MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE
SECOND REGULAR SESSION
16th Legislative Day
Thursday, March 19, 2026

Representative MATLACK of St. George assumed the Chair.

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

Prayer by Reverend Diann Bailey, First Parish Church, Yarmouth.

National Anthem by Yasmin Vitalius, Portland Symphony Orchestra.

Pledge of Allegiance.

Medical Provider of the Day, Jennifer C. Eaton, DO, Brunswick.

The Journal of yesterday was read and approved.

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

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

COMMUNICATIONS

The Following Communication: (H.C. 404)

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

March 19, 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:"
Health and Human Services
L.D. 1922 An Act to Support Workforce Development for Families That Were Involved in Child Protective Activities by Requiring the Sealing of Certain Records (EMERGENCY)
Housing and Economic Development
L.D. 292 An Act to Implement the Automotive Right to Repair Working Group Recommendations
L.D. 2182 An Act to Implement a Recommendation of the Commission to Recommend Methods for Preventing Deed Fraud in the State
Taxation
L.D. 926 An Act to Promote Research and Development in the State by Amending the Research Expense Tax Credit
Sincerely,
S/Robert B. Hunt
Clerk of the House

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

The Following Communication: (S.C. 895)

MAINE SENATE
132ND LEGISLATURE
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

March 18, 2026
Honorable Robert B. Hunt
Clerk of the House
2 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333
Dear Clerk Hunt:
Please be advised the Senate today insisted to its previous action whereby it Indefinitely Postponed "Joint Resolution To Honor The Life, Faith, Leadership And Legacy Of Charles "Charlie" James Kirk" (H.P. 1485) in non-concurrence.
Best Regards,
S/Darek M. Grant
Secretary of the Senate

READ and **ORDERED PLACED ON FILE**.

PETITIONS, BILLS AND RESOLVES REQUIRING REFERENCE
Pursuant to Statute
Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife

Representative ROBERTS for the **Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife** pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 5, section 8072 asks leave to report that the accompanying Resolve, Regarding Legislative Review of Chapter 10: Significant Wildlife Habitat, a Late-filed Major Substantive Rule of the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (EMERGENCY)

(H.P. 1515) (L.D. 2240)

Be **REFERRED** to the Committee on **INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE** and printed pursuant to Joint Rule 218.

The Report was **READ** and **ACCEPTED** and the Resolve was **REFERRED** to the Committee on **INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE** and ordered printed pursuant to Joint Rule 218.

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. 44)

ORDERED, that Representative Lynn Holland Copeland of Saco be excused Mar 10 for personal reasons.

AND BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that Representative Laurel D. Libby of Auburn be excused Jan 13, Feb 10 and Mar 10 for personal reasons.

AND BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that Representative Sheila A. Lyman of Livermore Falls be excused Mar 10 for health reasons.

AND BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that Representative Amy J. Roeder of Bangor be excused Mar 10 for health reasons.

AND BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that Representative Stephen J. Wood of Greene be excused Mar 10 for health reasons.

AND BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that Representative David Woodsome of Waterboro be excused Jan 20 and 27, Feb 10 and 12 for health reasons.

READ and **PASSED**.

SPECIAL SENTIMENT CALENDAR

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

Recognizing:

Wilfred Beriau, of Gray, who was inducted into the American Academy of Chefs Culinary Hall of Fame in 2024. We extend our congratulations and best wishes;

(HLS 621)

Presented by Representative GRAHAM of North Yarmouth.

Cosponsored by Senator PIERCE of Cumberland, Representative ARATA of New Gloucester.

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. Ladies and Gentlemen of the House, I am so honored to be able to honor my friend, Will Beriau, along with his wife of 42 years, Gitana.

You know, you never know who lives in your neighborhood until you knock on their door. I met Will several years ago when I served in a previous Legislature, and he and his wife and I have become fast friends.

Will shared with me his bio, and it's enormously extensive, but let me share a couple things. Will started his culinary career professionally in 1969. Since then, he was fortunate enough to be chosen for the 2005 Maine Restaurant Association Chef of the Year Award, a National Chef Educator of the Year in 2009, a Lifetime Achievement Award from Maine Hospitality and he was elected to the American Academy of Chefs Hall of Fame. He even had his own television show.

