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ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE
SECOND REGULAR SESSION
12th Legislative Day
Tuesday, March 10, 2026

Representative HEPLER of Woolwich assumed the Chair.

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

Prayer by Reverend Sara Bartlett, Second Congregational Church of Norway.

National Anthem by The Bipartisan Choral Ensemble, Augusta.

Pledge of Allegiance.

The Journal of Thursday, March 5, 2026 was read and approved.

COMMUNICATIONS

The Following Communication: (H.C. 390)

STATE OF MAINE
ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE
COMMITTEE ON LABOR

March 4, 2026
The Honorable Matthea E.L. Daughtry
President of the Senate
The Honorable Ryan D. Fecteau
Speaker of the House of Representatives
132nd Legislature
State House
Augusta, ME 04333
Dear President Daughtry and Speaker Fecteau:
Please accept this letter as the report of the findings of the Joint Standing Committee on Labor ("the Committee") from its review and evaluation of the Maine Labor Relations Board ("the Board") under the State Government Evaluation Act, Title 3 Maine Revised Statutes, chapter 35.
Pursuant to the requirements of the Act, the committee notified the Board by letter dated May 1, 2025 of its intent to conduct a review. The Board submitted its program evaluation report on October 31, 2025.
When the Board presented its report to the Labor Committee on Wednesday, January 28, 2026, committee members noticed that the statutorily allowed per diem rate for the Chair of the Board and for other members of the Board were low and had not been adjusted for some time. At a subsequent meeting on February 17, 2026, after requesting and receiving more information from Mr. Neil Daily, Executive Director of the Board, the Committee voted to report out a bill to increase per diem rates of the Board Chair and Board members.
In addition to submitting this legislation, the Committee unanimously finds that the Maine Labor Relations Board is operating within its statutory authority.
Sincerely,
S/Mike Tipping
Senate Chair
S/Amy Roeder
House Chair

READ and **ORDERED PLACED ON FILE**.

The Following Communication: (H.C. 391)

STATE OF MAINE
ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE
COMMITTEE ON LABOR

March 4, 2026
The Honorable Matthea E.L. Daughtry
President of the Senate
The Honorable Ryan D. Fecteau
Speaker of the House of Representatives
132nd Legislature
State House
Augusta, ME 04333
Dear President Daughtry and Speaker Fecteau:
Please accept this letter as the report of the findings of the Joint Standing Committee on Labor from its review and evaluation of the Workers' Compensation Board under the State Government Evaluation Act, Title 3 Maine Revised Statutes, chapter 35.
Pursuant to the requirements of the Act, the committee notified the Workers' Compensation Board by letter dated May 1, 2025 of its intent to conduct a review. The Workers' Compensation Board submitted its program evaluation report on November 1, 2025.
The committee has reviewed the report and unanimously finds that the Workers' Compensation Board is operating within its statutory authority.
Sincerely,
S/Mike Tipping
Senate Chair
S/Amy Roeder
House Chair

READ and **ORDERED PLACED ON FILE**.

The Following Communication: (H.C. 392)

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

March 10, 2026
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:"
Criminal Justice and Public Safety
L.D. 1919 An Act to Expand the Types of Convictions Eligible for Sealing Through a Post-judgment Motion to Seal Criminal History Record Information
Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services
L.D. 2206 An Act Expanding Access to Oral Health Care by Creating a New Path for Obtaining a License to Practice Dentistry
Sincerely,
S/Robert B. Hunt
Clerk of the House

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

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

SPECIAL SENTIMENT CALENDAR

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

Recognizing:

Nancy True, of Gray, recipient of a Spirit of America Foundation Award. The Spirit of America Foundation was established to encourage and promote volunteerism, and the foundation presents awards to honor local individuals, organizations or projects in appreciation of community service. We extend our congratulations and best wishes;

(SLS 1716)

On **OBJECTION** of Representative GRAHAM of North Yarmouth, was **REMOVED** from the Special Sentiment Calendar.

READ.

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

Representative **GRAHAM**: Thank you, Madam Speaker Pro Tem. I rise to comment about my dear friend, Nancy True. Now, many of these Spirit of America awards come through our Calendar, but she truly, truly deserves every bit of this award.

Nancy has been a long-time auxiliary member of the American Legion in Gray. She is solely responsible for many years for making the bean suppers every month. She's actually stepped down from that for a bit. She also volunteers at the food pantry in Gray.

Again, I think that oftentimes these awards come through on our Calendar and we're like, oh, whatever, right? This is so true. She lives and breathes community, and she gives back constantly, and she's also a dear friend. So, thank you, Madam Speaker Pro Tem.

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

Recognizing:

Amy Sinclair, of Yarmouth, recipient of a Spirit of America Foundation Award. The Spirit of America Foundation was established to encourage and promote volunteerism, and the foundation presents awards to honor local individuals, organizations or projects in appreciation of community service. We extend our congratulations and best wishes;

(SLS 1717)

On **OBJECTION** of Representative BELL of Yarmouth, was **REMOVED** from the Special Sentiment Calendar.

READ.

The SPEAKER PRO TEM: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Yarmouth, Representative Bell.

Representative **BELL**: Thank you, Madam Speaker Pro Tem. I met Amy Sinclair when we first moved to town, first moved to Maine 30 years ago. She was a celebrity at the time, she was the News Channel 13 reporter at large, and "Where's Amy" was her thing. And I had gone out to mow my lawn for the first time, and I woke up the next morning and I had this rash all over my arms and legs and I went to the pharmacy to find out what the hell it was about, and it was the brown tail moth. And so, they sold me some lotion or something like that, but they said, you ought to go downtown to the town hall and figure out what the heck's going on, how they're going to deal with it and that's where I met Amy. And she interviewed me and my daughter at the time, wasn't school age yet, and we became fast friends and Amy's just been a wonderful person here in town. So busy that she couldn't come here today, but, I congratulate her and a most-deserved award. Thank you.

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

The following item was taken up out of order by unanimous consent:

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

The following matter, in the consideration of which the House was engaged at the time of adjournment Thursday, March 5, 2026, had preference in the Orders of the Day and continued with such preference until disposed of as provided by House Rule 502.

Expression of Legislative Sentiment in Memory of Lynne Gould Cianchette, of Pittsfield

(HLS 582)

TABLED - March 3, 2026 (Till Later Today) by Representative COLLAMORE of Pittsfield.

PENDING - **ADOPTION**.

