

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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LEGISLATIVE RECORD

OF THE

*One Hundred and Sixth
Legislature*

OF THE

STATE OF MAINE

Volume III

June 6, 1973 to July 3, 1973

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KENNEBEC JOURNAL
AUGUSTA, MAINE

Eligibility for Unemployment Compensation. (H. P. 1014) (L. D. 1333)

An Act Relating to Nets to Catch Shrimp. (H. P. 1537) (L. D. 1967)

An Act Appropriating Additional Funds to the Department of Health and Welfare for Medical Care Payments for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1973. (S. P. 648) (L. D. 1985)

An Act Creating the Uniform Alcoholism and Intoxication Treatment Act. (S. P. 13) (L. D. 76)

(On motion by Mr. Conley of Cumberland, temporarily set aside.)

An Act Relating to Public Utilities Commission Rate Regulation for Carriers of Freight. (S. P. 634) (L. D. 1965)

An Act Authorizing Sale of the Seal Cove Water District. (H. P. 1530) (L. D. 1961)

These being emergency measures and, except for the matter temporarily set aside, having received the affirmative votes of 30 members of the Senate, were Passed to be Enacted and, having been signed by the President, were by the Secretary presented to the Governor for his approval.

The President laid before the Senate the matter temporarily set aside at the request of Mr. Conley of Cumberland:

An Act Creating the Uniform Alcoholism and Intoxication Treatment Act. (S. P. 13) (L. D. 76)

The PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes the Senator from Cumberland, Senator Conley.

Mr. CONLEY: Mr. President and Members of the Senate: Before us this morning, is L. D. 76, which is An Act Creating the Uniform Alcoholism and Intoxication Treatment Act. It is a bill or a subject, at least, that has long been a conversation in this state for many, many years, a step that the state has really not taken toward the rehabilitation of alcoholics, and this is the first implementation along those lines. I think it is a very, very significant piece of legislation, and I wouldn't want it just to go on the Appropriations Table without members of the Senate fully understanding what the ramifications of this bill are.

I think it should be pointed out, one, that there are between 30,000 and 50,000 alcoholics in the state who really find no place at all to go for the purposes of treatment. Secondly, it costs us, through loss of wages in employment, illnesses and so forth, into the millions of dollars each year.

I think we should be concerned about the fact that over the years the state has appropriated something like \$80,000 a year for the Division of Alcoholic Rehabilitation for the purpose of treatment, and yet at the same time the state has taken in through the sales of alcoholic beverages somewhere in the vicinity of \$40 million in the biennium. What the bill primarily does is recognize that alcoholism is a disease and that it is treatable, and it decriminalizes public intoxication as a crime. It also provides the State of Maine with the mechanism to establish alcoholic treatment facilities for the rehabilitation of its 40 to 50,000 alcoholic persons.

Enactment would allow the State of Maine to join Hawaii, Iowa, Maryland, North Dakota, Florida, Massachusetts, Connecticut and Oklahoma, all who have implemented a uniform statute with no apparent difficulty.

If this Uniform Act is passed in the Judiciary Committee's amended form, it will also make available to the state an additional \$120,000 each year of federal alcoholism formula grant monies.

L. D. 76 creates a framework within the state which can bring about an effective and humane method of care and treatment for the State's and the nation's first ranking drug and public health problem. It also establishes the mechanism for state licensing of public and private alcoholism treatment facilities and, thereby, the mechanism for third party (insurance coverage) payment for that treatment. The Act places heavy emphasis on voluntary treatment. Involuntary treatment is permitted only in exceptional and very clearly prescribed circumstances.

I would like to say, Mr. President and Members of the Senate, that this bill originated from an

order before the Legislative Research Committee in the last session, and that for 18 months that subcommittee met quite consistently with members of the Governor's Advisory Board on Alcoholism, with the Department of Health and Welfare, the Department of Mental Health and Corrections, and many other interested citizens throughout the state. At the time of the public hearing, held back some months ago — it almost seems as though this bill has been around here as long as I have — but at that public hearing there were over 500 people who turned out in support of this L. D.

This morning I just wanted to bring this bill to the attention of the Senate, and I am sure that the power from Penobscot County, the good Senator Sewall, is going to place this on the Appropriations Table.

The PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes the Senator from Cumberland, Senator Richardson.

Mr. RICHARDSON: Mr. President and Members of the Senate: Before this legislation presumably takes its place on the Appropriations Table, on the motion of the distinguished Chairman of the Appropriations Committee, I think that the record of this legislature and this Senate should reflect that the Senator from Cumberland, Senator Conley, has indeed made this a labor of love, that this very fine legislation really is in the finest tradition of the Senate, and I really think that the record ought to reflect our appreciation to him for a job that has been extraordinarily well done.

The PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes the Senator from Kennebec, Senator Speers.

Mr. SPEERS: Mr. President and Members of the Senate: I would like to join the good Senator from Cumberland, Senator Richardson, in congratulating the Senator from Cumberland, Senator Conley, for a very fine piece of legislation.

The Committee on State Government has been working on a new draft of a bill having to do with drug abuse and reestablishing the Drug Abuse Commission. This new draft which will be coming out

very shortly, not on today's calendar but it may very well be on tomorrow's calendar, has to do with the combining of the Drug Abuse Commission and the Alcoholic Division that is currently in the Department of Health and Welfare. The Committee, in working on this new draft, had very much in mind the Senator's legislation on alcoholism and intoxication treatment, and took many of the ideas from the Senator's bill, so I would just like to commend him for a very fine piece of legislation.

The PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes the Senator from York, Senator Hichens.

Mr. HICHENS: Mr. President and Members of the Senate: I, too, rise in commendation of the Senator from Cumberland, Senator Conley. I presented two like bills, although not nearly so all inclusive as this bill is, during my first two sessions as a legislator. Both times they were passed and then died on the Appropriations Table, so I certainly hope that this bill, after all this intensive study, is passed through this year and goes on to make wonderful legislation for the State of Maine.

The PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes the Senator from Penobscot, Senator Sewall.

Thereupon, on motion by Mr. Sewall of Penobscot, placed on the Special Appropriations Table.

On motion by Mr. Sewall of Penobscot,
recessed until the sound of the bell.

(After Recess)

Called to order by the President.

Orders of the Day

The President laid before the Senate the first tabled and specially assigned matter:

Bill, "An Act to Extend the Deadline for Mandatory Shoreland Zoning," (H. P. 1538) (L. D. 1968)

Tabled — June 4, 1973, by Senator Berry of Cumberland.

Pending — Passage to be Engrossed.

(House Amendment "B" H-478).

On motion by Mr. Schulen of Sagadahoc, retabled until later in