Following Communication: (H.C. 148)

**DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE, VETERANS AND
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
33 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0033**

April 22, 2025

The Honorable Ryan D. Fecteau

Speaker of the House

Room 303, State House

2 State House Station

Augusta, Maine 04333-0002

Dear Mr. Fecteau:

As the Commissioner of the Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management and the Adjutant General of the Maine National Guard, I accept your invitation to address the Joint Session of the 132nd Maine Legislature on Wednesday, April 30th at 11:00 a.m.

Sincerely,

S/Brigadier General Diane L. Dunn

Commissioner and Adjutant General

READ and ORDERED PLACED ON FILE.

The Following Communication: (H.C. 149)

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

April 30, 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:"

Health and Human Services

L.D. 453 An Act to Require the State to Pay 90 Percent of All General Assistance Expenses of Municipalities and Indian Tribes

L.D. 657 An Act to Modify the Law Governing Municipal General Assistance by Designating Broadband Internet Access Service and Wireless Access Point Technology as Basic Necessities

L.D. 891 An Act to Exclude Poverty as a Factor When Determining Instances of Willful Neglect or Abuse of a Child

L.D. 1046 An Act to Establish a 180-day State Residency Requirement for Receiving Municipal General Assistance

L.D. 1178 An Act to Expedite the Process Involving Municipalities That Illegally Move a Person to Avoid Responsibility for General Assistance Support

L.D. 1237 An Act to Support Adult Family Care Homes and Residential Care Facilities That Are Small or Located in Rural and Isolated Areas of the State

L.D. 1421 An Act to Clarify Parental Notifications Regarding Child Care Facility Investigations

L.D. 1487 An Act to Support Community Violence Prevention and Intervention Programs

L.D. 1489 Resolve, to Provide Stability to Long-term Care Facility Funding (EMERGENCY)

Housing and Economic Development

L.D. 824 An Act Regarding Pet Fees in Rental Housing

L.D. 1486 An Act to Provide Financing Assistance for Down Payments for First-generation Homeowners

L.D. 1569 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)

Marine Resources

L.D. 1352 An Act to Amend Provisions Regarding the Scallop Fishery License Apprentice Program, Licensing and Limited Access Areas

Transportation

L.D. 1508 An Act to Clarify the Law Regarding Tinted Windows in Motor Vehicles

Veterans and Legal Affairs

L.D. 1289 An Act to Amend the Election Recount Process

L.D. 1373 An Act to Repeal the National Popular Vote Compact
L.D. 1685 RESOLUTION, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine Concerning the Direct Initiative Process

Sincerely,

S/Robert B. Hunt

Clerk of the House

READ and with accompanying papers ORDERED PLACED ON FILE.

The Following Communication: (H.C. 150)

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

April 30, 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 Housing and Economic Development has approved the request by the sponsor, Representative Sachs of Freeport, to report the following "Leave to Withdraw:"

L.D. 1338 Resolve, Directing State Agencies and Semiautonomous State Agencies to Provide a List of Surplus Properties and Properties Eligible for Redevelopment to the Maine Redevelopment Land Bank Authority

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

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

The Following Communication: (H.C. 151)

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

April 30, 2025
Honorable Robert B. Hunt
Clerk of the House
2 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333
Dear Clerk Hunt:

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

on April 29, 2025

Abbey Hamilton of Yarmouth for appointment as a student member and Victoria Cohen of Farmington for appointment to the State Board of Education.

Pursuant to Title 20-A, M.R.S.A. §401, these appointments are contingent on confirmation by the Maine Senate after review by the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs.

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

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

PETITIONS, BILLS AND RESOLVES REQUIRING REFERENCE

Bill "An Act to Expand the State's Workforce by Supporting the Transition from Incarceration to Employment"

(H.P. 1228) (L.D. 1844)

Sponsored by Representative SAYRE of Kennebunk.

Cosponsored by Senator TALBOT ROSS of Cumberland and Representatives: ANKELES of Brunswick, HASENFUS of Readfield, MATHIESON of Kittery, MILLIKEN of Blue Hill, PLUECKER of Warren, SARGENT of York, SINCLAIR of Bath, WARREN of Scarborough.

Bill "An Act to Implement Recommendations for Improved Dam Safety"

(H.P. 1232) (L.D. 1848)

Sponsored by Representative MILLIKEN of Blue Hill.

Cosponsored by Representatives: BELL of Yarmouth, BISHOP of Bucksport, Senators: GROHOSKI of Hancock, HAGGAN of Penobscot.

Bill "An Act to Establish a Minimum Age at Which a Juvenile May Be Adjudicated"

(H.P. 1233) (L.D. 1849)

Sponsored by Representative SALISBURY of Westbrook.

Cosponsored by Representatives: BRENNAN of Portland, NUTTING of Oakland, SINCLAIR of Bath.

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, to Establish a Pilot Program to Protect Firefighters from Cancer

(H.P. 1225) (L.D. 1830)

Sponsored by Representative BAGSHAW of Windham.

Cosponsored by Senator TALBOT ROSS of Cumberland and Representatives: HEPLER of Woolwich, LANCE of Paris, SUPICA of Bangor, Senators: DUSON of Cumberland, HICKMAN of Kennebec, RAFFERTY of York, RENY of Lincoln, TEPLER of Sagadahoc.

Committee on **CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY** suggested.

On motion of Representative HASENFUS of Readfield, the Resolve was **REFERRED** to the Committee on **HEALTH COVERAGE, INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES**, ordered printed and sent for concurrence.

At this point, a message came from the Senate borne by Senator PIERCE of Cumberland of that Body, proposing a Joint Convention of both branches of the Legislature to be held in the Hall of the House at 10:45 in the morning for the purpose of extending to Brigadier General Diane L. Dunn, Commissioner of the Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management, and The Adjutant General of the Maine National Guard, an invitation to attend the Joint Convention and to make such communication as pleases her.

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

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Fairfield, Representative Rudnicki, and inquires as to why she rises.

Representative **RUDNICKI**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we are at week six. Could someone from your side of the aisle please check with the Chief Executive Officer to see if she believes in the Maine and the U.S. Constitutions? The Maine Constitution says "extraordinary occasions" that we would be called back for, as outlined in Article V, Section 13 of the Maine Constitution. What is that extraordinary circumstance? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Bill "An Act to Establish an Educational Tax Credit Program to Help Parents Pay for Nonpublic School Tuition and Fees"

(H.P. 1237) (L.D. 1853)

Sponsored by Representative SWALLOW of Houlton.

Committee on **EDUCATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS** suggested.

On motion of Speaker FECTEAU of Biddeford, the Bill was **REFERRED** to the Committee on **TAXATION**, ordered printed and sent for concurrence.

Bill "An Act to Improve Interagency Coordination on Renewable Energy Construction Projects"
(H.P. 1234) (L.D. 1850)

Sponsored by Representative WEBB of Durham.
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 Provide Peer Respite for Individuals with Mental Health Care Needs"
(H.P. 1227) (L.D. 1843)

Sponsored by Representative ROEDER of Bangor.
Cosponsored by Senator INGWERSEN of York and Representatives: MATHIESON of Kittery, SARGENT of York, Senator: TIPPING of Penobscot.

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 Require the Board of Counseling Professionals Licensure, Board of Dental Practice, Board of Speech, Audiology and Hearing and Board of Occupational Therapy Practice to Obtain Fingerprint-based Federal Bureau of Investigation Criminal Background Checks for Initial Applicants and Licensees Seeking Compact Privileges"
(H.P. 1238) (L.D. 1854)

Sponsored by Representative MATHIESON of Kittery.
Submitted by the Department of Professional and Financial Regulation pursuant to Joint Rule 204.

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

Bill "An Act to Build Housing for Maine Families and Attract Workers to Maine Businesses by Amending the Laws Governing Municipal Land Use Decisions"
(H.P. 1224) (L.D. 1829)

Sponsored by Speaker FECTEAU of Biddeford.
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 Establish the Working Waterfront Advisory Council"
(H.P. 1229) (L.D. 1845)

Sponsored by Representative RIELLY of Westbrook.
Cosponsored by Senator DUSON of Cumberland and Representatives: GERE of Kennebunkport, GOLEK of Harpswell, MINGO of Calais, SIMMONS of Waldoboro, STROUT of Harrington, Senators: BAILEY of York, MOORE of Washington, RENY of Lincoln.

Committee on **MARINE RESOURCES** suggested.

On motion of Speaker FECTEAU of Biddeford, the Bill was **REFERRED** to the Committee on **HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**, ordered printed and sent for concurrence.

Bill "An Act to Promote Equitable Property Taxation by Reducing Valuation Based on Nearby Clean Energy Projects"
(H.P. 1236) (L.D. 1852)

Sponsored by Representative HYMES of Waldo.
Cosponsored by Representatives: COLLINS of Sidney, DRINKWATER of Milford, FOSTER of Dexter, HAGGAN of Hampden, PAUL of Winterport, Senator: BRADSTREET of Kennebec.