What's more important is that he gave back to his community. He worked with the Boy Scouts, the Red Cross, Wayside Soup Kitchen and I remember him serving and helping people during the pandemic. He has subsequently retired from Southern Maine Community College after 27 years. From there, he became the Curriculum Director for Maine Hospitality and the ProStart program up until 2023, visiting up to 15 schools annually. And the thing that he pointed out to me was in 2011, he served over 1,100 people in the Hall of Flags, along with his students from Southern Maine Community College. I understand we had Lobster Newburg; I'm allergic to it, so I didn't have it that day, but that he's given back again and again and again.

So, I am, again, so honored, I'm so happy to recognize that Will has been inducted into the American Academy Chefs Culinary Art Hall of Fame in 2024. Thank you, Madam Speaker Pro Tem.

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

COMMUNICATIONS

The Following Communication: (H.C. 405)

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

March 19, 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 Ann Higgins Matlack, of St. George to serve as Speaker Pro Tem to convene the House on Thursday, March 19, 2026.

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

READ and **ORDERED PLACED ON FILE**.

The Speaker resumed the Chair.

The House was called to order by the Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair wishes to thank the Representative from St. George, Representative Matlack, 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 **CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY** reporting **Ought Not to Pass** on Bill "An Act to Amend Maine's Good Samaritan Laws Regarding Suspected Drug-related Overdoses"

(S.P. 643) (L.D. 1646)

Signed:

Senator:

CYRWAY of Kennebec

Representatives:

HASENFUS of Readfield
ABDI of Lewiston
ARDELL of Monticello
MCINTYRE of Lowell
MILLIKEN of Blue Hill
NUTTING of Oakland
PERKINS of Dover-Foxcroft

Minority Report of the same Committee reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-541)** on same Bill.

Signed:

Senators:

BEEBE-CENTER of Knox
CURRY of Waldo

Representatives:

BUNKER of Farmington
LAJOIE of Lewiston
LOOKNER of Portland

Came from the Senate with the Majority **OUGHT NOT TO PASS** Report **READ** and **ACCEPTED**.

READ.

On motion of Representative HASENFUS of Readfield, the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report was **ACCEPTED** in concurrence.

Majority Report of the Committee on **ENERGY, UTILITIES AND TECHNOLOGY** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-544)** on Bill "An Act Regarding the Beneficial Electrification Policy of the State"

(S.P. 676) (L.D. 1730)

Signed:

Senators:

LAWRENCE of York
GROHOSKI of Hancock

Representatives:

SACHS of Freeport
FOSTER of Dexter
GEIGER of Rockland
KESSLER of South Portland
RUNTE of York
WADSWORTH of Hiram
WARREN of Scarborough
WEBB of Durham

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

Signed:

Representatives:

MCINTYRE of Lowell
PAUL of Winterport

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-544)**.

READ.

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

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Bar Harbor, Representative Friedmann.

Representative **FRIEDMANN**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as you know, electricity prices are rising rapidly for Maine households. These rising costs --

The SPEAKER: The Member will defer. The Chair will remind the Member -- The Member may proceed.

Representative **FRIEDMANN**: These rising costs hit low- and moderate-income households, renters and seniors especially hard. LD 1730 expands access to affordable clean energy by allowing residents to use small, portable, plug-in solar systems without the complex interconnection requirements typically associated with large rooftop arrays. The bill is designed to help Mainers lower their electricity bills.

Plug-in solar refers to small solar units that can be plugged into an AC outlet and used to provide electricity to a home, barn, camp or a small business. These units typically consist of one to four panels, an inverter to convert DC to AC power and cabling to plug it in. Some include battery storage and the cost is just $500 to $3,000, making it affordable to many. Plug-in solar is thriving in Europe, with four million registered systems in Germany alone, totaling about 700 megawatts, the equivalent of a large power plant. Twenty-five European countries have legalized plug-in solar, and here in the U.S., Utah is the first state to pass a law legalizing plug-in solar systems. Twenty other states have plug-in solar legislation pending.

So, why LD 1730? My friend, Sue Inches, suggests five reasons. Number one, plug-in solar needs to be defined with a maximum power output, so people and utilities have a shared understanding of exactly what it is. This bill limits plug-in solar to 1,200 watts or less, about what's needed to run lights and ventilation in your barn, garage or camp or an electric hair dryer. Number two, to establish these units are off grid and behind the meter. This bill specifies that they would be free from fees, interconnection agreements or any other obligations to utilities. Owners will only need to file a form registering their units, so the number of units can be tracked. Number three, the bill prohibits plug-in solar from net metering. Unused power cannot be banked for later use. Generally, plug-in units are too small to generate excess power, but this bill rules that possibility out. Number four, LD 1730 allows homeowners and renters to install plug-in solar devices without a professional installer or licensed electrician. And finally, the Law specifies safety requirements so that like other electrical appliances, plug-in solar units will be tested and certified.

