

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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LEGISLATIVE RECORD
OF THE
One Hundred And Fifteenth Legislature
OF THE
State Of Maine

VOLUME V

FIRST SPECIAL SESSION
July 11, 1991 to July 18, 1991
Index

FIRST CONFIRMATION SESSION
October 2, 1991
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SECOND SPECIAL SESSION
December 18, 1991 to January 7, 1992
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SECOND REGULAR SESSION
House of Representatives
January 8, 1992 to March 9, 1992

The Speaker resumed the Chair and called the House to order.

PASSED TO BE ENACTED

Emergency Measure

An Act Providing Unified Appropriations and Allocations for the Expenditures of State Government, General Fund and Other Funds, and Changing Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 1991, June 30, 1992 and June 30, 1993 (H.P. 1393) (L.D. 1979) (S. "C" S-467 and S. "D" S-468)

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

Representative Tracy of Rome requested a roll call vote.

The SPEAKER: A roll call has been requested. For the Chair to order a roll call, it must have the expressed desire of more than one-fifth of the members present and voting. Those in favor will vote yes; those opposed will vote no.

A vote of the House was taken and more than one-fifth of the members present and voting having expressed a desire for a roll call, a roll call was ordered.

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

Representative GWADOSKY: Mr. Speaker, Men and Women of the House: The members of the Democratic Majority enthusiastically support the enactment of this two-year budget before us as we have continued to support in solidarity over the past several weeks, a two-year budget for the people of the State of Maine. We have said, time and time again, and will continue to say that we believe that it is absolutely unconscionable not to do everything in our power to end the shutdown of state government. We have said that we believe that we have a moral obligation to keep state government open, knowing that the shutdown is causing tremendous hardship, not only for thousands and thousand of state employees, but also for Maine's most vulnerable citizens back home who are not receiving essential services for which they depend upon.

The people of the State of Maine have been without a budget since July 1st. People of the State of Maine deserve a budget today.

The bond companies are watching us, more importantly, the people of Maine are watching us. We have an opportunity today to send a message back to the people of Maine about what we are and what we hope to be. We have shown our ability in the last couple of days to work effectively and diligently and we believe (I hope) we can share a mutual responsibility and obligation to keep state government open, to reopen it, put state employees back to work and show that our constituents are getting the services they deserve.

As you know, we have been mired in a process that has been paralyzed for weeks. Both sides have been entrenched unalterably. Both sides have been entrenched to the point that success was gauged by

which side caved in first. When that happens, government becomes paralyzed and government did become paralyzed.

The leaders of this legislature and the Governor of this state attempted to work out a framework process. Frankly, many accused us of having a chip on our shoulder from both political parties, Republicans and Democrats and the administration. Someone once said that a chip on your shoulder is often a piece of wood that has fallen from the head. Maybe that is the case. The fact is that both parties have strong philosophical beliefs and have operated on those beliefs to get us to this point. As you know, on Sunday, an agreement in principle was reached on a format, a process to work to get us beyond this stalemate. It is a process that has been shared with each of you, it has been discussed openly. It involved going back and trying to freeze where we were Wednesday night at midnight when the legislature did not extend and things fell apart. There are many people here, both Democrats and Republicans, that would suggest that perhaps if we had extended, we very well might have adjourned sine die on Thursday. That didn't happen.

The fact is, we had to develop a process. So, the process evolved is the sheet that you have seen, allowed an opportunity for legislators who were negotiating that Wednesday night to meet with officials from the administration, to try to freeze-frame where we were with our agreements, not to negotiate, but to establish where we were. The feeling was, if we could at the very least reach an agreement on those issues on which we had agreement, some suggested was 26 points (if you believe in points), some said it was 23, 24, but the theory was, why not bank those points, those \$100 million worth of savings to Maine businesses and begin to move on in this process? As the process evolved, we decided that we would make an agreement where we would attempt to reach agreement on what was resolved before things broke Wednesday night. If we were able to do that, we would then pass a two-year budget, that budget would be signed by the Governor of this state. Immediately upon that time, we would then, within 24 hours, pass a bill dealing with Workers' Compensation on those areas of agreement. On those areas that we were unable to agree, those areas of disagreements, we would set those aside, work on those effectively, thoroughly, as we could between now and August 22nd, which is the date of a Senate confirmation, and we will deal with that section (those areas of disagreement) and some of those areas are very fundamental issues. There are some of us who are going to want to go after the insurance companies, there are some who don't, but we are going to have to deal with those issues because we don't have the time now, between now and August 22nd.

This process has been agreed upon by the leaders, by the Chief Executive of this state, in an attempt to get us beyond where we were which is deadlocked, to allow both sides the opportunity to do what we really want to do, I hope, for the State of Maine, put state employees back to work, get our constituencies to receive the services that they need and to pass a meaningful Workers' Compensation legislation that makes the necessary reforms that we think is going to benefit Maine people in the long-run.

I hope that we have reached an agreement and I feel that we have on where we were Wednesday night.