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

Bill "An Act to Amend the Law Governing Notification to Vehicle Owners and Lienholders When a Vehicle Is Towed or Left Without Permission on Residential or Business Property"
(H.P. 1230) (L.D. 1846)

Sponsored by Representative CLUCHEY of Bowdoinham.
Committee on **TRANSPORTATION** suggested and ordered printed.
REFERRED to the Committee on **TRANSPORTATION** and ordered printed.
Sent for concurrence.

Bill "An Act to Support Small Adult Use Cannabis Businesses by Establishing a Micro Cannabis Facility License"
(H.P. 1226) (L.D. 1831)

Sponsored by Representative BOYER of Poland.
Bill "An Act to Institute Testing and Tracking of Medical Use Cannabis and Cannabis Products Similar to Adult Use Cannabis and Cannabis Products, Dedicate a Portion of the Adult Use Cannabis Sales and Excise Tax to Medical Use Cannabis Programs and Create a Study Group"
(H.P. 1231) (L.D. 1847)

Sponsored by Representative GRAHAM of North Yarmouth.
Cosponsored by Senator MOORE of Washington and Representatives: FAIRCLOTH of Bangor, GRAMLICH of Old Orchard Beach, MEYER of Eliot, SHAGOURY of Hallowell, ZAGER of Portland, Senators: INGWERSEN of York, RENY of Lincoln, TEPLER of Sagadahoc.

Bill "An Act to Bring Parity Among the Wabanaki Nations Regarding the Generation of Revenues from Gaming"
(H.P. 1235) (L.D. 1851)

Sponsored by Representative MALON of Biddeford.
Cosponsored by Senator TALBOT ROSS of Cumberland.

Bill "An Act to Impose an Excise Tax on Spirits-based Cocktails Containing No More than 12 Percent Alcohol"
(H.P. 1239) (L.D. 1855)

Sponsored by Representative DILL of Old Town.
Cosponsored by Representative: HEPLER of Woolwich.

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. 26)

ORDERED, that Representative William R. Bridgeo of Augusta be excused Apr 24 for personal reasons.

AND BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that Representative Robert A. Foley of Wells be excused Apr 24 for legislative business reasons.

AND BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that Representative Kenneth Wade Fredette of Newport be excused Apr 22 and 23 for personal reasons.

AND BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that Representative Randall C. Hall of Wilton be excused Apr 23 for personal reasons.

AND BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that Representative Abden S. Simmons of Waldoboro be excused Apr 22 for personal reasons.

AND BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that Representative Holly B. Stover of Boothbay be excused Apr 23 for legislative business reasons.

AND BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that Representative Joseph F. Underwood of Presque Isle be excused Apr 22 for health reasons.

READ and PASSED.

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

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

REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

**Refer to the Committee on Judiciary
Pursuant to Statute**

Report of the **Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary** on Bill "An Act to Make Technical Changes to the Laws Governing the Maine Commission on Public Defense Services"

(S.P. 700) (L.D. 1801)

Reporting that it be **REFERRED** to the Committee on **JUDICIARY** pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 4, section 1804, subsection 3, paragraph H.

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.

**Refer to the Committee on Judiciary
Pursuant to Statute**

Report of the **Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary** on Bill "An Act to Implement the Recommendations of the Maine Commission on Public Defense Services to Clarify When an Indigent Criminal Defendant Is Entitled to Counsel at State Expense"

(S.P. 701) (L.D. 1802)

Reporting that it be **REFERRED** to the Committee on **JUDICIARY** pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 4, section 1804, subsection 3, paragraph H.

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.

**Refer to the Committee on Judiciary
Pursuant to Statute**

Report of the **Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary** on Bill "An Act to Implement the Recommendation of the Maine Commission on Public Defense Services to Eliminate the Crime of Violation of Condition of Release"

(S.P. 709) (L.D. 1817)

Reporting that it be **REFERRED** to the Committee on **JUDICIARY** pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 4, section 1804, subsection 3, paragraph H.

Came from the Senate with the Report **READ** and **REJECTED** and the Bill **REFERRED** to the Committee on **CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY**.

The Report was **READ** and **REJECTED** and the Bill was **REFERRED** to the Committee on **CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY** in concurrence.

**Refer to the Committee on Judiciary
Pursuant to Statute**

Report of the **Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary** on Bill "An Act to Implement the Recommendations of the Maine Commission on Public Defense Services Regarding the Confidentiality of Attorney-Client Communications in Jails and Correctional Facilities"

(S.P. 712) (L.D. 1825)

Reporting that it be **REFERRED** to the Committee on **JUDICIARY** pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 4, section 1804, subsection 3, paragraph H.

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.

**Refer to the Committee on Judiciary
Pursuant to Resolve**

Representative KUHN for the **Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary** on Bill "An Act Directing the Maine Commission on Public Defense Services to Assist Persons Filing Post-judgment Motions to Seal Criminal History Record Information"

(H.P. 1240) (L.D. 1856)

Reporting that it be **REFERRED** to the Committee on **JUDICIARY** pursuant to Resolve 2023, chapter 103, section 8.

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

Sent for concurrence.

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

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. 16) (L.D. 117) Bill "An Act to Provide Funding for Sexual Assault Services" Committee on **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-30)**

(S.P. 212) (L.D. 472) Resolve, Directing the Maine-Canadian Legislative Advisory Commission and the New England and Eastern Canada Legislative Commission to Examine Restoring Passenger Rail from Boston to Montreal Committee on **TRANSPORTATION** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-26)**

(H.P. 788) (L.D. 1183) Bill "An Act to Ensure Rent-to-own Protections Apply to Mobile Home Park Tenants" Committee on **HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT** reporting **Ought to Pass**

(H.P. 521) (L.D. 814) Bill "An Act to Provide Funding to Area Agencies on Aging for Community-based Services and Programs to Support Older Adults" Committee on **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-77)**

(H.P. 690) (L.D. 1061) Bill "An Act to Increase Community Support for Families in Maine" (EMERGENCY) Committee on **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-78)**

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

There being no objection, the Senate Papers were **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.

ENACTORS

Emergency Measure

An Act to Amend the Definition of "Transient Occupancy" in the Laws Governing the Maine Land Use Planning Commission

(H.P. 252) (L.D. 398)

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.

Acts

An Act to Clarify Processes of the Board of Environmental Protection

(S.P. 58) (L.D. 36)

(C. "A" S-25)

An Act to Appropriate Funds to the Department of Environmental Protection, Lake Water Quality Restoration and Protection Fund

(H.P. 196) (L.D. 296)

(C. "A" H-69)

An Act to Update Waste Discharge License Fees

(S.P. 200) (L.D. 465)

(C. "A" S-24)

An Act to Provide Funding for Low-income Electric Ratepayer Assistance

(H.P. 642) (L.D. 995)

(C. "A" H-76)

An Act to Require Reporting of Sheltering or Aiding Missing Children

(H.P. 755) (L.D. 1150)

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.

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

REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

Divided Reports

Majority Report of the Committee on **AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-28)** on Bill "An Act to Establish the PFAS Response Program and to Modify the Fund To Address PFAS Contamination"

(S.P. 66) (L.D. 130)

Signed:

Senators:

TALBOT ROSS of Cumberland
BLACK of Franklin
INGWERSEN of York

Representatives:

PLUECKER of Warren
BUNKER of Farmington
COOPER of Windham
CRAY of Palmyra
DILL of Old Town
FROST of Belgrade
GUERRETTE of Caribou
HEPLER of Woolwich

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

Signed:

Representative:

JACKSON of Oxford

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-28)**.

READ.

On motion of Representative PLUECKER of Warren, the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended** Report was **ACCEPTED**.

The Bill was **READ ONCE**. **Committee Amendment "A" (S-28)** 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-28)** in concurrence.

Majority Report of the Committee on **ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-27)** on Bill "An Act Clarifying Exemptions from the Notification Requirements for Products Containing PFAS"

(S.P. 419) (L.D. 987)

Signed:

Senators:

TEPLER of Sagadahoc
MARTIN of Oxford

Representatives:

DOUDERA of Camden
BELL of Yarmouth
BRIDGEO of Augusta
CAMPBELL of Orrington
RIELLY of Westbrook
SCHMERSAL-BURGESS of Mexico
SOBOLESKI of Phillips
WOODSOME of Waterboro

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

Signed:

Senator:

BRENNER of Cumberland

Representatives:

ANKELES of Brunswick
OSHER of Orono

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-27)**.

READ.

On motion of Representative DOUDERA of Camden, the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended** Report was **ACCEPTED**.

The Bill was **READ ONCE**. **Committee Amendment "A" (S-27)** 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-27)** in concurrence.

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

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

SENATE PAPERS

The following Joint Order: (S.P. 719)

ORDERED, the House concurring, that when the Senate and House adjourn, they do so until Tuesday, May 6, 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.

Bill "An Act to Expand Law Education and Training by Creating a Night Law School Program"

(S.P. 715) (L.D. 1833)

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.

Bill "An Act to Clarify Available Relief for the Protection of At-risk Children"

(S.P. 714) (L.D. 1832)

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

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 Improve Nonemergency MaineCare Transportation"

(S.P. 717) (L.D. 1835)

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 Allow Dental Care Providers to Opt In to Receive Claim Reimbursement Payments Made by Virtual Credit Cards"

(S.P. 716) (L.D. 1834)

Bill "An Act to Amend the Laws Affecting Insurance"

(S.P. 720) (L.D. 1837)

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

REFERRED to the Committee on **HEALTH COVERAGE, INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES** in concurrence.