Mr. Speaker, this is an exciting and promising technology that complements Maine's independent spirit, frees ratepayers from the volatility of fossil fuels and promotes the frugal self-sufficiency that has kept us strong. I urge you to vote yes on this bill. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

The Bill was **READ ONCE**. **Committee Amendment "A" (S-544)** 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-544)** in concurrence.

Majority Report of the Committee on **HEALTH COVERAGE, INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-538)** on Bill "An Act to Provide Additional Financing Options to Consumers in the State"

(S.P. 843) (L.D. 2056)

Signed:

Senators:

BAILEY of York
BALDACCI of Penobscot
HAGGAN of Penobscot

Representatives:

MATHIESON of Kittery
ARFORD of Brunswick
BOYER of Cape Elizabeth
CIMINO of Bridgton
FLYNN of Albion
FOLEY of Wells
MASTRACCIO of Sanford
MORRIS of Turner
OLSEN of Raymond

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

Signed:

Representative:

CLUCHEY of Bowdoinham

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-538)**.

READ.

On motion of Representative MATHIESON of Kittery, **TABLED** pending **ACCEPTANCE** of either Report and later today assigned.

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

Representative **STROUT**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. My heart is racing almost as it was the other day for the Point of Order, but not quite.

So, I just wanted to rise today and recognize the Narraguagus Junior-Senior High School Class D Volleyball State Champions three years in a row. They've made the trip from Harrington, so it'll be a six-hour bus ride, so to get the best out of it, I'm going to take a little minute and highlight some of their great accomplishments.

So, they were DAC Champions four years in a row, and this is specific to the players. So, Eden Fraser was PVC's Spirit of the Game Award; Eileen Berry, All-Star, PVC Second Team; Kaitlyn Grant, All-Star, PVC Second Team; Lola Worcester, DAC All-Star, PVC First Team, AVCA National Player of the Week; Natalie Stanwood, she's a senior DAC All-Star, DAC Player of the Year, PVC First Team, PVC Player of the Year, AVCA National Player of the Week, Senior All-Star MVP and Eastern Maine Sports Volleyball Player of the Year. That's just to name a few of their accomplishments.

The program has grown immensely, with the dedication of their coach, Holly Strout. She is the DAC Coach of the Year for the ninth year in a row and PVC Coach of the Year. In addition, what she has done for our community is she brings these kids together to appreciate getting and giving back. So, she started the Volley for the Cure and over the past 10 years, they've raised over $60,000 to help people in our area battling cancer. Most recently, you guys will probably remember the Honorable Robert Alley. We raised $7,000 for his great-grandson, Isaac Hall.

So, I just wanted to take a minute and highlight all of the good things going on in the county. Our All-State players were just announced, and it's no surprise that Natalie Stanwood is on the Class D First Team, but we also have Lola Worcester on the First Team and then Eden Fraser, Eileen Berry, Kaitlyn Grant. And in addition to their academics, Keyontae Pinkham just won the Bronze medal at the SkillsUSA for First Aid and CPR. Serenity McLaughlin won the Bronze medal for Basic Health Care. So, I'm very proud of these kids and all their accomplishments and everything that goes on in Downeast. So, thank you.

Eight Members of the Committee on **LABOR** report in Report "A" **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-546)** on Bill "An Act to Decrease Offsets to Disability Retirement Benefits"

(S.P. 863) (L.D. 2145)

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

Four Members of the same Committee report in Report "B" **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "B" (S-547)** on same Bill.

Signed:

Senator:

BRADSTREET of Kennebec

Representatives:

COLLINS of Sidney

DRINKWATER of Milford

SOBOLESKI of Phillips

One Member of the same Committee reports in Report "C" **Ought Not to Pass** on same Bill.

Signed:

Representative:

LIBBY of Auburn

Came from the Senate with Report "A" **OUGHT TO PASS AS AMENDED READ** and **ACCEPTED** and the Bill **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED AS AMENDED BY COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" (S-546)**.

READ.

Representative ROEDER of Bangor moved that the House **ACCEPT** Report "A" **Ought to Pass as Amended**.

Representative DRINKWATER of Milford **REQUESTED** a roll call on the motion to **ACCEPT** Report "A" **Ought to Pass as Amended**.