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

Representative **COLLAMORE**: Thank you, Madam Speaker Pro Tem. Lynne spent her life succeeding in acts of kindness and service. She was a pillar in our community, known for her advocacy and volunteering. Often known as and called Mama Lynne, she opened her home to many people, including local community members who needed a warm meal and a seat at the table for the holidays, rural student athletes at Maine Central Institute in Pittsfield who needed a safe place to eat and rest between sports sessions or school breaks. She was a host mother to many domestic boarding students, who were typically inner-city kids here in Central Maine for the safe environment and guidance while completing school and their athletic programming, and also a host mother to international students during their boarding school enrollment, all of whom stayed in touch and called her Mama Lynne even decades after their time in Pittsfield.

Professionally, she worked in an office setting, always directly with students. She cherished her 15 years plus in Florida, supporting disabled and underprivileged students at the college and, reflecting on her many years at MCI with a nurse during her brief illness, Lynne stated that she never worked with bad kids, just kids who made bad decisions and oftentimes needed to hear from someone that they'd be okay.

Lynne was part of the women's movement back in the early '90s, advocating in Augusta for insurance policies covering women's preventative health care and to obtain the very first mammogram machine in our small hospital, Sebasticook Valley Hospital. As a result, she and other advocates received their first mammogram. It was then that she found out she had breast cancer the first of three times, and she beat it three times. She continued to advocate for breast cancer research throughout her life, even walking with the team she created, accepting the highest level of donations in the community's 5K just five months before she passed.

She was often a volunteer face for the hospital auxiliary, local ski hill, Friday night football hut, where I saw her many times, and many more community groups and events. If there was a fundraiser or event, she was part of it and often leading it.

Finally, she will be remembered for her gifts and acts of service quietly. She delivered homemade dinners, muffins and soups to local families during their difficult personal times or simply because they lived alone and she knew it would be helpful. Thank you so much for giving us this time to remember Lynne, and we will miss her so much in our community.

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

REPORTS OF COMMITTEE
Refer to the Committee on Housing and Economic Development
Pursuant to Public Law

Representative GERE for the **Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development** on Bill "An Act to Support Owners of Manufactured Housing, Mobile Homes and Tiny Homes"

(H.P. 1506) (L.D. 2231)

Reporting that it be **REFERRED** to the Committee on **HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT** pursuant to Public Law 2025, chapter 365, section 2.

The Report was **READ** and **ACCEPTED** and the Bill was **REFERRED** to the Committee on **HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**.

Sent for concurrence.

Refer to the Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety
Pursuant to Resolve

Representative HASENFUS for the **Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety** on Bill "An Act to Increase County Jail Funding" (EMERGENCY)

(H.P. 1507) (L.D. 2232)

Reporting that it be **REFERRED** to the Committee on **CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY** pursuant to Resolve 2025, chapter 73, section 2.

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

Sent for concurrence.

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

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

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

CONSENT CALENDAR
First Day

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

(S.P. 674) (L.D. 1728) Bill "An Act to Establish the Maine Child Care Affordability Program Advisory Board" (EMERGENCY) Committee on **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-520)**

(S.P. 847) (L.D. 2061) Bill "An Act to Clarify the Prohibition on Paper Billing Statement Fees" Committee on **HEALTH COVERAGE, INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-519)**

(S.P. 832) (L.D. 2134) Bill "An Act to Create an Exception to the Prohibition of Tobacco Sales in Retail Establishments Containing Pharmacies for Certain Small Grocery Stores" Committee on **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-521)**

(H.P. 1423) (L.D. 2108) Bill "An Act to Establish the Suicide Mortality Review Panel" (EMERGENCY) Committee on **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES** reporting **Ought to Pass**

(H.P. 1387) (L.D. 2074) Bill "An Act to Update the Requirements for Social Worker Licensure" Committee on **HEALTH COVERAGE, INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-833)**

(H.P. 1402) (L.D. 2087) Bill "An Act to Amend the Laws Governing the Licensure of American Sign Language Interpreters" Committee on **HEALTH COVERAGE, INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-832)**

(H.P. 1443) (L.D. 2154) Bill "An Act to Establish the Health Information Technology Fund to Support a State-designated Statewide Health Information Exchange" Committee on **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-834)**

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.

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

The Speaker resumed the Chair.

The House was called to order by the Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair wishes to thank the Representative from Woolwich, Representative Hepler, for her service as Speaker Pro Tem and her four consecutive terms as a State Representative.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEE
Divided Reports

Majority Report of the Committee on **ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-523)** on Bill "An Act to Establish the Municipal Shoreline Protection Legal Fund" (S.P. 745) (L.D. 1904)

Signed:
Senators:
TEPLER of Sagadahoc
BRENNER of Cumberland
Representatives:
DOUDERA of Camden
ANKELES of Brunswick
BELL of Yarmouth
BRIDGEO of Augusta
OSHER of Orono
RIELLY of Westbrook

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

Signed:
Senator:
MARTIN of Oxford
Representatives:
SCHMERSAL-BURGESS of Mexico
SOBOLESKI of Phillips

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-523)**.

READ.

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

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

Representative **DOUDERA**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Colleagues, here in Maine, we are known for our clean water, and every year our lakes, rivers and beaches attract millions of visitors to our State who contribute billions of dollars to our economy. And a big reason why we have such clean water here is because of our strong environmental laws like the Mandatory Shoreland Zoning Act, which was established in 1971. But as you know, the laws that we create in this building are only effective if they're enforced.

Unfortunately, today, it's become all too common for waterfront property owners to intentionally violate local shoreland zoning ordinances, opting to take a chance to see if they can get away with it. Our hardworking municipal code enforcement officers around the State often know that these violations are occurring, but they lack the resources to bring the violators to justice.

So, Mr. Speaker, this bill remedies the situation by establishing a revolving municipal shoreline protection legal fund within our DEP and it will provide loans to municipalities for legal costs incurred in pursuing violations. After a final settlement or ruling on the case, the municipality will then be required to repay the loan, sustaining the fund in a long term to help other municipalities with their cases.

Our rivers, lakes and beaches and coastal waters are the lifeblood of our State, and they're also the property of the State. So, let's help our municipalities protect these vital resources by allowing them to hold people accountable. Thank you. I urge your support.

Subsequently, the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended** Report was **ACCEPTED**.

The Bill was **READ ONCE**. **Committee Amendment "A" (S-523)** 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-523)** in concurrence.

Majority Report of the Committee on **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-518)** on Bill "An Act to Support and Sustain Maine's Child Care Workforce" (S.P. 554) (L.D. 1414)

Signed:
Senators:
INGWERSEN of York
NANGLE of Cumberland
Representatives:
MEYER of Eliot
DEBRITO of Waterville
GRAHAM of North Yarmouth
MCCABE of Lewiston
SHAGOURY of Hallowell
ZAGER of Portland

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

Signed:
Senator:
MOORE of Washington
Representatives:
DAIGLE of Fort Kent
GRIFFIN of Levant
LEMELIN of Chelsea

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-518)**.