Bill "An Act to Establish Stepparent Visitation Rights"

(S.P. 725) (L.D. 1842)

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 Strengthen the So-called Maine Hire-a-Vet Program"

(S.P. 722) (L.D. 1839)

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

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

Bill "An Act to Modify the Process of Selling Tax-acquired Properties"

(S.P. 724) (L.D. 1841)

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

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

Bill "An Act to Provide Opportunities and Sustainable Revenue for Maine Farms, Agricultural Fairs, Wabanaki Tribes and Veterans' Homes"

(S.P. 721) (L.D. 1838)

Bill "An Act to Amend the Maine Medical Use of Cannabis Act"

(S.P. 723) (L.D. 1840)

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.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

Divided Report

Majority Report of the Committee on **JUDICIARY** reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on Bill "An Act to Authorize Judicial Disposition of a Juvenile Adjudicated of Murder or a Class A Crime to a Term of Commitment Extending Beyond the Juvenile's 21st Birthday"

(H.P. 354) (L.D. 535)

Signed:

Senators:

CARNEY of Cumberland
TALBOT ROSS of Cumberland

Representatives:

KUHN of Falmouth
BABIN of Fort Fairfield
CARUSO of Caratunk
HENDERSON of Rumford
LEE of Auburn
O'HALLORAN of Brewer
POIRIER of Skowhegan
PUGH of Portland
SATO of Gorham
SINCLAIR of Bath

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-81)** on same Bill.

Signed:

Senator:

HAGGAN of Penobscot

READ.

Representative KUHN of Falmouth moved that the House **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report.

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, the purpose of this bill was really to address a matter in which there was a sentencing in the Waterville District Court. It's a criminal matter, underlying matter, and in this particular case, if you want to take the time to look it up on the internet, it was in regards to a Waterville court hearing regarding the murder of a Mount Vernon girl who was stabbed 10 times. In the sentencing of this

particular defendant, the defendant in this case was a juvenile, and as many people may know in this Body, if someone is sentenced as a juvenile, there are limitations in regards to which a judge can sentence an offender. And typically, that is a limit to when a juvenile turns the age of 21.

If you look at the title on this bill, Mr. Speaker, it's "An Act to Authorize Judicial Disposition of a Juvenile Adjudicated of Murder or a Class A Crime to a Term of Commitment Extending Beyond the Juvenile's 21st Birthday." So, in regards to this matter, Mr. Speaker, it creates a very small exception in regards to sentencing, and that exception is limited to murder or an otherwise Class A crime, which might be, for example, arson. And so, all this does is give a judge a little bit more discretion in determining, based on the facts of the case and/or recommendations from the District Attorney, whether or not someone should be sentenced for a crime; which, again, is of our highest magnitude in the State, which is a Class A crime. We have Class A through Class E, Class A being the highest crime. Again, murder, arson and whatnot.

So, the particular of this bill was to address what I think is an unfair outcome in regards to a recent case in which the judge himself, on the record, expressed that he was limited in regards to the sentencing; in regards to the crime that was committed, my understanding is, in the victim's home of her parents. So, while the Committee voted an Ought Not to Pass, I appreciate that one Member chose to vote along with the intent of the bill, and Mr. Speaker, I'd request a Roll Call. Thank you.

Representative FREDETTE of Newport **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 Falmouth, Representative Kuhn.

Representative **KUHN**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just wanted to offer Members some additional information for consideration of this matter. There already exists in law a process to bind over –

The SPEAKER: The Chair would ask the Member to defer.

On motion of Representative MOONEN of Portland, **TABLED** pending the motion of Representative KUHN of Falmouth to **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report and later today assigned. (Roll Call Ordered)

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

In Convention

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

The Convention was called to order by the Chair.

On motion of Senator PIERCE of Cumberland, it was

ORDERED, that a Committee be appointed to wait upon Brigadier General Diane Dunn, Adjutant General of the Maine National Guard and Commissioner for the Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management; and members of the Maine National Guard and the Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management; to inform them that the two Branches of the Legislature are in Convention assembled, ready to receive such communications as the Brigadier General is pleased to make.

The Chair appointed:

The Senator from Kennebec, Sen. HICKMAN
The Senator from Cumberland, Sen. DUSON
The Senator from Androscoggin, Sen. TIMBERLAKE
The Representative from Bangor, Rep. SUPICA
The Representative from Bangor, Rep. FAIRCLOTH
The Representative from North Yarmouth, Rep. GRAHAM
The Representative from Biddeford, Rep. MALON
The Representative from Gorham, Rep. TERRY
The Representative from Poland, Rep. BOYER
The Representative from Sanford, Rep. FREDERICKS
The Representative from Auburn, Rep. CHAPMAN
The Representative from Waldo, Rep. HYMES
The Representative from Belgrade, Rep. FROST

Subsequently, Senator HICKMAN, for the Committee, reported that the Committee had delivered the message with which they were charged, and they were pleased to report that Brigadier General Diane Dunn would attend forthwith.

The Chair welcomed to the Convention, the leadership team from the Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management: Maine Army National Guard Assistant Adjutant General-Army, Brigadier General Scott Lewis; Maine Air National Guard Director of Staff, Brian Camire; Maine Bureau of Veterans' Services Director, David Richmond; and Maine Emergency Management Agency Director, Peter Rogers.

The Chair welcomed to the Convention, Brigadier General Diane Dunn, Adjutant General of the Maine National Guard and Commissioner for the Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management.

The Chair recognized in the Gallery: Mr. James Dunn, husband of the Commissioner; their children, Kayla, Kristen, Marcus and his wife Erin; and grandchildren, Aaliyah, Yaneli, Za'Kari and Oakley.

The Chair also recognized in the Gallery, Members of the Color Guard: Staff Sergeant David Richardson of Winslow; Sergeant Keygan Wyman of Augusta; Staff Sergeant Zechariah Musselman of Thorndike, who is also the Non-Commissioner Officer of the Year for the Maine Army National Guard; Sergeant First Class Michael Martel of Pittsfield; Colonel Earl Weigelt, who was Chaplain this morning in the House; Master Sergeant Joel Crowley, who performed the National Anthem this morning in the House; Members of the Army and Air National Guard; and Members of the Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management.

The Chair requested the Adjutant General of the Maine National Guard, Brigadier General Diane Dunn, to please step forward and address the Joint Convention.

Brigadier General **DUNN**: Good morning, President Daughtry, Speaker Fecteau, Members of the 132nd Legislature. Thank you for the opportunity to address you today in this Joint Assembly. Fellow soldiers, airmen and Department civilians, thank you for the privilege of representing you today and every day. To my fellow Commissioners and distinguished guests, thank you for attending. General Farnham, General Lagasse, thank you for your show of support in joining us. It means a great deal having you here today.

It's great to have our leadership team up front with me this morning. I think this is a first. I might have a habit of doing things like that. Other members of our senior military leadership team includes: the State Chief Master Sergeant Ryan Cote, Command Sergeant Major Alex Clifford, 101st Air Refueling Wing Chief Master Sergeant Stanley Nedorowski and State Command Chief Warrant Officer CW5 Carlo Paratore. Thank you for being here today. Also, I'd like to say a shout-out to our distinguished policy advisor, Joe Marro, who I know is listening. Thank you for your support to DVEM. Thanks to Joe.

This morning, I want you to hear about the amazing work that these public servants accomplish throughout your districts and on behalf of the people of Maine. To my family in the Gallery, thank you for being here. I will do my best to make you as proud of me as I am of you. I love you, and I thank you for your endless support. It's also my goal that my 14-year-old granddaughter will have a greater understanding and maybe appreciation for State government after today. So, Aaliyah, pay attention, there might be a quiz afterwards. After all, they are skipping school.

To all our friends and family watching on live stream now or catching us later, thank you for tuning in and thank you for your support.

Before I begin, I want to explain to those that may not realize: State organizational placement and responsibility of the Adjutant General within State government is different from state to state. On last count, there were 13 of 53 Adjutant Generals across our states and territories who serve in the trifecta; Commissioner overseeing veterans' services, emergency management and in addition to our military branches. To address this Body about the status of our Department and the Bureaus within it is a great privilege.

Since Chief Executive Mills appointed me in February of last year, I've had the pleasure of leading DVEM, an organization of passionate professionals, citizen soldiers, airmen, emergency managers and veterans' advocates, all who work tirelessly toward a shared mission: to protect, serve and honor the people of Maine. I must acknowledge that when Major General Farnham turned over the keys to the office, it truly was

turnkey. I was fortunate to have and to continue to receive his guidance and wisdom. Thank you.

I also now have the advantage of sharing these duties and responsibilities with Deputy Commissioner of the Department, Ms. Michelle Lenihan. Deputy Commissioner Lenihan joined our team in December and jumped in with both feet, and many of you know, the Session was in full speed just two weeks later. Deputy Commissioner Lenihan is new to our Department and new to State government. From the first day, she began to lead our day-to-day operations, initiating coordination with other Departments and picked up the primary responsibility of our legislative engagements specific with our Committees of VLA and Criminal Justice and Public Safety and the Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee. I want to give my thanks to our Deputy Commissioner Michelle Lenihan. Please rise to be recognized.

