

Bill **READ ONCE**.

Committee Amendment "A" (S-397) **READ** and **ADOPTED**.

ASSIGNED FOR SECOND READING NEXT LEGISLATIVE DAY.

Divided Report

Seven members of the Committee on **VETERANS AND LEGAL AFFAIRS** on Bill "An Act To Define the Term 'Caucus Political Action Committee'"

S.P. 654 L.D. 1902

Reported in Report "A" that the same **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-391)**.

Signed:

Senators:

LUCHINI of Hancock
HERBIG of Waldo

Representatives:

SCHNECK of Bangor
COOPER of Yarmouth
HANINGTON of Lincoln
HUBBELL of Bar Harbor
McCREIGHT of Harpswell

Four members of the same Committee on the same subject reported in Report "B" that the same **Ought Not to Pass**.

Signed:

Senator:

CYRWAY of Kennebec

Representatives:

ANDREWS of Paris
DOLLOFF of Rumford
STROM of Pittsfield

Two members of the same Committee on the same subject reported in Report "C" that the same **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "B" (S-392)**.

Signed:

Representatives:

ACKLEY of Monmouth
HICKMAN of Winthrop

Reports **READ**.

Senator **LUCHINI** of Hancock moved the Senate **ACCEPT** Report "A", **OUGHT TO PASS AS AMENDED BY COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" (S-391)**.

THE PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes the Senator from York, Senator Chenette.

Senator **CHENETTE:** Thank you, Mr. President. I rise in support of the pending motion and in support of a more ethical State House. This is a very easy one. L.D. 1902, An Act to Define the Term 'Caucus Political Action Committee'. It's a definition. We have areas in statute where the phrase Caucus PAC, Caucus Campaign Committee, and Party Caucus Political Action Committee are referred to. The problem here is we don't define what a Caucus PAC is. It's a phrase we throw around a lot here at the State House. Party caucuses here in the Maine Legislature, on both sides of the aisle, have used political action committees, or PACs, to promote the party nominees of their respective caucuses. The law needs to reflect the type of PAC that is used, especially since Legislators are involved. It needs to be clear what it is to prevent any future issues or confusion around what is allowed and what is not allowed. This bill defines a caucus PAC as a political action committee designated by a party leader in the Legislature to promote the election of the nominees of a party leader's political action party to the Senate or the House of Representatives. It allows each appointed leader of a political party in the Senate or House of Representatives to designate one caucus political action committee to promote the election of nominees of that appointed leader's political party to the Body of the Legislature of which that appointed leader is a member. Now if that sounds familiar, Mr. President, it should because it's exactly what is taking place right now. It's what Republicans in this Chamber are doing right now. It's what Democrats are doing in this Chamber right now. What is so wrong with defining what we are already doing? It seems like it's a pretty commonsense matter to me. So to recap, what is before you is a simple definition. You can't regulate or provide oversight to something that doesn't exist in statute. As Chair of Government Oversight, I look for ways to streamline government and make it run more efficiently. Sometimes that requires taking a red pen and going line by line through statute to find loopholes and omissions to determine what needs fixing. No better example of that than the bill before you. The Maine Ethics Commission believes this clarification in State law is critical for them to be able to do their job of enforcement of ethics and campaign finance rules, meaning they can't effectively do their job without this bill, as articulated in the testimony from the Commission on your desk. In 2017, the Maine Ethics Commission actually proposed that this issue be addressed but action wasn't taken. Well I hope now is the time we can make it happen and this should not be a Democrat versus Republican issue. The Committee Report before you is actually bi-partisan. Ethics, and particularly strengthening our ethics rules, should not be up for partisan fodder but should be a great unifier in our democratic society. This should bring us together. If we can't agree on a vocabulary lesson what can we agree on?

I know folks in this Chamber, whether you come from a rural district or an urban one, whether you are progressive or conservative, care deeply about this institution we have the pleasure of serving in. As a member of the Senate Ethics Committee, I value being held to a higher ethical standard and I know many of you do as well. What binds us together in this Chamber is our commitment to public service. Let us use that and let that be a guide as we vote on this bill today.

Now if you're going to oppose this bill I'd like to ask you to think about a few things and actually I'd love to hear from you why

you oppose this bill because I would love to know why we would want a less ethical State House. Why we shouldn't be giving the Maine Ethics Commission the tools they need to do their job? Why the Maine Ethics Commission is wrong? Why you don't think, as Legislators, we need to follow the rules? Why you don't think, as Legislators, we need to be held accountable? That is the message you will send if you vote against this bill. If you don't pass this bill we are saying to our constituents we are above the law. Legislators are above following the rules. Everyone else has to follow them but not us, and I think that's wrong. If we vote this down caucus PACs will continue to operate without proper oversight. Please join me in choosing a more, not less, ethical State House. Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes the Senator from Kennebec, Senator Cyrway.

Senator **CYRWAY:** Thank you, Mr. President. Ladies and gentlemen of the Senate, I'm not opposed to this bill. I just wanted clarity as far as where it asks for caucus leadership compared to the five chosen members from leadership. So that was the concern. That's why we just kind of voted this way, just so we'd clarity before we need to vote. So I don't have a problem with the bill. I think the intension is good. I just have to have clarity on that. Thank you.

On motion by Senator **LUCHINI** of Hancock, Report "A", **OUGHT TO PASS AS AMENDED BY COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" (S-391), ACCEPTED.**

Bill **READ ONCE.**

Committee Amendment "A" (S-391) **READ** and **ADOPTED.**

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SECOND READERS

The Committee on **Bills in the Second Reading** reported the following:

House

Bill "An Act To Reduce Financial Burdens on Small Water Utilities" (EMERGENCY)

H.P. 1442 L.D. 2032

Bill "An Act To Ensure an Efficient Contracting Process for the Department of Health and Human Services"

H.P. 1461 L.D. 2057

READ A SECOND TIME and **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED**, in concurrence.

House As Amended

Bill "An Act To Support Emergency Shelter Access for Persons Experiencing Homelessness in Maine"

H.P. 1363 L.D. 1909
(C "A" H-680)

Bill "An Act To Amend the Laws Regarding the Reserve Funds of Certain School Organizational Structures"

H.P. 1366 L.D. 1918
(C "A" H-681)

READ A SECOND TIME and **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED AS AMENDED**, in concurrence.

Senate

Bill "An Act To Amend the Qualifications for the State Nuclear Safety Inspector"

S.P. 724 L.D. 2051

READ A SECOND TIME and **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED.**

Sent down for concurrence.

All matters thus acted upon were ordered sent down forthwith for concurrence.

ENACTORS

The Committee on **Engrossed Bills** reported as truly and strictly engrossed the following:

Emergency Measure

An Act To Correct the Maine Revised Unclaimed Property Act To Reflect Recent Changes

H.P. 1335 L.D. 1864

This being an Emergency Measure and having received the affirmative vote of 32 Members of the Senate, with no Senators having voted in the negative, and 32 being more than two-thirds of the entire elected Membership of the Senate, was **PASSED TO BE ENACTED** and, having been signed by the President, was presented by the Secretary to the Governor for approval.

Emergency Measure

An Act To Provide for the 2020 and 2021 Allocations of the State Ceiling on Private Activity Bonds

S.P. 706 L.D. 2004
(C "A" S-381)