READ.

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

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

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

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

Representative **LEMELIN**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Members of the House. Again, this is another child care workforce bill. We don't oppose this because we don't feel that people should have child care. We do. And it's not that we don't know that there's single parents out there that are poor and need our help. That help is already out there. With this bill, it extends it to everyone; all these bills do, they extend it to everyone in the State.

Once again, parents need to start being parents. We have the responsibility to provide child care for our own children. Taxpayers do not want to pay for babysitting. A three-year-old doesn't need education except from their parents. What's amazing is we pass bills that prevent a person

like myself from caring for some of these people. It's mind-blowing that we voted down a bill where I can have seven to 10 children and I can care for them all, but if I only have four children and I want to care for four of my neighbor's children, I can't do it by State law. I need to become a registered child care facility. Why? Why? Why can't I care for my neighbor's kids? Same thing with any other family member.

As I said before, we need to go back to the old way of doing things. We need to go back to being parents, and caring and having responsibility for our own children and not wait for the State to pay for that. Once again, those single parents who are poor get help already. That care is available to them. But I don't need to have the State pay for me to put my child in a daycare and instead of being treated as a babysitting place, my three-year-old has an educator in there. So, instead of daycare is costing one hundred a week, they cost four to six hundred a week.

This is poor management. This is bad business. The people of Maine don't want this. I've had many, many people tell me to talk against this, and that's why I am, because the voters, they do not want to pay for babysitting. They feel that the responsibility is not theirs. The responsibility is for the parents. Thank you.

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

Representative **MEYER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Women and Men of the House. Establishing a strong foundation early in the life of Maine's children is crucial for everything that follows. This foundation is built by ensuring that young children have positive learning experiences and stable, consistent relationships with caring adults at home and in the community.

Today, with 69% of Maine's children under the age of six having both parents working, it's imperative to align Maine's investments in early childhood with the scientific understanding of what children require. This includes supporting educators and accommodating Maine's families as they raise the generation that will lead the State into the future. High-quality infant and toddler care is simply more expensive for child care providers to offer. Raising subsidy payment rates for infants and toddlers is a critical step in aligning our system to better serve children and families. We have been hearing from parents for many years about the lack of child care for infants. LD 1414 would provide an additional financial incentive to encourage more educators to accept infants and toddlers into their programs.

Mr. Speaker, the lack of infant and toddler care carries immeasurable economic cost. Maine loses approximately $400 million annually due to insufficient infant and toddler care, through reduced workforce participation, lost earnings and lower productivity. Public investment that reflects the true cost of care strengthens families, supports businesses and benefits Maine's economy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Representative **COLLAMORE**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to say the phrase that we all laugh about, but I had not intended to rise on this. But what's really frustrating for me as somebody who has a degree in early childhood education is to hear myself called a babysitter time and time again. I went $60,000 in debt to be called a babysitter and I'm very frustrated by that, and it has happened multiple times in the past couple of weeks and it's very hard to hear. And I didn't stand up last time, I didn't stand up the second time and I almost didn't stand up this time.

If the argument against this bill was we shouldn't be doing money to provide subsidies to families to pay for child care that doesn't exist, I would be on board. I would be a no vote, absolutely. But to be told that it's because parents need to stand up and be parents? Well, I was a parent who was a single mom, who the only way I could go to work was to pay an exorbitant amount of money, I worked two jobs so that I could afford child care and my rent and then went to school to become an early childhood educator. I can't afford to be an early childhood educator. I don't even work in the field that I went to a degree for and paid over $60,000 for because we don't make enough money.

If this bill were about making sure that we provided subsidies for the early childhood educators who are providing this quality care to our kids, I would be all for it. I think providing more subsidies for something that's nonexistent is where we need to be fighting the argument. I believe we should vote this down because I believe the money should be going directly to the child care workers, not to the families, because we don't have enough child care workers to even give the money to the families.

So, with that in mind, I will not be supporting the Ought to Pass as Amended, but not because I feel that early childhood educators are not doing their job, I think the money is being directed in the wrong place. Thank you.

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

Representative **FOSTER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. One of the words that we keep hearing and we will hear for the next few months time and time again is affordability. I've listened to this argument in here and in the press and from my constituents about child care, can't afford it. For those of us who are old enough to remember the days when we could afford child care, I'll go back to the days when my children were young, before they started school. The restrictions that have been placed on what a child care facility needs to look like since those days has made what was affordable to parents then unaffordable. And what have we done in my time here? We keep adding onto monies that the State will provide to make it affordable, even though the amount it costs keeps going up. Taxpayers are tired of this.

Those who had child care facilities in days gone by took care of the small ones and most of them also helped to educate those children. But as we place restrictions on that capability, we went from a time when two parents working in that day, one maybe at Dexter Shoe, not making a very high wage and the other maybe working in the woods, both pretty much working piecemeal wages, they could afford to have their children in a facility where they knew they were safe, well taken care of and, yes, educated. That isn't so today. That hasn't been so for many years.

I'm opposed to throwing more money at this as we heap more regulations on what's available out there. We make it harder and harder for the child care facilities that have even done well during the time that we've placed quite strict regulations on them and now are suffering under the weight of that and cannot find children whose parents can afford to make their daycare centers worthwhile.

Mr. Speaker, I think the time is to start looking at why people can't afford these child care facilities. When I was on the school board in Dexter many years ago, early 2000s, when we started talking about pre-K for kids, we went through a series of hearings, if you will, at school board meetings. The people who came that were most concerned about it were

Head Start program facilitators who had a very successful Head Start program and were concerned they would lose those kids to the school's pre-K program, and also the local small daycare facilities that thought they would also lose students to that program. We started one of the first in the State of Maine with the idea that it was obviously voluntary, it was for four-year-olds and transportation had to be provided by the parents, partly because we couldn't afford to provide that for them. That worked very well and we didn't take too many children away from those facilities that could afford to keep going.

Mr. Speaker, I say to you that rather than pass this bill, we should be looking at what we can do to make child care more affordable, that meaning that the cost of having that child in a daycare facility goes down, not that we make it affordable by handing out more State payer tax dollars. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Representative **DAIGLE**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A statement was made about $410 million being lost in productivity in Maine, and it's somewhat of a misleading statement because that would only be true if those particular positions were not filled by somebody else other than these people looking for child care. And we know that's not the case, so it's a very misleading statement. That's what I have to say. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Belgrade, Representative Frost.