And many thanks to all of you who have welcomed her. We value the policy discussions that we have with you and are especially grateful for the advocacy of our bipartisan veterans' caucus. Thank you. There's still much work to be done, but we look forward to the outcomes of our enacted and pending legislation before this assembly.

Our Department recruits, trains and develops educated and reliable workforce; delivers services critical to the health, welfare, safety and growth of Maine communities and your constituents. And we could not do this without all of you. The work you conduct in this building is essential. It matters to our Department, and it matters to the people of Maine. We share in the responsibility of protecting our communities in times of crisis and strive to provide quality service to each and every person in Maine. We partner across State government. As Commissioner of DVEM, I made it a priority to enhance coordination and integration across Maine State government. Through partnerships, we've increased efficiency, expanded shared training opportunities, while working collaboratively with our teammates to protect and serve Maine residents. For example, this past September, we were excited for the Maine Department of Corrections who joined the Army's Partnership for Your Success; widely known as PaYS; a partnership between the Army and private industry, academia and businesses at the federal, State and local levels to assist active-duty soldiers in finding meaningful employment upon discharge. We truly appreciate Commissioner Liberty's demonstration of his support in the commitment to our veterans as they transition to Maine.

We'd also like to recognize Maine Bureau of Motor Vehicles staff; Dawn Pelletier, Chris Ireland and others who helped us coordinate a commercial driver's licensing exam for our current military members. Their support allowed 23 military truck operators to translate their military certification into civilian licenses. This was a huge win for our soldiers and airmen, and a huge win for Maine businesses. Dawn, Chris and the entire Bureau of Motor Vehicle team, we thank you so much.

We're incredibly proud of our Bangor-based Army helicopter crew, who assisted Maine Game Wardens in searching for two missing men in a wooded area outside of Old Town. Coordination between our aviators and our State partners is not new. We prioritize interagency training to serve and protect the people of our State. In December, Chief Warrant Officer 5 Eric Couture, Chief Warrant Officer 2 Max Santagata and Sergeant Caleb York, along with operations and refuelers quickly responded and took flight in their Lakota aircraft to assist the wardens from the air. After hours of searching, the Warden Service received notification from a local resident of the possible location of the lost men. The wardens found one of the men stranded in his truck, but while still searching for the other

person, the wardens gave the Lakota crew an area to search from the air. Using their aircraft's thermal imaging system, the aviators found the second man about a half a mile away and relayed the grid coordinates back to the wardens, who then made their way to the individuals and transported them to safety. Training and responding in support of other agencies amplifies our Department's ability to serve the State while also ensuring and reinforcing community preparedness.

This morning, I'm incredibly proud to speak of accomplishments across all three of all Bureaus. First, I will focus on those who've already fulfilled their military service, our Maine veterans, and their families who stand beside them. The Maine Bureau of Veterans' Services serves more than 300,000 Maine veterans. Under leadership of director Dave Richmond, the Bureau serves as one of one-stop-shop for resources for veterans, families and community partners. 2024 was a year marked by dedication, growth and deeply meaningful accomplishments. Maine Bureau of Veterans' Services laid to rest 998 veterans and their spouses. To continue carrying out its mission of honoring the legacies of service, the Bureau has applied and received \$2.7 million in federal construction grants to fund cemetery expansion programs, many of which are being carried out by our own Maine National Guard engineers. Last summer, our Maine engineers were joined by engineer soldiers from the Montenegrin Armed Forces, our State partner. The project ensured these sacred spaces remain a lasting tribute to those who have served. Thanks to the efforts of many of you in this building, for the first time, Maine Bureau of Veterans' Services can now intern eligible National Guard and Reserve service members. As a result of Public Law 593, An Act Regarding Eligibility for Burial in Maine's Veterans' Memorial Cemetery, a long-awaited milestone that affirms we value National Guard Members who serve our State. Thank you for this important piece of legislation.

We're able to provide exceptional service thanks to dedication and professionalism of our employees. The staff at our cemetery system is second to none, and Dan Preston is just one employee who comes to mind. Dan has emerged as a leader and is committed to meeting the needs of the Bureau of Veterans' Services and the families that rely on them. Dan went above and beyond his normal duties by obtaining a specialized State certification that saves the cemetery system \$15,000 of operating funds annually. He did this by spending his personal time and resources to obtain the required State certifications to properly maintain our sacred grounds. Thank you to Dan for your dedication.

Our Veterans' Service officers are dispersed across the State, working tirelessly connecting veterans with critical resources. They are often the first point of engagement, providing vital support to veterans facing hardship, giving hope and stability when it's needed most. The Veterans Emergency Financial Assistance Program; otherwise known as VEFAP; is one program that can assist veterans with emergencies like heating assistance or ensuring that a car that's needed to commute to work can be fixed at a local auto body shop. The program has been a lifeline for veterans in their time of need, and thank you to this Body for supporting emergency financial assistance. Over the last year, Veterans' Service officers assisted in filing 2,592 claims with the Veterans' Administration, valued at over \$50.3 million, directly connecting Maine veterans with health care and disability benefits. This work could not have been accomplished without incredibly dedicated staff. Julie Roberts has been with the Bureau for over 35 years. Whether it's working on VA claims, locating stable housing for a homeless veteran or administering services from the Veterans' Dental

Network, Julie has been there meeting the needs of our veterans. And while Julie is unable to join us today, I still want to recognize her steadfast dedication and commitment to Maine Bureau of Veterans' Services and Maine veterans for 35 years of service.

Maine Bureau of Veterans' Services isn't just helping veterans; it's honoring their legacy, expanding their access to benefits and strengthening their connections to the State and the communities they fought to protect. We are also honoring veterans in other ways. Through Maine Bureau of Veterans' Services' collaborative efforts with many other service organizations, relationships are built and new ideas dawn. One such example of collaboration between Honor Flight Maine, Bangor International Airport and Maine's military aviation community. Colonel Nate Arnold; who oversees the State's Army aviation assets; helped plan and execute Sunday's open house with his team of all-stars. The open house was in conjunction with Honor Flight Maine's very first flight from Bangor, Maine's largest event to date, with 78 veterans and their family members flying to Washington, D.C., where they toured the Capitol and multiple war memorials. It's an honor to welcome them home with a warm celebration and the open house. Many thanks to Chief Executive Mills and over 800 friends, many of you here in this room, who made that inaugural event so special. We thank all who provided that long-overdue honorable welcome home to our veterans. And I'd like to recognize Colonel Nate Arnold, who's with us today. Thank you, Nate.

As we look to Maine's safety and resilience, we turn to the outstanding work of Maine Emergency Management Agency. MEMA stands as a foundation in both protecting and responding to disasters within our; your; communities and our experts that coordinate statewide emergency response. Chief Executive Mills just signed LD 1 last week. LD 1 will increase MEMA's ability to provide assistance to increase storm preparedness across your communities. Thank you for your hard work in enacting this bipartisan legislation, and thank you for your investment in our emergency preparedness.

In my role as the Chief Executive's homeland security advisor, and with Director Rogers serving as the Chair of the Homeland Security Council, we work with Council members to assess critical infrastructure, improve statewide communication and methods of improving cybersecurity networks. We've launched resilience initiatives and fostered greater collaboration with local and federal partners. Through strategic planning and strong partnerships with our county and local governments, MEMA ensures our State is equipped to face any crisis, safeguarding lives and property. Rated among the top 10 state emergency management agencies for mitigation efforts in the country, our team at MEMA continuously demonstrates their ongoing commitment to our State's safety and well-being, working alongside your municipal and county leaders. In this past year, MEMA activated the State Emergency Operation Center for major storms and issued 26 emergency alerts to keep Mainers safe. They distributed \$67.7 million in federal grant funding, an incredible achievement that helped launch Maine from 37th to eighth in FEMA's national mitigation rankings. For every \$2 million in State support, MEMA has returned over \$17.4 million in federal funds. That's a nearly nine-to-one return; clear evidence that this agency is one of the best investments we can make. With your continued support and assistance, we will remain ready and resilient.

We all remember the solar eclipse on April 8, 2024. This once-in-a-generation event drew 10s of thousands of visitors to rural Maine to experience the path of totality. Under the leadership of Director Rogers, Maine Emergency Management was able to collaborate with our partners at the Department of Transportation, the Department of Economic and Community Development, the Department of Public Safety, Maine's Office of Tourism and our county emergency management agencies, ensuring the safety and preparedness for the influx of travelers who set out for Oxford, Somerset, Piscataquis and Aroostook Counties. Thank you to all those who worked with us to ensure our State was prepared for this historic event.

While the entire MEMA team deserves our thanks, I want to recognize two individuals for their extraordinary service. Tony Fletcher, Maine State Dam Inspector, has returned from retirement to ensure the continued safety of our dam infrastructure, a selfless act of service for which we are deeply grateful. And Anne Fuchs, Director of Mitigation and Recovery, has delivered 10s of millions in support to Maine communities and played a key role in shaping the resilience policies like LD 1. Her leadership and collaboration set the standard for public service. Thank you to both of you, please.