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 Milford, Representative Drinkwater.

Representative **DRINKWATER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, under Maine law, the amount of disability retirement benefits available through MainePERS generally is 59% of a member's average final compensation. If the member is also receiving or has received a Worker's Comp payment for the same disability, the law currently requires the disability benefit be reduced so that the two benefits combined do not exceed 80% of their annual income. This bill would increase the amount the recipients of MainePERS disability retirement benefits who also received Worker's Comp benefits from 80% to 100% of the member's annual financial, allowing members to receive full income replacement.

By moving compensation to 100% of income, we are removing the very incentive that has long been built into the system. Instead of encouraging recovery and a timely return to the workforce, we risk creating a system that unintentionally rewards prolonged absence from work. The goal should be recovery, independence and getting people back to work, not

creating conditions that make it easier to stay out of work indefinitely.

This bill also carries a direct and immediate fiscal impact. MainePERS estimates it will cost $1.7 million. Article IX, Section 18 of the Maine Constitution requires that a Legislature cannot create or expand a benefit without fully funding it at the time of Enactment. Not only does this bill create a requirement to fully fund expanded benefits, it does so without the level of consensus typically needed to secure that funding. We are, in effect, debating a proposal that is unlikely to be funded, while putting forward a policy that increases cost, weakens incentives to return to work and places additional burden on the taxpayers. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Topsham, Representative Macias.

Representative **MACIAS**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's been an honor to serve on the Labor Committee this past year. The work happening there matters deeply to me, because it affects real people, real families and real lives. And while the details can be technical, sometimes even dry, I have great respect for the policy experts and advocates who bring these issues forward. I won't claim to understand every Statute or regulation that has been built over the years, but I do understand fairness and I know when something feels out of balance. And I've spent a lot of time thinking about this bill not just from the policy perspective, but from a human one.

This past Monday, I brought my wife, Gemma, home from Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston after surgery on her foot. For a few days, her mobility was very limited. She couldn't do the things she normally does without help. It was temporary and she's healing well; she went back to work today with a boot on. But even in that short window, I saw something clearly. The loss of independence, her frustration, the vulnerability, obstacles everywhere.

Now imagine that isn't temporary. Imagine that's your life. That is the reality for many workers in Maine who are injured on the job. People who went to work, did what was asked of them and come home changed, sometimes permanently. And then, on top of that, we tell them that their compensation will be limited or capped. Reduced. We justify it by saying we don't want someone earning more on disability than what they did while they were working. Let's be honest about that. No one is choosing injury. No one is hoping for a life-altering disability so they can navigate a complicated system for partial wages. And even if there are cases of fraud, and there always will be outliers, that is not the reason to undercut the dignity and security of every honest worker who has been hurt in service to their employer and to this State. We are talking about teachers, state employees, people who are already underpaid for the value they provide. When they are injured, our responsibility is not to limit them, our responsibility is to stand with them, to ensure that they know their well-being, not cost containment, is at the center of our decisions.

I also want to recognize Sue Hawes, whose steadfast commitment to her spouse and her advocacy for injured workers has brought this issue into clear focus for many of us. Her voice represents countless families navigating these challenges every day and she's there every day. This is not abstract. This is personal. And it is our responsibility to get it right.

And I'll close with this, if the assumption behind this policy is that people are gaming the system, that workers are lazy, they can't be trusted, then I'd ask us to pause for a moment and look in the mirror. That is not who the people of Maine are, and it is not how we should legislate. We were elected to represent and protect the residents of this State, not to prioritize the profit margins of employers. The free market will take care of profits, right? Our responsibility is people. Labor is not a line item on a balance sheet; labor is a human being. It is a body that can be injured, a mind that can be strained and a family that depends on that person coming home whole. And when that doesn't happen, our measure of success should not be how much we saved, it should be how well we cared. Because labor is not measured in costs to be cut, it is measured in the well-being of the people who do the work.

If we cannot make injured workers whole physically, then we should at least make them whole financially. They gave their labor, they gave their bodies, they gave their futures. The least we can do is ensure they receive 100% of the benefits they've earned. Thank you.

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

Representative **ROEDER**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to read a portion of the MePERS testimony, because I think this is going to help us understand this particular bill a little bit better.