Representative **FROST**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just learned about this bill last week, and I had the pleasure of attending a lunch-and-learn with the Aroostook partnership, and I have a lot of love for Aroostook County because my daughter was in school there for four years and really fell in love with that area.

And so, anyway, the partnership talked about three hurdles in development of Aroostook County, and the first was child care. And so, I asked specifically about this bill and many of my Colleagues in this Body were at that luncheon and heard the response for about 10 minutes, strongly supporting this bill. So, I just put it on the record that I'm going to support this bill and go Aroostook County.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Harpswell, Representative Golek.

Representative **GOLEK**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just wanted to stand and add a couple of important thoughts on this, and how this bill helps.

We must remember that Maine is also facing a severe workforce shortage and right now, with over two-thirds of children under age six, about 51,000 children affected by the continued child care challenges. Improving access and availability is crucial for supporting parents and fostering a stable future for our workforce, for our economy. Parents need access to reliable, affordable child care to stay in the workforce, but challenges with affordable availability, the child care workforce and care quality leaves parents with a lack of viable options. Lack of accessible child care forces many parents, especially women; and I think highlighting that during Women's History Month is just really important; to reduce their work hours or leave the workforce entirely.

The lack of child care availability is near the top of the list of challenges facing Maine's female workforce. The State of Working Maine Report recently stated that an average of 19,600 women and 2,500 men each week listed either child care or care for older adults as their main barrier to employment. Meaning that the responsibility of care was almost eight times as likely to fall upon women as on men. And when that happens, it reduces household income and contributes to gender inequality in the workplace.

So, when we're looking at providing child care, it's also a major economic driver for our workforce and our State. And for that, and for many other reasons, I will be supporting this bill. 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. 639

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

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

ABSENT - Adams, Copeland, Jackson, Lanigan, Libby, Lyman, Pluecker, Roberts, Roeder, Terry, Warren, Wood S.

Yes, 72; No, 65; Absent, 12; Vacant, 1; Excused, 1.

72 having voted in the affirmative and 65 voted in the negative, 1 vacancy with 12 being absent and 1 excused, and accordingly the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended** Report was **ACCEPTED**.

The Bill was **READ ONCE**. **Committee Amendment "A" (S-518)** 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-518)** in concurrence.

Majority Report of the Committee on **ENERGY, UTILITIES AND TECHNOLOGY** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-835)** on Bill "An Act to Transfer the Responsibilities of the Governor's Energy Office to the Department of Energy Resources"

(H.P. 1442) (L.D. 2153)

Signed:

Senators:

LAWRENCE of York
GROHOSKI of Hancock
HARRINGTON of York

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:

Representatives:

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

READ.

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

The Bill was **READ ONCE**. **Committee Amendment "A" (H-835)** 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-835)** and sent for concurrence.

Majority Report of the Committee on **HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT** reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on Bill "An Act to Create a Residential Rental Unit Registry"

(H.P. 1207) (L.D. 1806)

Signed:

Senators:

CURRY of Waldo
BAILEY of York
BENNETT of Oxford

Representatives:

COLLAMORE of Pittsfield
EDER of Waterboro
JULIA of Waterville
MINGO of Calais

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-836)** on same Bill.

Signed:

Representatives:

GERE of Kennebunkport
GOLEK of Harpswell
LOOKNER of Portland
MALON of Biddeford
YUSUF of Portland

READ.

Representative GERE of Kennebunkport moved that the House **ACCEPT** the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report.

The same Representative **REQUESTED** a roll call on her 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 Bangor, Representative Rana.

Representative **RANA**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, LD 1806 is a small technical bill. The original intention of this bill is to capture data essential for State and local planning, code enforcement, housing access and public safety.

This is an initiative that we've seen year after year in the Legislature, and I feel this is the closest that we've come to making it possible. The current bill is vastly different from its original language. We heard the concerns of stakeholders, real estate agents and the concerns of landlords from across the State, and we took those concerns in. We made adjustments and brought forward amended language that would eliminate burdens on landlords and create a simple process for the registration of rental businesses.

As the Sponsor, I worked closely with the Secretary of State's office to capture the data by making a small change to how businesses file their annual reports with the Maine Bureau of Corporations. This is data that is often and routinely requested from the Bureau and have been unavailable. Under this bill, business filers who are already required to file annually with the State would add their North American Industrial Classification System, or an NAICS code, which is found on a 1040 Schedule C form when filing Federal taxes, and they'll file that form when they do their annual report with the Secretary of State's office. If a business includes long-term residential rentals, indicated by code 531110, they would need to provide limited additional information, which includes the contact information for the landlord or the housing manager, emergency contact information if that's different, the 9-1-1 address, the total number of units, if they're occupied at the time of filing and any other companies that are related to the company that is filing. This bill does not apply to small landlords who rent on their own, it only applies to those who register their business with the Bureau of Corporations.

Given concerns about increased annual filing costs and the need to cover up-front database upgrades, we also amended LD 1806 to have the State cover the costs of those changes. This felt appropriate as the data primarily benefits local and State agencies in planning, in health and in safety. There's no cost to property owners for filing this new form. This bill does not cost businesses or landlords any additional money. It does not include any penalties for failure to file, it does not include any remedies to tenants or restrictions to landlords for conducting their business. This data has been requested for years by municipal officials, local and State planners, housing navigators, economic development officials and first responders.

Knowing the nature of Maine's residential rental housing market and how to connect with specific owners will have significant positive impacts That includes having information on how many businesses operate in Maine's different industries for better economic development strategies; tracking the level of corporate control of Maine's rental housing market, including private equity; housing navigators will be better able to develop relationships with local landlords and help connect tenants with potential homes; local officials will be able to

confirm a tenant's residency and connect them with rental and heating assistance; code enforcement officials will be able to follow up on critical safety issues; first responders will have better information to plan and care for our neighbors in emergencies and will have a better understanding in supporting the rental market in our communities.

I hope to have your support on this bill, which is a first and important step regarding data collection of the industries that operate here in Maine. Please vote against the pending motion. Thank you.

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

Representative **COLLAMORE**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I support the motion before us today for the Ought Not to Pass Majority Report that is the bipartisan Report before us.