MEMA continues to protect lives, strengthen communities and build a more resilient Maine. With your partnership, we stand ready to face whatever comes next. At the core of our Department in the Maine National Guard, we operate under a dual mission. In our State role, our guardsmen protect life and property and maintain peace, order and public safety here in our State. In our federal role, guardsmen provide trained, equipped and ready forces to defend the nation during times of emergency, conflict and war. North to Fort Kent, east to Lubec, south to Kittery and west to Fryeburg, our 3,000 members of the Maine National Guard come from every corner of the State. Whether they serve in the Army or Air National Guard, they meet the demands for service every day.

I am proud to report that we have seen recent increases in those choosing to serve our State and nation through military service. Enlistments are on a rise. Recently, a high school junior, who is only 17, and a more seasoned Mainer, who might be 39 years old, both raised their hand and took an oath of service. Those Guard members and every other member we have in our organization balance ongoing education requirements, drill weekends, prepare for federal deployments and State missions, balance their family, civilian careers, as they learn, work and serve here in our great State of Maine. Your Maine National Guard is prepared to support in any way possible, living the Guard motto of 'always ready, always there.' Our presence is across the State. Every one of our facilities and armories represents an anchor in your community. They are sources of safety, service and a skilled workforce. In your districts, you'll find armories and readiness centers supporting local schools, youth programs and public safety training. Units participating in infrastructure projects that deliver direct, local benefits. Soldiers and airmen who live, work and volunteer in your communities. In fact, through our innovative readiness training, we delivered more than \$843,000 in savings to Maine communities and State agencies. This federally funded program allows Maine Guardsmen to train and serve in our local communities. The engineers, at the request of Parks and Lands, were in Senator Farrin's and Representative Poirier's district working at Lake George State Park, where those engineers rehabilitated cabins and improved access roads, and they'll be back to do more. Thanks to the city of Brewer, Guard members constructed a new marksmanship and training facility for the Brewer Police Department in Senator Haggan and

Representative O'Halloran and Faircloth's districts. The Maine Veterans' Memorial Cemetery in Augusta is undergoing an expansion project, where our teams are helping with both expansion and erosion control, ensuring multiple decades' worth of internment space is available for our veterans and their families. Through IRT projects, we're training our Guard members and strengthening our communities. I pledge to you and my fellow Commissioners to look for opportunities right here in Maine where we can apply Maine National Guard capabilities to save precious State tax dollars and give back to our communities.

One of our most collaborative and community integrated units is the Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Unit in Waterville. Last summer, the CST led Katahdin Shield, the largest interagency training exercise in New England, with participation from federal partners, MEMA, local fire, law enforcement and health care, as well as student role-players from the University of Maine System. The CST has an average response time of under 90 minutes and is a trusted partner for both routine and high-risk incidents. Civil support teams provide 100% federally funded training, superior technical expertise, rapid deployment and enhance our State's overall response capabilities.

Building on our global and domestic service of our Guardsmen, the Maine Air National Guard; commonly referred to as the Maineiacs; exemplifies this dual commitment through their exceptional contributions to both State and global missions. While Bangor is often recognized for its air refueling mission, its incredibly large planes and yes, the green and white stickers found worldwide, I'd like to shine a light on our exceptional airmen in South Portland. South Portland is home to the Combat Communications Squadron, a unit of 105 airmen who recently were nationally recognized for their superior achievements in providing rapid and secure communication networks in remote and challenging environments. Aaliyah, you'll have to look that one up, figure out what that is. In fact, they were the only National Guard organization selected in the category. As a highly regarded squadron, they are frequently requested by name to participate in multi-national exercises.

South Portland is also home to the Engineering Installation Squadron, which designs, engineers and installs fixed communication infrastructure. One of the highlights for South Portland was their participation in conjunction with their Maine Army National Guard counterparts in the 10th annual Cyber Yankee exercise in Cape Cod. Cyber Yankee is recognized as the second-largest cyber exercise and allowed the airmen to continue developing their cyber protection capabilities while collaborating with local, State and federal partners in the event of a cyber-attack.

Our Guardsmen play a larger role in the threats we face here in Maine and are key to protecting Maine's critical infrastructure. In Bangor, the 101st Air Refueling Wing leads the nation with our 10 KC-135 tankers. They pump gas in the sky, haul people and move cargo to all corners of the globe on a weekly basis. Maineiacs conduct detailed planning for nearly 90% of the fighter aircraft movement on behalf of the United States Transportation Command. The 101st participates in critical Arctic exercises every year and continues to be the gold standard in tanker support to America's national defense. Airmen like Major Ryan Wing, our Maintenance Squadron Commander from Bangor, a UMaine graduate, is leading the country; leading the country; in 3D printing across the Air Force. His unit was the first certified 3D printer in the National Guard and has printed over 200 flight-worthy replacement parts, as well as tools, while also collaborating to develop artificial

intelligence learning platforms for our newest airmen. The additive manufacturing effort at Bangor has gleaned interest from the Department of Defense as an additive manufacturing center of excellence. In 2024, Major Wing received the United States Air Force Lance Sijan Leadership Award, created in 1981 to recognize individuals who have demonstrated the highest qualities of leadership in their jobs and in their lives. Major Wing, please stand to be recognized.

But the good news; Major Ryan Wing is not an outlier, he is representative of the superior character and leadership across our entire National Guard. Bangor Air National Guard base and the hundreds of airmen in mission support and medical groups are proud hosts of the region's Navy Reserve and pride themselves on thinking as training as one service. Airmen from the 101st Medical Group boarded the USS *John Basilone* missile destroyer, providing medical support to over 100 sailors. And this summer, the 101st Medical Group will host a unique combat exercise for the United States Marine Corps. All you Marines, where are you? You missed it. All right, I gave you the opportunity.

The Air Guard reach is long, our airmen are agile and we thank the leadership of this world-class organization for their continued commitment to our communities, great State and nation. Meanwhile, our Army Guardsmen are ready, trained and equipped. This fall, one of our engineer units will mobilize to the Middle East to support the United States Central Command with vertical construction capabilities. A few short months later, Brewer's own infantry company will deploy to provide well-trained combat force to protect US personnel and installations. The upcoming deployments and missions are not new to the Guard, and the last year alone is evidence of that. Our cyberwarfare detachment, headquartered in Augusta, deployed 11 soldiers to Fort Eisenhower, Georgia, from September 2023 to September 2024 to conduct cyber operations in support of United States Central Command missions in the Middle East. Our counterdrug task force provides prevention programs in your local schools and works alongside local and federal law enforcement. They assisted in seizure of more than \$8 million in illegal drugs. We are also honored to be selected as one of seven national finalists for future basing of the KC-46 Pegasus, a next generation aerial refueling aircraft. This is a testament to our facilities, our people and our strategic relevance. Our Guardsmen embody service and dedication, but the commitment and care from their families and employers; you here in the room, employers; enable our members to serve whenever called upon. Family and employers are the backbone of support while we fulfill our duties, and for that, we are grateful.

From honoring our veterans to responding to natural disasters; from training here in Maine with our local partnerships, to international missions; the Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management is unified in service to our State and nation. We are proud of what we have accomplished, and we're even more committed to what lies ahead. As we look to the future; and the 250th anniversary of the United States, from now through July 4th, 2026; I ask that you pause and reflect on our nation's past. Honor the contribution of all Americans and look forward to the future that we want to create for the next generation and beyond. I ask for your support in investing in the well-being of our dedicated workforce, the local facilities in which they serve and recognizing their invaluable contributions. Building a stronger and more resilient Maine is DVEM's goal. We thank you for your support with meeting our mission.

On your desks, you should have a QR code for tomorrow's 34th annual Interfaith Prayer Breakfast. We hope you will join us at the Augusta Armory.

To the entire DVEM team who worked behind the scenes to make today possible, my deepest appreciation. To the Members of the 132nd Legislature and all Mainers, thank you for your continued trust and confidence. It is an honor and privilege to serve and uphold the responsibilities you have bestowed on us, and we remain committed to meeting and exceeding your expectations. *Dirigo*.

At the conclusion of the address, the Adjutant General withdrew amid the applause of the Convention, the audience rising.

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

The Senate then retired to its chamber.

(After the Convention)

The House was called to order by the Speaker.

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

HOUSE DIVIDED REPORT - Majority (12) **Ought Not to Pass** - Minority (1) **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-81)** - Committee on **JUDICIARY** on Bill "An Act to Authorize Judicial Disposition of a Juvenile Adjudicated of Murder or a Class A Crime to a Term of Commitment Extending Beyond the Juvenile's 21st Birthday"

(H.P. 354) (L.D. 535)

Which was **TABLED** by Representative MOONEN of Portland pending the motion of Representative KUHN of Falmouth to **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report. (Roll Call Ordered)

Representative MOONEN of Portland assumed the Chair. The House was called to order by the Speaker Pro Tem.

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

Representative **KUHN**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wanted to offer some clarifying information for the Members as they consider this item.