According to Statute, in order to qualify for disability retirement, a member must demonstrate that one or more medically diagnosable conditions exist, that functional limitations caused by those conditions make the member unable to perform the essential functions of the member's employment position with reasonable accommodations and that the inability can be expected to be permanent. This is not about temporary disabilities and getting back to work, this is about long-term disabilities. And I am grateful that the majority of the Committee understood that 80%, which is currently in Statute, was not adequate. The Majority Report is a full 100% cap, and we heard from the folks that were testifying that even 100% is not enough. When someone is disabled and they'd been counting on an income in order to pay their mortgage, to feed their families, to pay their bills and then you add on top of that ongoing medical expenses, even 100% is not enough.

So, this is a step in the right direction. It is still not going to take care of the vast needs that disabled workers have, but at least it is a step in the right direction. Thank you.

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

ROLL CALL NO. 663

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

NAY - Adams, Albert, Arata, Ardell, Babin, Bagshaw, Bishop, Blier, Boyer D, Campbell, Carlow, Caruso, Chapman, Cimino, Collamore, Collins, Cooper, Cray, Daigle, Drinkwater, Ducharme, Eder, Faulkingham, Flynn, Foley, Foster, Fredericks, Gifford, Greenwood, Guerrette, Haggan, Henderson, Hymes, Jackson, Lance, Lavigne, Lemelin, Libby, Lyman, Mason, McIntyre, Mingo, Morris, Nutting, Olsen, Parry, 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 - Fredette, Geiger, Hall, Lanigan, Moonen, Paul, Pugh, Roberts, Sargent, Wood S.

Yes, 73; No, 66; Absent, 10; Vacant, 1; Excused, 1.

73 having voted in the affirmative and 66 voted in the negative, 1 vacancy with 10 being absent and 1 excused, and accordingly Report "A" **Ought to Pass as Amended** was **ACCEPTED**.

The Bill was **READ ONCE**. **Committee Amendment "A" (S-546)** 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-546)** in concurrence.

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

CONSENT CALENDAR
First Day

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

(S.P. 850) (L.D. 2139) Resolve, Authorizing the Commissioner of Administrative and Financial Services to Convey the Interests of the State in Certain Real Property in East Millinocket Committee on **STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT** reporting **Ought to Pass**

(S.P. 562) (L.D. 1416) Bill "An Act to Require the Department of Health and Human Services to Immediately Take Custody of Persons Sentenced to Mental Health Facilities That May Not Include County or Regional Jails" Committee on **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-550)**

(S.P. 690) (L.D. 1772) Bill "An Act to Implement the Recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Commission to Design a Plan for Sustained Investment in Preventing Disease and Improving the Health of Maine Communities" Committee on **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-548)**

(S.P. 775) (L.D. 1980) Bill "An Act to Implement the Recommendations of the Stakeholder Group to Examine and Improve the Recruitment, Retention and Wellness of Law Enforcement Officers" Committee on **CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-540)**

(S.P. 809) (L.D. 1996) Bill "An Act to Clarify Responsibilities of the State in the Laws Governing General Assistance" Committee on **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-555)**

(S.P. 814) (L.D. 2000) Bill "An Act to Update the Campaign Finance Laws" (EMERGENCY) Committee on **VETERANS AND LEGAL AFFAIRS** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-542)**

(S.P. 846) (L.D. 2060) Bill "An Act to Make Technical Changes to the Maine Uniform Securities Act and to Clarify the Securities Administrator's Authority to Grant Licensing Exemptions for Broker-Dealers" Committee on **HEALTH COVERAGE, INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-545)**

(S.P. 818) (L.D. 2129) Bill "An Act to Prohibit Liens on Principal Residences and Wage Garnishments for Medical Debt" Committee on **HEALTH COVERAGE, INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-551)**

(S.P. 823) (L.D. 2130) Bill "An Act to Support Employment Opportunities for Military Spouses" Committee on **VETERANS AND LEGAL AFFAIRS** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-543)**

(S.P. 830) (L.D. 2133) Bill "An Act Regarding Licensing of Community Paramedicine Services and Clinicians" Committee on **HEALTH COVERAGE, INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-552)**

(S.P. 884) (L.D. 2179) Bill "An Act to Amend Certain Motor Vehicle Laws" Committee on **TRANSPORTATION** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-549)**

(S.P. 896) (L.D. 2195) Bill "An Act to Prohibit the Appointment or Assignment of a Private Attorney to Provide Indigent Legal Services Without That Attorney's Consent" Committee on **JUDICIARY** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-539)**

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

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

ENACTORS
Emergency Measure

An Act Facilitating the Reconstruction or Replacement of Storm-damaged Commercial Fisheries Facilities and Infrastructure

(S.P. 861) (L.D. 2143)

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. 111 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 Require Superintendents of School Administrative Units to Report Data Related to Educator Vacancies

(H.P. 1345) (L.D. 2015)
(C. "A" H-839)

An Act to Define "Public Education" and Clarify That a Private School Receiving Approval for Public Tuition Must Be Located in the State

(H.P. 1424) (L.D. 2109)
(C. "A" H-838)

An Act to Amend the Charter of the Boothbay-Boothbay Harbor Community School District

(H.P. 1426) (L.D. 2111)
(C. "A" H-840)

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**.