If voting against this motion to go for the Minority Report, the Minority Report would require domestic and foreign corporations, limited liability partnerships and companies to file a report with the State when their business is renting or leasing units. What we should be doing, Mr. Speaker, and what I hear about all the time in our Committee, is encouraging more small businesses, more small landlords doing this and to provide rental for our communities. We're constantly hearing about how these investment groups and big businesses from out of state and corporations will buy up all of our rental properties and this will discourage the small business investments, because even small businesses register as limited liability corporations. I had a limited liability corporation, we rented property. We got rid of this because these kind of bills keep coming out of this building, and we said no more, we're just not; we can't afford; there's no cost to the business, we were told by the last speaker, but time is a cost to the business, Mr. Speaker. And I can tell you, even with my LLC, I never had to file the extra stuff that goes along with this, trying to find this code that's apparently easy to find; which, by the way, I tried to Google, it is not easy to find, it is a pain in the butt and we're just going to discourage more small business investment, which goes against the model of us being a small business State.

So, I encourage you to support the pending motion before us, so that we can encourage more housing with small businesses instead of opening the doors for the people who have all of the lawyers to help them file these reports. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Representative **BOYER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm a housing provider, I'm a small landlord, a couple units and this is, again, like what the Good Representative from Pittsfield just said, more time, more paperwork, more processes and it's redundant. A lot of big cities already keep track of this information. I have to register long-term in Portland. And it's rough in Portland. I have tenants that are under rent control and it's hard keeping up with inflation, energy, paying the water and keeping up with the mortgage. I don't have an LLC, but I know a lot of small landlords do have an LLC, so, the idea that this isn't going to affect small landlords, I just disagree with.

We can't afford it. It has a Fiscal Note of half a million dollars. I think there's a lot more pressing issues for our State that we could spend half a million dollars on than this. Looking at Washington State, they had a bill similar. This one's a little more narrowly tailored, but that fiscal note was around five million dollars for that registry. So, this could balloon into something a lot bigger than what is being proposed today and ultimately, at the end of the day, this is going to result in less housing and more housing costs. You're going to see less stock, you're going to see people just throw their hands up and say, you know what, it's not worth it, I'm going to turn my multi-unit into condos or I'm just going to sell or, you know what, I'll offer it to friends and family, not advertise it, do it under the table and not have to worry about the State.

But the end result, no matter what, is it's going to be more time and treasure for the people trying to provide housing. It's a housing tax on time, and I think we should support the pending motion and vote this bill down. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Representative **LOOKNER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What we're doing here is really a quite simple technical fix, as you've heard, at a time when Maine is facing a severe housing crisis.

One of the most basic challenges that we face when we're trying to pass reasonable policies is that we don't actually know who's owning and operating a lot of the rental housing in our State. So, I don't think it's unreasonable that we should ask who's owning the rental housing. It's pretty simple.

So, right now, as you've heard, when businesses register or file annual reports, they already describe what kind of business they're engaged in. In theory, this information is already available to the Secretary of State because when you go to register your business on an annual basis or do your report, you have to type in a box what kind of business you're doing. The problem is that it would just take thousands of hours of staff time to sort through all that data and figure out which corporations are in the business of renting housing. So, all this does is update the Secretary of State's process to have a little box that you check that when you're a rental housing person or when you're doing that, you check the box. And that way, we'll have a better idea of what major private equity and out-of-state firms are buying up all the rental housing in our State, we'll know when there are vacant properties, who to talk to when there's an emergency of some kind, we'll be able to dispatch public safety resources in a reasonable and timely manner.

So, despite the rhetoric, this is a very simple Bill. It's not Big Brother here, all we're doing is asking businesses that are already telling us what kind of business they're in to do it in a more efficient manner. And this is an issue across State government that when we are asking our technological vendors to help us update websites, we get slapped with huge Fiscal Notes and the vendors are taking advantage of us as the public sector and thinking that we don't have any technological competency, which unfortunately is sometimes true, but this data we're already collecting, this would just make it a simpler, more efficient way to do it and make it available to us as we're trying to contemplate how to fix the housing crisis. So, I'll be voting against the motion.

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

Representative **ARATA**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. Several times I've heard my good friends from across the aisle refer to this bill as a simple technical fix. However, I urge you all to click on the link to see this Amendment. It's seven pages long, it is far from simple and I urge you to support the Majority Ought Not to Pass motion. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Kennebunkport, Representative Gere.

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

Mr. Speaker, with this Bill, we have a great opportunity to improve our system for collecting business registration information with a clear classification of the sectors that businesses are involved in and vital contact information for our rental properties.

Mr. Speaker, I have operated and owned businesses over many years and had to file Federal income taxes for those businesses. And during that time, when you complete your Federal return, you have to already know and include your NAICS code to complete those forms. So, there's no additional work, anyone operating a business would already have that information. And keeping the information on rental properties very succinct is something that this bill does. It is really common sense that you should be able, if you are in the business of providing housing, homes for people, that you provide clear details on ownership, property management, contact information in case of an emergency and the various properties that are owned.

It's really just a common-sense measure that will put more information at the fingertips of all the entities that have been mentioned so far in the debate today. So, I will be voting against the pending motion and I urge you to follow my light. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Brewer, Representative O'Halloran.

Representative **O'HALLORAN**: Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to LD 1806.

I represent District 20 in Brewer, and in my community, rental housing is not owned primarily by large corporations, but it most likely will be if this passes. It is owned by local people. It is a duplex, it is three-unit buildings someone purchased as an investment for retirement, it is a homeowner who rents out an apartment over the garage.

Rental property is private property, it is personal property, and with ownership comes both responsibility and rights. And one of those rights is the ability to enforce a lawful contract through our courts between landlords and their tenants.

Supporters of this bill have suggested that 1806 is simply a small change to how businesses file annual reports with the Secretary of State. But when you look at the language of the bill, it does much more than that. LD 1806 creates a statewide residential rental unit registry administered by the Secretary of State, requires owners have registers with a lot of personal information. This bill also directs the Secretary of State to publish publicly accessible searchable database that includes registry and allows municipalities to obtain that data. That also will lead to probably property tax increases, as well as a lot of commercial owners being able to easily access that information to buy the property before it ever even goes out to the public. Many municipalities already have their own housing registration systems.

The most troubling part of this bill, to me, is if a landlord has not registered the rental unit, that the landlord may not serve a notice of termination. And again, it is personal property. People, even if they own rentals, have the right to evict their tenants. They don't have to get permission or wait 120 days. And for that reason and many others, I strongly oppose this bill.

I didn't catch up on the Amendment, I had a different speech, but I know some of the changes came through, but there's nothing about this, personally, that I like, and I strongly suggest voting against it, especially those of us that, you know, live in communities where there's a fair amount of rentals. Thank you.

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

Representative **COLLINS**: Good morning, Mr. Speaker. I have had a number of Realtors reach out to me, my own constituents are reaching out to me telling me to oppose this. So, I will be voting yes, and I just want that to be on the record, so they know I support them and their personal private property rights. Thank you.