There already exists in law a process for a prosecuting attorney to petition to bind over a juvenile accused of a Class A crime or murder. If it's granted and the juvenile is moved to adult court, they're provided with additional constitutional due process rights that aren't available in juvenile court, such as the right to a jury trial. What this bill would do is require the juvenile to stay in juvenile court while facing adult penalties without the due process guarantees that go with the adult penalties. So, it's sort of a double whammy on the due process front.

I can't speak to why the prosecutor in the particular example that was given did not petition; or did not successfully petition; to bind over that particular defendant, but this bill is not the solution to that problem. And I'll just quote from the testimony that was provided from the Maine Department of Corrections where they testified in opposition to the bill, and they said that the bill "gives rise to questions of constitutionality, and creates an unnecessary parallel track to the current bind over process," which is why the Committee arrived at a very strong bipartisan report of Ought Not to Pass. Thank you.

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

Representative **POIRIER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I just want to stand; basically, the Good Representative stole my thunder and said about everything I was going to say, but I want to concur with that, because while I do recognize the intent and appreciate that with this bill, due process is extremely important, and we need to make sure that everybody, regardless of age, has that same due process rights. So, I would encourage everybody to support this motion. Thank you.

The SPEAKER PRO TEM: 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. 103

YEA - Abdi, Albert, Ankeles, Arata, Archer, Ardell, Arford, Babin, Beck, Bell, Blier, Boyer D, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Campbell, Caruso, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, Cray, Crockett, Daigle, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Eaton, Faircloth, Farrin, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foley, Fredericks, Friedmann, Geiger, Gere, Gifford, Golek, Graham, Gramlich, Griffin, Guerrette, Hasenhus, Henderson, Hepler, Hymes, Jackson, Javner, Kessler, Kuhn, Lajoie, Lavigne, Lee, Lookner, Macias, Malon, Mastraccio, Mathieson, Matlack, McIntyre, Meyer, Milliken, Mitchell, Montell, Moonen, Morris, Murphy, Nutting, O'Halloran, Olsen, Osher, Parry, Pluecker, Poirier, Pomerleau, Pugh, Ray, Rielly, Roberts, Roeder, Rollins, Rudnicki, Runte, Sachs, Salisbury, Sargent, Sato, Sayre, Shagoury, Simmons, Sinclair, Skold, Smith, Soboleski, Stover, Strout, Supica, Swallow, Terry, Thorne, Warren, Webb, Wood P, Wood S, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

NAY - Adams, Bagshaw, Bishop, Carlow, Chapman, Cimino, Collins, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eder, Foster, Fredette, Frost, Greenwood, Haggan, Lance, Lemelin, Lyman, Mason, Paul, Perkins, Quint, Schmearsal-Burgess, Tuell, Underwood, Wadsworth, White J, White R, Woodsome.

ABSENT - Collamore, Cooper, Gattine, Hall, Julia, Lanigan, McCabe, Mingo, Rana, Walker.

RESTRICTED - Libby.

Yes, 111; No, 29; Absent, 10; Excused, 0; Restricted, 1.

111 having voted in the affirmative and 29 voted in the negative, with 10 being absent and 1 restricted, and accordingly the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report was **ACCEPTED** and sent for concurrence.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

Divided Reports

Majority Report of the Committee on **ENERGY, UTILITIES AND TECHNOLOGY** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-29)** on Bill "An Act to Require the Office of the Public Advocate to Implement the State's Climate Action Plan"

(S.P. 370) (L.D. 837)

Signed:

Senators:

LAWRENCE of York
GROHOSKI of Hancock

Representatives:

SACHS of Freeport
GEIGER of Rockland
KESSLER of South Portland
RUNTE of York
WARREN of Scarborough
WEBB of Durham

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

Signed:

Senator:

HARRINGTON of York

Representatives:

FOSTER of Dexter
MCINTYRE of Lowell
PAUL of Winterport
WADSWORTH of Hiram

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-29)**.

READ.

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

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

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

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

Representative **FOSTER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand in opposition to the pending motion, and I think rather than use my own words, I'd like to first read from a couple of testimonies that were given during the hearing on this bill.

First of all, testifying neither for nor against, the Office of the Public Advocate. Public Advocate Heather Sanborn testified as such: "As drafted, the bill would require the Office of the Public Advocate (OPA) to implement Maine's climate action plan. However, the OPA does not possess the authority or necessary tools to implement anything. We cannot issue orders or conduct procurements. Our mission at the OPA is advocacy on behalf of Maine's utility ratepayers, with a particular focus on low income, residential, and small business customers. As such, we would respectfully suggest amended language, reflecting both our advocacy rather than executory role and our focus on ratepayer affordability, which should remain at the very core of our mission as an office." And as you've heard, Mr. Speaker, there is an Amendment that we are voting on here to this bill today, and I would suggest, however, in my opinion, it does not do enough to continue to carry on the initial mission of the Public Advocate's office.

Another testimony that we received was from the Maine Policy Institute, and that testimony stated the following: "The OPA serves as an independent watchdog for Maine's energy consumers. As outlined in 35-A M.R.S. §1702, the Public Advocate's primary duty is 'to represent the using and consuming public,' in proceedings before the PUC and certain other regulatory bodies. This role requires an impartial approach to ensure that ratepayer interests are prioritized over political or ideological considerations, which is why 35-A M.R.S. §1702 clarifies that the Public Advocate 'shall exercise independent judgment' when taking positions on any proceeding. Subsection B clarifies that these positions must promote stabilizing and lowering energy prices for the consuming public. Forcing the OPA to implement the Climate Action Plan would compromise its independence and shift its focus from advocating for affordable, reliable energy to advancing a climate policy agenda that imposes substantial costs on Maine consumers. Ratepayers, particularly those in rural and low-income communities, should not bear the financial burden of policies prioritizing broad climate goals over affordability and energy reliability." Their testimony went on to say, "the Office of the Public Advocate must focus in its statutory role protecting ratepayers and ensuring affordable, reliable energy. LD 837 would fundamentally alter this mission, forcing the OPA to implement policies that increase costs and reduce energy reliability while exposing the State to unnecessary legal risks. Maine cannot afford to jeopardize the independence of the Public Advocate in service of an energy agenda that prioritizes political goals over consumer welfare."

Mr. Speaker, I'll go on to say this; in its current role, the OPA serves as a check and balance to the Legislative and Executive Branches. This will change that. And in conclusion, I'll address what instigated the submission of this bill. This bill was introduced to address the support given to efforts to reduce the cost of net energy billing to Maine ratepayers in the 131st Legislature by then-Public Advocate William Harwood. In that case, the Public Advocate; who on mic stated time and time again his support for green energy generation; adhered to his primary role and worked to reduce electric rates for all Maine ratepayers. This legislation will at the very least cloud the expectations of the OPA's primary role going forward.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you follow my light and vote down the pending motion to maintain the role of the Maine ratepayers' only advocate here in an official capacity in Augusta. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the time.

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

Representative **SACHS**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker Pro Tem, and I appreciate the history given by my good friend, the Representative from Dexter. But what I'd like to focus this Body's attention to is the actual Amendment that came as a result of working with the Office of Public Advocate. To quote, it still states, Mr. Speaker Pro Tem, that the role of the Office of Public Advocate is to promote "stabilization and lowering of prices paid by those members of using and consuming public whose interests the Public Advocate is representing; and is consistent with the cost-effective implementation for ratepayers of the greenhouse gas emissions reductions and obligations established in Title 38," which I note, Mr. Speaker Pro Tem, is what every State agency has to abide by, and this language is consistent with State Statute also governing the Public Utilities Commission. All this does is update this Statute to be in line with every other State agency regarding this particular piece of Statute and that the Public Advocate's office, whomever that person may be, may be in line with the rest of the State. Thank you, Mr. Speaker Pro Tem.

The SPEAKER PRO TEM: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Hiram, Representative Wadsworth.

Representative **WADSWORTH**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. I think we all saw last week that Maine was the third-fastest price increase in the cost of electricity. We all saw that. You know who was second, Mr. Speaker? California. Is that the company that we want to keep? The Public Advocate and her small handful of attorneys are supposed to stand up to the IOUs at the PUC when they request rate increase after rate increase. Now, this forces the Public Advocate to take her eye off the ball protecting Maine ratepayers.

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

Representative **UNDERWOOD**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is nothing more than they could substitute the political action plan from the Chief Executive's office implemented into law into this thing. So, please vote against the pending motion. Thank you.

The SPEAKER PRO TEM: 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. 104

YEA - Abdi, Ankeles, Arford, Beck, Bell, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Cloutier, Cluchey, Copeland, Crafts, Crockett, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Eaton, Faircloth, Farrin, Friedmann, Frost, Gattine, Geiger, Gere, Golek, Graham,

Gramlich, Hasenfus, Hepler, Kessler, Kuhn, Lajoie, Lee, Lookner, Macias, Malon, Mastraccio, Mathieson, Matlack, Meyer, Milliken, Mitchell, Montell, Moonen, Murphy, O'Halloran, Osher, Pluecker, Pugh, Ray, Rielly, Roberts, Roeder, Rollins, Runte, Sachs, Salisbury, Sargent, Sato, Sayre, Shagoury, Sinclair, Skold, Stover, Supica, Terry, Warren, Webb, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

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

ABSENT - Archer, Collamore, Cooper, Hall, Julia, McCabe, Mingo, Rana, Walker.

