

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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Legislative Record

OF THE

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OF THE

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Limit of the Maine School Building Authority from \$25,000,000 to \$10,000,000 (H. P. 2171) (L. D. 2295)

Was reported by the Committee on Bills in the Second Reading and read the second time.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Freeport, Mrs. Clark.

Mrs. CLARK: Mr. Speaker and Members of the House: L. D. 2295 is a new draft of L. D. 1994, which reads as follows: Resolution Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution to Increase the Bonding Limit on Maine Veterans' Mortgage Loans from \$2,000,000 to \$5,000,000. It deals specifically with Article IX, Section 14-E.

The bill, L. D. 2295, is a new draft in new title, and it includes in its subject matter the decrease of bonding limit under the Maine School Building Authority, and I would ask the Chair for a ruling on this as to the germaneness.

The SPEAKER: The Chair is not in a position to rule, since this body voted to accept the committee report yesterday and in effect negated the possibility of my ruling. As a result, the body unanimously adopted the fact that the amendment would be added and therefore the issue of germaneness is not before us.

Mrs. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, what would be the parliamentary procedure so that we could have a ruling from the Chair on the issue of germaneness?

The SPEAKER: The Chair would inform the gentlewoman that she would have to back up the bill to acceptance of the committee report and would have to move reconsideration whereby yesterday this House voted to accept the committee report.

Thereupon, on motion of Mrs. Clark of Freeport, the House reconsidered its action whereby the Bill was read the first and second time.

The same gentlewoman moved that the House reconsider its action whereby the Report was accepted.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Bath, Mrs. Goodwin.

Mrs. GOODWIN: Mr. Speaker, Men and Women of the House: The reason that the Appropriations Committee reported the bill out in this manner is that we were told by the State Treasurer that if we were to just pass the bill as it was at that time from \$2 million to \$5 million, we would jeopardize the state's credit rating, and the only way we could pass out a bill to help the veterans would be to decrease the bonding limit in some other area. The State Treasurer suggested that an area in which we could do this without any damage would be the School Building Authority. If we remove this, we will then damage the state's credit rating and I would then not be able to support the bill at all.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Freeport, Mrs. Clark.

Mrs. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, in response to the remarks of the gentlewoman from Bath, Mrs. Goodwin, I am in no way objecting to the main thrust of this measure. I am simply suggesting that the decrease of the bonding limit of the Maine School Building Authority from \$25 million to \$10 million has not been before us, or the people of the state have not had option to testify in public hearing. It seems to me that it is not necessarily relevant subject matter. I am just making a general inquiry.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Lewiston, Mr. Jalbert.

Mr. JALBERT: Mr. Speaker, I can't miss this opportunity. The gentelady from Freeport, Mrs. Clark, talked about one issue that was not in the bill and you let her go. That should give me the right to speak about another issue—

The SPEAKER: The Chair would inform the gentleman from Lewiston that he is to restrict his remarks to the bill.

Mr. JALBERT: Mr. Speaker, then let's have it all restricted to all bills then, Mr. Speaker. That will make me happy and it will also save a lot of time. I think I got my point over anyway.

This is a committee report, unanimous, and if we don't go along in this area here, you might as well kill the bill, which is a good bill in itself because of the fact that it could very well put our credit rating in jeopardy. It is in jeopardy as it is, I can assure you, from 3-A, and I predicted the 3-A to 2-A and I did predict shortly that we might wind up in 1-A. If you want to touch this thing in this area here, then kill the bill, because if we have the thing left as it was originally presented to us, it would definitely jeopardize our credit rating.

The SPAAKER: The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Vassalboro, Mrs. Mitchell.

Mrs. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker and Members of the House: I would like to pose a question to a member of the Appropriations Committee, please. Why was it necessary to decrease by \$15 million in order to increase by \$2 million. I don't understand.

The SPEAKER: The gentlewoman from Vassalboro, Mrs. Mitchell, has posed a question through the Chair to anyone who would care to answer.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Dover-Foxcroft, Mr. Smith.

Mr. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House: I am sure you all recall some years ago now when the state's credit rating was lowered from triple A to double A. Since that time, all of our state officials that I know of have taken a great number of steps to insure that the double A rating that the state presently has would be retained and hopefully get us back in a position where the triple A rating would be reinstated.

Over a period of time, of course, this means interest rate money to us, and over a very long period of time it would mean hundreds of thousands of dollars of interest money that we are going to have to pay at a double A rate rather than a triple A rate.

The School Building Authority bond issue that we are talking about here is presently unused school bonds. It has nothing to do with any school building that is under construction or contemplated at this time.

The State Treasurer has been before the Appropriations Committee on a number of occasions during the special session telling us that he wished very much that we could find ways to reduce even the potential for further bonded exposure to the state, and he has suggested that we eliminate all of these school bonds that you see addressed here.

On the other hand, the committee has had a very strong desire to do something to raise the ability of the other board here that we are talking about to help the veterans. It is simply kind of a balancing act. The veterans' organization has done a very good job. There has been no defaults that we can find, we specifically asked the

question. So it is an attempt, really, to help this group and to reduce the bonded exposure of the state, a bonded exposure that is only going to stay at exposure, really, because I don't think that the State Treasurer is going to allow these bonds to go out when there is a very real risk of the double A rating being lost. I don't believe it is going to be used anyway, but simply it is an attempt to make us look a little bit better on paper.

The SPEAKER: The Chair will order a vote. The pending question is on the motion of the gentlewoman from Freeport, Mrs. Clark, that the House reconsider its action whereby the Committee Report was accepted. All in favor of that motion will vote yes; those opposed will vote no.

A vote of the House was taken.

15 having voted in the affirmative and 81 having voted in the negative, the motion did not prevail.

Thereupon, the Bill was read twice, passed to be engrossed and sent up for concurrence.

Enactor

Tabled and Assigned

An Act Concerning the Identification by Fingerprints of Past Offenders (H. P. 1883) (L. D. 2061) (C. "A" H-945)

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

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Stockton Springs, Mr. Shute.

Mr. SHUTE: Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House: I was on the Legal Affairs Committee that heard this bill and one of the signers of the unanimous "ought to pass" report. However, since the signing of the report, I have had communication with the sheriff in my county, the district attorney and also the district court judge, and they see problems in repealing this law, and I wonder if someone could table this for one day.

Thereupon, on motion of Mr. Palmer of Nobleboro, tabled pending passage to be enacted and tomorrow assigned.

Passed to Be Enacted

An Act to Amend the Protection and Improvement of Air Statutes (H. P. 2034) (L. D. 2207) (C. "A" H-946)

Was 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.

Orders of the Day

The Chair laid before the House the first tabled and today assigned matter:

House Divided Report — Majority (8) "Ought to Pass" — Minority (5) "Ought to Pass" as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-949) — Committee on State Government on Bill, "An Act to Provide for More Effective Debt Management and for More Effective Administration of the State's Development Financing Capability" (H. P. 1816) (L. D. 1974)

Tabled — March 9 by Mrs. Najarian of Portland.

Pending — Motion of Mr. Cooney of Sabattus to Accept Majority "Ought to Pass" Report.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Sabattus, Mr. Cooney.

Mr. COONEY: Mr. Speaker, this is an important measure and deserves our careful and perhaps lengthy consideration. I know I have several pages of remarks here and I think other people