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

Representative **BLIER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. Twenty-five years ago, Old Orchard Beach came up with some common-sense zoning that required all landlords to register their apartments. Today, the registration of your apartment is $500 per deed, $75 per unit. So, in a duplex, that's $650, so, that's $55 a month that has to be raised in order to just cover the registry.

Now, I know that's not the intention of this bill, but this is the intention of where this bill could go. So, I'm here today in support of this measure. It's the first time I see a bill that is helping with affordable housing in this State. Thank you.

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

ROLL CALL NO. 640

YEA - Albert, Arata, Ardell, Babin, Bagshaw, Bishop, Blier, Boyer D, Boyer M, Bridgeo, Bunker, Campbell, Carlow, Caruso, Chapman, Cimino, Collamore, Collins, Cooper, Crafts, Cray, Crockett, Daigle, Dill, Doudera, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eaton, Eder, Farrin, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foley, Foster, Fredericks, Fredette, Frost, Gifford, Greenwood, Guerrette, Haggan, Hall, Hasenfus, Henderson, Hepler, Hymes, Julia, Lajoie, Lance, Lanigan, Lavigne, Lee, Lemelin, Mason, Mastraccio, McIntyre, Mingo, Morris, Murphy, Nutting, O'Halloran, Olsen, Parry, Paul, Perkins, Poirier, Pomerleau, Quint, Rudnicki, Salisbury, Sargent, Sayre, Schmersal-Burgess, Simmons, Sinclair, Smith, Soboleski, Stover, Strout, Swallow, Thorne, Tuell, Underwood, Wadsworth, Walker, Webb, White J, White R, Wood P, Woodsome, Zager, Mr. Speaker.

NAY - Abdi, Ankeles, Archer, Arford, Beck, Bell, Brennan, Cluchey, DeBrito, Dhalac, Dodge, Faircloth, Friedmann, Gattine, Geiger, Gere, Golek, Graham, Gramlich, Harriman, Kessler, Kuhn, Lookner, Macias, Malon, Mathieson, Matlack, McCabe, Meyer, Milliken, Mitchell, Montell, Moonen, Osher, Pugh, Rana, Ray, Rielly, Rollins, Runte, Sachs, Sato, Shagoury, Skold, Supica, Yusuf.

ABSENT - Adams, Copeland, Jackson, Libby, Lyman, Pluecker, Roberts, Roeder, Terry, Warren, Wood S.

Yes, 92; No, 46; Absent, 11; Vacant, 1; Excused, 1.

92 having voted in the affirmative and 46 voted in the negative, 1 vacancy with 11 being absent and 1 excused, and accordingly the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report was **ACCEPTED** and sent for concurrence.

Majority Report of the Committee on **JUDICIARY** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-837)** on Bill "An Act to Protect the First Amendment Rights of Individuals in the State"

(H.P. 335) (L.D. 517)

Signed:

Senators:

CARNEY of Cumberland

TALBOT ROSS of Cumberland

Representatives:

KUHN of Falmouth

BABIN of Fort Fairfield

LEE of Auburn

O'HALLORAN of Brewer

PUGH of Portland

SATO of Gorham

SINCLAIR of Bath

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

Signed:

Senator:

HAGGAN of Penobscot

Representatives:

CARUSO of Caratunk

HENDERSON of Rumford

POIRIER of Skowhegan

READ.

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

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

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

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

Representative **KUHN**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and Honorable Members of the House. This bill promotes transparency in Maine elections by requiring a disclosure on certain political communications that contain deep fake or AI-generated content.

As high-quality deep fakes become easier to create and circulate, these materials are spreading rapidly, posing a serious threat to our elections. Today more than ever, it is important for people to know what is real. This bill is narrowly tailored to require a disclosure only if it meets a three-part test: the communication is a public communication as defined in Maine's election laws, the communication is already subject to a disclosure requirement under the campaign finance laws and the communication contains synthetic media that either depicts a candidate's appearance, actions or speech in a manner that is likely to deceive a reasonable person.

Again, this bill is very narrow, it will not address all of the fake content that we are seeing circulating online, but I do think it will make a difference. Free and fair elections depend on voters making informed decisions, and disclosures protect voters from being misled. When people see campaign ads, many assume that they are watching authentic video or hearing real statements. Without a disclosure, a voter could easily believe a fabricated material is real and base their vote on misinformation. This simple one-sentence notice stating that the content was generated by AI gives viewers the context they need to evaluate the content.

Disclosure also preserves trust in democratic institutions. If deep fake political ads spread without transparency, voters may begin to doubt everything they see or hear during elections, even real content. This creates a dangerous environment where truth itself becomes questionable.

Finally, this disclosure requirement is a practical solution, as it fits discretely within Maine's existing campaign finance laws, similar to existing rules that require campaigns to identify who paid for an advertisement. Just as voters deserve to know the source of political messaging, they also deserve to know when the message they're seeing has been fabricated.

In a time when technology can blur the line between reality and fiction, transparency is more important than ever, and requiring disclosure for deep fake content will protect voters, strengthen trust in elections and promote responsible use of this powerful new technology. So, I urge the Body to support the pending motion.

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

Representative **POIRIER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House, I rise in opposition to LD 517. While this bill is intended to address concerns about altered or synthetic media in political campaigns, the approach before us raises serious concerns about free speech, practicality and unintended consequences.

Political speech is among the most protected forms of expression under our Constitution. Campaigns, advocacy groups and everyday citizens routinely use satire, commentary and edited media to make political points. When the government begins requiring disclaimers for certain forms of expression, we place the State in a position of regulating political speech, something this Body should approach with great caution.

There are also serious questions about how this law would work in practice. Political messaging frequently involves edited clips, shortened statements and stylized images. Determining what qualifies as manipulated media will not always be clear, and the bill risks creating confusion for campaigns, organizations and citizens simply trying to participate in the democratic process.

The penalties are also significant. Fines tied to campaign spending could quickly become substantial, creating a chilling effect on speech, particularly from smaller campaigns and grassroot voices that lack legal teams to navigate complex rules.

We should ask ourselves an important question. Does the problem require government regulation? Maine voters are thoughtful and capable of evaluating political messages, questioning sources and making their own judgments. Our responsibility is to protect the marketplace of ideas, not to police it. For these reasons, I urge the Body to vote against the pending motion.

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

Representative **BOYER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this bill came to VLA last year and the Judiciary Committee had the courtesy to run it by us again after it's been worked a little bit more since then. And I still have a lot of hesitations about this bill.