RESTRICTED - Libby.

Yes, 74; No, 67; Absent, 9; Excused, 0; Restricted, 1.

74 having voted in the affirmative and 67 voted in the negative, with 9 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-29) 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-29)** in concurrence.

Majority Report of the Committee on **INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-23)** on Bill "An Act to Allow Persons to Label Their Wild Animal Traps with Their Online Identification Number Issued by the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife"

(S.P. 18) (L.D. 6)

Signed:

Senators:

BALDACCI of Penobscot
GUERIN of Penobscot

Representatives:

ROBERTS of South Berwick
BRIDGEO of Augusta
CLUCHEY of Bowdoinham
DILL of Old Town
LANCE of Paris
MASON of Lisbon
TERRY of Gorham
THORNE of Carmel
WOOD of Greene
WOODSOME of Waterboro

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

Signed:

Senator:

CARNEY of Cumberland

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-23)**.

READ.

Representative ROBERTS of South Berwick moved that the House **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended** Report.

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

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

The SPEAKER PRO TEM: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Bowdoinham, Representative Cluchey.

Representative **CLUCHEY**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker Pro Tem. I rise today in support of this motion.

This is a simple but important bill that allows trappers to label their traps with a State-issued trap ID number instead of their name and address. The request for this bill was brought forward by a trapper who was concerned about the safety of herself and her children after being doxed online for engaging in the legal activity of trapping. Her concerns for the safety of herself and her children are not unique. As online harassment and extremist behavior continue to rise, it is our responsibility; our responsibility; as legislators to ensure that Mainers can participate in lawful practices without fear of being harassed and targeted. It is our responsibility to do this even if we wouldn't engage in those activities ourselves.

Mr. Speaker, passing this bill is an action we can take to protect the safety of our citizens. Thank you for allowing me to speak, and I urge you and our colleagues to support this motion.

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

Representative **FAULKINGHAM**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand in support of the pending motion. I agree with the Representative from Bowdoinham. This bill is really a no-brainer. The woman that brought it forward; it's very understandable that she would not want a sexual predator to know her name and information, and this is a very common-sense bill and I urge every Member to vote yes on the pending motion.

The SPEAKER PRO TEM: 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. 105

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, Copeland, Crafts, Cray, Daigle, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eaton, Eder, Faircloth, Farrin, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foley, Foster, Fredericks, Fredette, Friedmann, Frost, Gattine, Geiger, Gere, Gifford, Golek, Graham, Gramlich, Greenwood, Griffin, Guerrette, Haggan, Hasenfus, Henderson, Hepler, Hymes, Jackson, Javner, Kessler, Kuhn, Lajoie, Lance, Lanigan, Lavigne, Lee, Lemelin, Lookner, Lyman, Macias, Malon, Mason, Mastraccio, Mathieson, Matlack, McIntyre, Meyer, Milliken, Mitchell, Montell, Moonen, Morris, Murphy, Nutting, O'Halloran, Olsen, Osher, Parry, Paul, Perkins, Pluecker, Poirier, Pomerleau, Pugh, Quint, Ray, Rielly, Roberts, Roeder, Rollins, Rudnicki, Runte, Sachs,

Salisbury, Sargent, Sato, Sayre, Schmersal-Burgess, Shagoury, Simmons, Sinclair, Skold, Smith, Soboleski, Stover, Strout, Supica, Swallow, Terry, Thorne, Tuell, Underwood, Wadsworth, Warren, Webb, White J, White R, Wood P, Wood S, Woodsome, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

NAY - NONE.

ABSENT - Archer, Collamore, Cooper, Crockett, Hall, Julia, McCabe, Mingo, Rana, Walker.

RESTRICTED - Libby.

Yes, 140; No, 0; Absent, 10; Excused, 0; Restricted, 1.

140 having voted in the affirmative and 0 voted in the negative, with 10 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-23)** 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-23)** in concurrence.

Majority Report of the Committee on **CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-80)** on Bill "An Act to Enhance Public Safety in Rural Counties by Providing State Police Patrol and Policing Services"

(H.P. 306) (L.D. 477)

Signed:

Senators:

BEEBE-CENTER of Knox
CYRWAY of Kennebec

Representatives:

HASENFUS of Readfield
ARDELL of Monticello
BUNKER of Farmington
LAJOIE of Lewiston
MCINTYRE of Lowell
NUTTING of Oakland
PERKINS of Dover-Foxcroft

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

Signed:

Representatives:

ABDI of Lewiston
LOOKNER of Portland
MILLIKEN of Blue Hill

READ.

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

The same Representative **REQUESTED** a roll call on his 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 PRO TEM: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Readfield, Representative Hasenfus.

Representative **HASENFUS**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This bill adds 15 State Trooper positions, with the purpose of supporting more rural patrols in the rural areas of Maine.

Maine is big geographically, as we all know, and there are times when there are certain areas of Maine that have a hard time getting police presence for the traffic patrols and that sort of thing. Maine State Police are Maine's police, they are our police, they are under the oversight of the Legislature and the Chief Executive. We budget for them every year, and the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee has oversight authority to direct how the police will patrol, do their jobs, how the unit will be set up. And in my opinion, I believe that if we are going to invest in police, in expanding and growing the police force in Maine, it should be through the Maine State Police, our police. And that is why I am in support of this bill, and I think if we are going to address, from a policy perspective, how we adequately patrol rural areas of Maine, we should address it through our police in all areas of Maine and not specifically pick particularized counties and allocate the funds to those counties to be used without any oversight from this Body or the Chief Executive. And for that reason, you know, I believe that this bill gives us the flexibility that is demanded in a very noble profession and will be voting for the motion before us today. Thank you.

The SPEAKER PRO TEM: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Portland, Representative Lookner.

Representative **LOOKNER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Pro Tem. I wasn't going to roll-call this, but I feel as though I'd like to explain myself and my opposition to this.

The Maine State Police might have a hard time recruiting Troopers, but that's not for lack of positions; they still have dozens of vacancies for patrol without adding new positions. We added 16 positions last legislative session, and we continue to grow the Maine State Police. I think public safety is a bigger project than just policing and prisons, and there are a lot of things we can do to ensure public safety that is not focused on the law enforcement side of things. We need employees to fill positions across all of our State Departments, across all of our municipalities, in schools, in infrastructure, and a lot of that has to do with the lack of housing that's available. So, I'd like to see us invest in the things that are effective at increasing public safety and preventing crime, and those things are housing, those things are jobs, those things are education, and I don't think we need to continue growing our State's police force.

So, that's why I was in opposition, I wasn't planning again on roll-calling, but again, the Maine State Police has many vacancies, let's have them fill those vacancies before we add more positions. Thank you.

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

Representative **DUCHARME**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker Pro Tem. I rise in support of this motion.

It's no secret that law enforcement is struggling to keep up with societal conditions in our State. The scourge of illegal drugs flowing into our State is killing our citizens, destroying our families and threatening the peace of our neighborhoods. Since the pandemic, many towns that had their own municipal police forces have decided to eliminate them due to their inability to find staff, the lack of trained and willing officers or the human need to maximize their earning for their skills. Many towns have given up trying to maintain their own force and have come to rely on the County Sheriff and the State Police for policing services. The State Police, for reasons that were societal, fiscal and command decisions, reduced their presence in many rural counties. The County Sheriffs have struggled to hire, train and retain officers in the never-ending revolving door that has been the history of policing in Maine. Officers simply go to where

they'll be able to make the most money. No one faults them, but the safety net that we used to have for small towns is gone.

As rural law enforcement presence faded, crime increased. One area that has shown significant increase, particularly in rural counties, is the lack of available officers to do traffic patrol. The Sheriff's Department is tied up with all the regular policing issues like drug enforcement, domestic violence cases, robbery and, in some cases, homicide. They simply do not have the time to do rural traffic patrol. In the absence of visible traffic patrol, human nature being what it is, violations of traffic law have become the norm. I'm sure that there are many in this room that have experienced impatient drivers, tailgating, people running red lights and stop signs in rural areas and other traffic infractions. As speeds increase, fatalities increase. Maine had 171 fatalities in 2024 alone. Since 2019, there have been 726 fatal crashes in Maine.

In the 131st Legislature, Maine State Police came forward with a plan in the Chief Executive's supplemental budget to add 32 Troopers to the staff. This effort was widely supported, by both rural and urban Representatives. However, at the last minute, the request was cut from 32 to 16 new Troopers. The overall fiscal savings of that action was about \$3 million annually. Part of the plan for these 32 officers was to help cut down on the overtime that officers were having to work. In 2024 alone, Maine spent nearly \$8.5 million in overtime for State Police officers. It seems like we might have saved \$5.5 million by spending the \$3 million earlier. Fast forward to 2025. The officers added are making a difference in traffic patrols on the Maine Turnpike. However, the rural areas of the State still need help. Our County Sheriffs are covering huge amounts of territory with limited resources. Adding additional resources to the County Sheriff's Department falls directly on the local property taxpayer. By adding resources to the law enforcement mix using the Maine State Police, we can spread the cost of that police presence over the entire tax base of the State of Maine. Further, the addition of more personnel in the Maine State Police helps them cut down on overtime, allows flexibility in region coverage and, in turn, provides relief to the County Sheriff Department.