SENATE PAPERS

The following Joint Order: (S.P. 916)

ORDERED, the House concurring, that when the Senate and House adjourn, they do so until Tuesday, March 24, 2026, at 10:00 in the morning, or until the call of the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House, respectively.

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

READ and **PASSED** in concurrence.

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

COMMUNICATIONS

The Following Communication: (H.P. 1514)

STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF THE
SECRETARY OF STATE
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0148

March 17, 2026
Honorable Robert B. Hunt
Clerk of the House
2 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333
Dear Clerk Hunt:
Enclosed please find my official certification to the 132nd Legislature of the citizen initiative petition entitled "An Act to Designate School Sports Participation and Facilities by Sex".
Sincerely,
S/Shenna Bellows
Secretary of State

STATE OF MAINE
SECRETARY OF STATE

I, Shenna Bellows, Secretary of State, hereby certify that written petitions bearing valid signatures of 71,033 electors of this State were addressed to the Legislature of the State of Maine and were filed in the office of the Secretary of State on February 2, 2026, requesting that the Legislature consider an act entitled, "An Act to Designate School Sports Participation and Facilities by Sex".

I further certify that the number of signatures submitted is in excess of ten percent of the total votes cast in the last gubernatorial election preceding the filing of such petitions, as required by Article IV, Part Third, Section 18 of the Constitution of Maine, that number being 67,682.

I further certify this initiative petition to be valid and attach herewith the text of the legislation circulated on the petition's behalf.

In testimony whereof, I have caused the Great Seal of the State of Maine to be hereunto affixed. Given under my hand at Augusta on the seventeenth day of March in the year Two Thousand and Twenty-six.

S/Shenna Bellows
Secretary of State

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

Sent for concurrence.

On motion of Representative KUHN of Falmouth, the accompanying Bill "An Act to Designate School Sports Participation and Facilities by Sex"

(I.B. 3) (L.D. 2239)

Was **REFERRED** to the Committee on **JUDICIARY**, ordered printed and sent for concurrence.

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

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

Representative **KUHN**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Colleagues of the House. Today is Access to Justice Day, when we recognize and celebrate Maine's seven civil legal services providers and the critical work they're doing for Maine people in every corner of our State. These providers are the clinics at Maine Law, Disability Rights Maine, Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project, Legal Services for Maine Elders, Maine Equal Justice, Pine Tree Legal Assistance and the Volunteer Lawyers Project.

One of the fundamental principles of our legal system is that everyone, regardless of circumstance, should have access to the courts and a fair opportunity to seek justice. And every year, thousands of Maine people with low incomes depend on civil legal services to help them respond to pivotal, often life-changing legal issues. This includes: helping Mainers stay housed and prevent evictions and foreclosures; access health care and income supports when benefits are wrongly terminated; escape abuse, exploitation, unsafe living conditions; protect the educational rights of children with disabilities; respond to crises and community emergencies by providing trusted legal guidance and critical resources when Mainers need help the most and achieving and maintaining

economic stability for families, older people and people with disabilities.

The impact of Maine's civil legal services in these situations extends far beyond the individuals who are helped, but rather contributes to the overall health, stability and resilience of our communities. Legal services also help our legal system run better. When individuals are represented, the courts run more efficiently, because lawyers can resolve the cases that can be resolved and removes those cases from dockets and reduces court costs.

If we want people to respect the courts and trust the rule of law, we have to ensure that there is justice for all. Investing in civil legal services is a proven strategy that will make our communities healthier, stronger and more resilient. So, I urge my colleagues to take advantage of the opportunity to meet with these providers today, they are in the Hall of Flags, and learn more about the great work they're doing in our State. Thank you.

On motion of Representative RIELLY of Westbrook, the House adjourned at 11:19 a.m., until 10:00 a.m., Tuesday, March 24, 2026, or until the call of the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate, respectively, pursuant to the Joint Order (S.P. 916).