We couldn't get straight answers in Committee. I gave a few examples, and I thought they were pretty benign, but we couldn't; for example, Mr. Speaker, if I were, you know, I'm a political operative and sometimes we write some mail or make some images. If, for example, I was going to make an image of the Representative from Caribou, maybe, and I was to put a

clown nose on the Representative from Caribou, would that be synthetic media? Would that need a disclosure, a disclaimer? We couldn't get a good answer on something as simple as a clown nose, so, I think it's, you know, the Representative from Skowhegan made some really excellent points about this, the confusion that it will cause during campaign season for organizations, especially smaller grassroots organizations.

The idea that satire and parody is carved out, you know, for First Amendment protections, who decides what's satire, what's parody? Everyone laughs at my jokes, so, I might do a good job of deciding what's satire and parody. But really, who decides? And, you know, there's a legal standard in there about a reasonable person and they would think that this is materially different. You know, I get it, that's a legal standard, but this day and age in politics, there's not much reason going on, and one side could think something's perfectly reasonable while the other side thinks it's absolutely crazy.

So, I don't think this bill is ready for primetime. I agree with the Sponsor that we do need trust and faith in our elections, but I'm not sure that this is the way to do it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Kennebunk, Representative Sayre.

Representative **SAYRE**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand the comments that cast doubt on Maine's ability to apply this law, but I do not share that doubt.

I have faith in the people of Maine to do what 25 other states have already done; red states and blue states; to regulate this kind of malicious and intentionally deceptive use of AI or other information technology to deceive voters. There is nothing substantially novel in this bill when compared to laws that have been passed in states across the political spectrum, or the color wheel, if you prefer; Arizona, Michigan, Texas, Colorado, Utah, to just name some of the examples.

The problem is serious; it is an issue of protecting authentic communication with voters by putting up guardrails against deliberately inauthentic communication with voters. Parody and satire are carved out; there is an awful lot of jurisprudence around what constitutes parody and satire. I think the courts in Maine and the people of Maine will be able to tell the difference. It's just a bill to provide a disclaimer, which I think in this day and age is a clear necessity. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Lowell, Representative McIntyre.

Representative **McINTYRE**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First time to do this, I'd like to pose a question through the Chair to anybody that can answer a question.

The SPEAKER: The Member may proceed.

Representative **McINTYRE**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Looking at the language of the Amendment, is there a statutory definition of either the word manipulated or altered? A statutory definition of either of those two words.

The SPEAKER: The Representative from Lowell, Representative McIntyre, has posed a question through the Chair to any Member who wishes to answer.

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. 641

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

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

ABSENT - Adams, Copeland, Jackson, Libby, Lyman, Pluecker, Roberts, Roeder, Terry, Warren, Wood S.

Yes, 73; No, 65; Absent, 11; Vacant, 1; Excused, 1.

73 having voted in the affirmative and 65 voted in the negative, 1 vacancy with 11 being absent and 1 excused, and accordingly the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended** Report was **ACCEPTED**.

The Bill was **READ ONCE**. **Committee Amendment "A" (H-837)** 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-837)** and sent for concurrence.

Majority Report of the Committee on **LABOR** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-831)** on Bill "An Act to Require Transportation Network Companies to Provide Fair Wages to Drivers"

(H.P. 563) (L.D. 877)

Signed:

Senators:

TIPPING of Penobscot

RAFFERTY of York

Representatives:

ROEDER of Bangor

ARCHER of Saco

BECK of South Portland

GEIGER of Rockland

MACIAS of Topsham

SKOLD of Portland

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

Signed:

Senator:

BRADSTREET of Kennebec

Representatives:

COLLINS of Sidney

DRINKWATER of Milford

SOBOLESKI of Phillips

READ.

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

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

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

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

Representative **SATO**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Colleagues of the House. This bill is just one step forward to address the deep disparity between transportation network companies like Uber and Lyft and their workers.

Drivers who work for Uber and Lyft are gig workers who do not answer to a person, but to an app. An app that is run by a multi-billion-dollar tech company out of Silicon Valley. In many cases, drivers are not making money, but losing money, which given the cost of living is detrimental to many Maine families. And not only that, drivers are subjected to an unfair deactivation process that essentially allows for the company to fire someone for the smallest infraction.

In an effort to bring forward legislation to bring equity and fairness to this system for TNC drivers, I had great difficulty obtaining basic aggregated data to craft language that would actually provide fair wages to workers while also ensuring that the bill can be implemented. That's why the Committee Amendment that is before us today is a Resolve to create a study with stakeholders to obtain basic aggregated Maine-specific data from transportation network companies to craft legislation to address the ongoing issues that TNC drivers face in our State. I urge you to vote yes on the pending motion.

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

Representative **SOBOLESKI**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There was very little testimony on this. I think maybe two, maybe three people did. Uber did come in and testify. They explained that in their structure, it is a gig; that it is a side hustle, in their structure, their payment, 75% of the fee goes to the driver, as well as all tips go to the driver. The company itself gets 25%, and that's it. I don't know what we're going to study to make it any clearer, how we're going to make it any different. There is no hire and fire process, there's an application process, if you're done, you're done and you just walk away. It's not a long-term situation.

So, I don't know what they're going to get out of the study, change the fee a little, maybe; I don't know what that would be, but Uber itself said that their people were pretty happy, they didn't receive very many complaints about it and I urge the Body to reject this. Thank you.

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

Representative **FAULKINGHAM**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Isn't it amazing that we can leave here, fly out of here on a plane, land in Boston, land in Atlanta, D.C. and before we've even got off the plane, get on our phone, get on an app, say we need a ride from point A to point B and already there's several choices of people that will pull right up and pick you up and go? The free market created that, Mr. Speaker. There was a need for it. We, the consumers, wanted it and it was created in the free market.

This is a per diem job, Mr. Speaker. People do this for a share of it, it's piecework, basically. You get paid by how much you do. There's nothing to study here, Mr. Speaker. If you want to make more money, you work more. If you want to take more rides, you do. If you don't feel like even going to work, you don't. It's all up to the driver, and it's all controlled by the free market and there's a service here that has pulled that together, basically co-opted that together these people who just have cars, all over the country, get to be unified with these apps by other people all over the country who don't know them, will never know that they need them, but want this service.

This is just another example of anti-business government getting in the way of a service that the consumer wants. Vote no on the pending motion, Mr. Speaker.

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

Representative **SKOLD**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wanted to very briefly just rise and say that drivers who are employed or are working with Uber as contracts, drivers have asked for this to be looked at, have been part of stakeholder groups that have requested this study to be done. I urge everyone to vote yes on the pending motion.

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

Representative **SUPICA**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As somebody who's going to need to be utilizing this to just make ends meet, I just want to paint a little different picture.