This effort, the effort that has been devised by this bill and presented to me by the State Police, seems to be well planned; it just needs legislative approval to execute. I've had many conversations about how these additional officers will be deployed across the State, but I will make sure that I will keep an eye on that as this goes through, and I've told them that.

I urge you to pass this legislation. Properly staffed and implemented, it will have a significant impact on policing the rural areas of Maine that need help. I'm confident in the professionalism and the integrity of both the County Sheriff's Department and the Maine State Police to bring this plan together to benefit the people of Maine at a cost the taxpayers of Maine can afford. With the statewide service model of the Maine State Police, there will be significantly more resources at the ready should situations arise that require specialized attention or expertise. I view this as a win for our local taxpayers, our County Sheriff's Department, especially in the rural areas. Thank you.

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

Representative **NUTTING**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to; as my colleague from Madison, I rise to support the pending motion and this bill.

As you've heard, it increases the troop force by 15 Troopers and 9 additional Corporals, for a total of 24 State Troopers. It was mentioned that there are open positions with the State Troopers, and that's true; although, they're rapidly

catching up. They have a large group right now at the Criminal Justice Academy, and the last two or three years, they've been making great strides to catch up with what was a bad couple of years wherein they were having trouble recruiting officers.

If you live in Portland or Bangor or Lewiston, you might expect that a 9-1-1 call from you would be responded to in maybe, say, five minutes would be reasonable, I think. If you live in a community the size of my community, Oakland; which has about 7,000 people; we have a full-time police force with 10 officers; I would expect a call from my home of two miles from the center of town would be responded to in, say, 10 minutes. If you're on the Criminal Justice Committee, though, after hearing a number of bills about the lack of emergency response in some of our more rural communities, more rural counties, you might not be surprised to learn that sometimes, it takes much longer than 10 minutes, longer than 30 minutes, sometimes as much as an hour and a half or so.

And to give you that perspective, I have a couple of sentences I'll read from the public hearing we had, and it was from Shira Burns, who's the Executive Director of the Maine Prosecutors Association, and I'll just read a couple of the lines that she said. "Police response times can take well over 20 minutes;" and she's talking about in rural Maine; "and this includes emergency police responses to domestic violence crimes. Prosecutors;" and this is a different perspective, I think; "prosecutors have listened to countless 9-1-1 calls from victims of domestic violence crying and pleading with dispatchers to have police arrive faster as they are hiding somewhere in their home for their life or the abuse is still continuing until police arrive. Access to more law enforcement can have a direct impact on police response time in ongoing emergencies."

I agree with Ms. Burns. I think law enforcement is one of the; if not the most important thing that the State can provide to its citizens. It certainly is in the top two or three. And if you've had someone that you love in your family; like I have; who has been subject to abuse, domestic abuse, then this bill is important to you, and it's important to me and I hope that you will join us in voting in favor of the motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER PRO TEM: The Chair recognizes the Representative from East Machias, Representative Tuell.

Representative **TUELL**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, rise in support of the pending motion, and my friend from Madison for bringing this bill forward.

This bill is brought forward on a parallel track with another; which we won't be discussing today; but there's a good deal of overlap, and the concern is real. Certainly, I come from one of those areas of the State where police service has been a hot topic, if you will, a priority. And our delegation, our Washington County delegation has met with the State Police numerous times, certainly most recently in December, to brainstorm ways that we could increase coverage around the county, but in this case, around the region as a whole, all of rural Maine. And we heard time and time again that the folks that are providing rural patrol are stretched thin. Our Sheriff's Department is stretched thin. Our local communities are under siege. We heard at the Sheriffs' Association breakfast a couple months ago that there's a suspected number of 300 or so illegal marijuana locations around the State. These resources are spread super thin. And just as our State coffers are extremely thin. But if there were one area that we could fund that we needed to fund, this would be it.

Funding these extra positions is vital to our public safety in rural Maine and to bridging the divide between urban and rural. Because when rural Maine flourishes, the whole State flourishes. So, I would join in speaking my support for this bill

and for the Representative from Madison, the Representative from Oakland and all those who provide law enforcement resources around rural Maine. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Representative **WHITE**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker Pro Tem. Last year, in a Joint Committee hearing with Appropriations and Transportation, a Senator asked the question of the Commissioner if the response time that he had been subject to when dialing 9-1-1 from a hotel room in Calais to report a violent attack in the neighboring hotel room and being responded to by the dispatcher that it would take at least two hours to get an officer to the location was a common occurrence, and the Commissioner replied, unfortunately so. Mr. Speaker, I submit to you that the victim in that crime wasn't looking for housing that evening; they were looking for a response time that was shorter than two hours by a police officer. Thank you.

The SPEAKER PRO TEM: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Hiram, Representative Wadsworth.

Representative **WADSWORTH**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. As someone who represents five rural towns in Oxford County, I support this bill. Could the Clerk read the Committee Report?

Representative WADSWORTH of Hiram **REQUESTED** that the Clerk **READ** the Committee Report.

The Clerk **READ** the Committee Report in its entirety.

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

Representative **QUINT**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the Good Representative from Madison for putting forward this bill. Two of the counties affected by this bill are in my representative area; both Washington County and Aroostook County; and having been reached out to from constituents where they have had over a one-hour response time in having their emergency calls ordered needing police assistance, I am glad to see this bill going forward with the bipartisan support that it has received, and I thank all the Members of the Body for that. Thank you.

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. 106

YEA - Adams, Albert, Arata, Ardell, Arford, Babin, Bagshaw, Bell, Bishop, Blier, Boyer D, Boyer M, Brennan, Bridgeo, Bunker, Campbell, Carlow, Caruso, Chapman, Cimino, Cluchey, Collins, Crafts, Cray, Crockett, Daigle, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dill, Dodge, Doudera, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eaton, Eder, Faircloth, Farrin, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foley, Foster, Fredericks, Fredette, Friedmann, Frost, Gere, Gifford, Golek, Graham, Greenwood, Griffin, Guerrette, Haggan, Hasenfus, Henderson, Hepler, Hymes, Jackson, Javner, Kessler, Kuhn, Lajoie, Lance, Lavigne, Lee, Lemelin, Lyman, Malon, Mason, Matlack, McIntyre, Meyer, Mitchell, Montell, Morris, Murphy, Nutting, O'Halloran, Olsen, Parry, Paul, Perkins, Pluecker, Poirier, Pomerleau, Quint, Ray, Rielly, Roberts, Rollins, Rudnicki, Runte, Salisbury, Sargent, Sayre, Schmursal-Burgess, Shagoury, Simmons, Skold, Smith, Soboleski, Stover, Strout, Swallow, Thorne, Tuell, Underwood, Wadsworth, Webb, White J, White R, Wood P, Wood S, Woodsome, Yusuf, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

NAY - Abdi, Ankeles, Archer, Beck, Cloutier, Copeland, Gattine, Geiger, Gramlich, Lanigan, Lookner, Macias, Mastraccio, Mathieson, Milliken, Moonen, Osher, Pugh, Rana, Roeder, Sachs, Sato, Sinclair, Supica, Terry, Warren.

ABSENT - Collamore, Cooper, Hall, Julia, McCabe, Mingo, Walker.

RESTRICTED - Libby.

Yes, 117; No, 26; Absent, 7; Excused, 0; Restricted, 1.

117 having voted in the affirmative and 26 voted in the negative, with 7 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" (H-80)** 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" (H-80)** and sent for concurrence.

Majority Report of the Committee on **INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-79)** on Bill "An Act to Enhance Protections Regarding Invasive Aquatic Plant Infestations in Inland Waters of the State"

(H.P. 104) (L.D. 171)

Signed:

Senators:

BALDACCI of Penobscot

CARNEY of Cumberland

Representatives:

ROBERTS of South Berwick

BRIDGEO of Augusta

CLUCHEY of Bowdoinham

DILL of Old Town

TERRY of Gorham

WOODSOME of Waterboro

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

Signed:

Senator:

GUERIN of Penobscot

Representatives:

LANCE of Paris

MASON of Lisbon

THORNE of Carmel

WOOD of Greene

READ.

On motion of Representative ROBERTS of South Berwick, the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended** Report was **ACCEPTED**.

The Bill was **READ ONCE. Committee Amendment "A" (H-79)** 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" (H-79)** and sent for concurrence.

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

The SPEAKER PRO TEM: The House will be in order through adjournment.

Representative **FAULKINGHAM**: Point of Order.

The SPEAKER PRO TEM: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Winter Harbor and inquires as to his Point of Order.

Representative **FAULKINGHAM**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank you for your reminder that the House will be in order, but the House be in order means we will pause in memoriam as we adjourn. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER PRO TEM: The Chair would answer in the affirmative, and the Chair was just about to do that.

On motion of Representative STOVER of Boothbay, the House adjourned at 12:44 p.m., until 10:00 a.m., Tuesday, May 6, 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. 719) and in honor and lasting tribute to Donald F. Dow of Westport Island.