This isn't just something fun that I'm going to do in my spare time to just have a little bit of extra cash. A lot of people who are doing this are living on the margins, we're barely getting by and we're being exploited. A lot of times there's a lot of wear and tear on our cars and we don't get to know how much we're going to make until we agree to the ride. It's a really unfair balance of power.

So, it's painted a picture of just something fun or that you can do in your spare time. I mean, there are opportunities where if you can make some money, but in Bangor, more often than not, it's not as easy to make money as you wish, it's actually at times really hard to make money and you end up losing money because you can agree to something and then when you agree to it, you can find that you're going a long distance, you make very little money compared to the amount that you'd have to spend on gas and the distance that you have to drive. So, please follow my light and support this measure.

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

Representative **SOBOLESKI**: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd just like to remind the Body that not one Uber driver came in to testify. Not one Uber driver submitted written testimony. 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. 642

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

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

ABSENT - Adams, Copeland, Jackson, Libby, Lyman, Pluecker, Roberts, Roeder, Terry, Warren, Wood S.

Yes, 72; No, 66; Absent, 11; Vacant, 1; Excused, 1.

72 having voted in the affirmative and 66 voted in the negative, 1 vacancy with 11 being absent and 1 excused, and accordingly the Majority **Ought to Pass as Amended** Report was **ACCEPTED**.

The Bill was **READ ONCE**. **Committee Amendment "A" (H-831)** 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-831)** and sent for concurrence.

Majority Report of the Committee on **LABOR** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-830)** on Bill "An Act to Modify Service Retirement Provisions to Include Additional Emergency Communications Positions in the 1998 Special Plan"

(H.P. 1400) (L.D. 2085)

Signed:

Senators:

TIPPING of Penobscot
BRADSTREET of Kennebec
RAFFERTY of York

Representatives:

ROEDER of Bangor
ARCHER of Saco
BECK of South Portland
COLLINS of Sidney
DRINKWATER of Milford
GEIGER of Rockland
MACIAS of Topsham
SKOLD of Portland
SOBOLESKI of Phillips

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

Signed:

Representative:

LIBBY of Auburn

READ.

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

The Bill was **READ ONCE**. **Committee Amendment "A" (H-830)** 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-830)** and sent for concurrence.

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

ENACTORS

Emergency Measure

An Act Regarding the Motor Vehicle Excise Tax Exemption for Leased Automobiles for Certain Veterans

(H.P. 205) (L.D. 305)
(C. "A" H-813)

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. 104 voted in favor of the same and 0 against, and accordingly the Bill was **PASSED TO BE ENACTED**, signed by the Speaker and sent to the Senate.

Emergency Measure

An Act to Address Vacancies on the Knox County Budget Committee

(H.P. 1447) (L.D. 2158)
(C. "A" H-810)

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. 106 voted in favor of the same and 0 against, and accordingly the Bill was **PASSED TO BE ENACTED**, signed by the Speaker and sent to the Senate.

Emergency Measure

Resolve, Regarding Legislative Review of Portions of Chapter 1: Fee Schedule, a Major Substantive Rule of the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Maine Land Use Planning Commission

(H.P. 1369) (L.D. 2039)

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. 107 voted in favor of the same and 0 against, and accordingly the Resolve was **FINALLY PASSED**, signed by the Speaker and sent to the Senate.

Emergency Measure

Resolve, Regarding Legislative Review of Chapter 6: Delegation of Nursing Activities and Tasks to Unlicensed Assistive Personnel by Registered Professional Nurses, a Major Substantive Rule of the Department of Professional and Financial Regulation, State Board of Nursing

(H.P. 1455) (L.D. 2166)

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. 109 voted in favor of the same and 0 against, and accordingly the Resolve was **FINALLY PASSED**, signed by the Speaker and sent to the Senate.

Acts

An Act Regarding Home Health Care Services Ordered by a Physician Licensed Outside of Maine

(H.P. 1041) (L.D. 1583)
(C. "A" H-811)

An Act to Clarify the Bureau of Labor Standards' Investigatory and Enforcement Procedures

(H.P. 1045) (L.D. 1587)
(C. "A" H-808)

An Act to Preserve and Strengthen the Fund for a Healthy Maine

(H.P. 1099) (L.D. 1658)
(C. "A" H-809)

An Act to Increase Child Care Affordability

(S.P. 763) (L.D. 1955)
(C. "B" S-515)

An Act to Authorize an Educational Requirement for Seaweed Permit Holders

(S.P. 803) (L.D. 1991)
(C. "A" S-516)

An Act to Make Changes to Certain Licensing Laws Governing For-hire Charter Boat Operators, Lobster and Crab Fishing and Elver Dealers

(H.P. 1354) (L.D. 2024)
(C. "A" H-812)

An Act to Establish the Child Care Employment Award

(S.P. 855) (L.D. 2066)
(C. "A" S-513)

An Act to Establish Guidance for Awarding General Spousal Support

(S.P. 860) (L.D. 2142)
(C. "A" S-517)

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

Resolves

Resolve, to Rename a Bridge in Roxbury the Roxbury-Frye Veterans Memorial Bridge

(S.P. 885) (L.D. 2181)

Resolve, to Rename the Little River Bridge in the Town of Cornish the Cornish Veterans Memorial Bridge

(S.P. 887) (L.D. 2183)

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

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

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

COMMUNICATIONS

The Following Communication: (H.C. 393)

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

March 10, 2026
Honorable Robert B. Hunt
Clerk of the House
2 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333
Dear Clerk Hunt:
Pursuant to my authority under House Rule 201.1 (H), I appoint Representative Allison Hepler, of Woolwich to serve as Speaker Pro Tem to convene the House on Tuesday, March 10, 2026.
Sincerely,
S/Ryan D. Fecteau
Speaker of the House

READ and **ORDERED PLACED ON FILE**.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEE
Refer to the Committee on Housing and Economic Development
Pursuant to Resolve

Report of the **Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development** on Bill "An Act to Invest in the Construction of Industrialized Housing"

(S.P. 912) (L.D. 2230)

Reporting that it be **REFERRED** to the Committee on **HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT** pursuant to Resolve 2025, chapter 105, section 7.

Came from the Senate with the Report **READ** and **ACCEPTED** and the Bill **REFERRED** to the Committee on **HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**.

The Report was **READ** and **ACCEPTED** and the Bill was **REFERRED** to the Committee on **HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT** in concurrence.

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

On motion of Representative POIRIER of Skowhegan, the House adjourned at 11:58 a.m., until 10:00 a.m., Thursday, March 12, 2026.