

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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Senate Legislative Record
One Hundred and Twenty-First Legislature
State of Maine

Volume III

Second Special Session (Continued)
March 22, 2004 to April 30, 2004

Second Confirmation Session
August 25, 2004

Interim Appendix

Senate Legislative Sentiments

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Pages 1416 - 1812

Under suspension of the Rules, **READ A SECOND TIME** and **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED AS AMENDED BY COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" (H-855)**, in **NON-CONCURRENCE**.

Sent down for concurrence.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

The Chair laid before the Senate the following Tabled and Later Today Assigned matter:

SENATE REPORT - from the Committee on **TAXATION**, Bill "An Act To Increase Business Investment, Provide Expanded Property Tax Relief to Low-income and Moderate-income Homeowners and Cap Local and County Spending"
S.P. 759 L.D. 1923

Report - Received by the Secretary of the Senate on April 26, 2004, pursuant to Joint Rule 309

Tabled - April 27, 2004, by Senator **GAGNON** of Kennebec

Pending - **ACCEPTANCE OF REPORT**

(In Senate, March 10, 2004, **REFERRED** to the Committee on **TAXATION** and ordered printed.)

(In House, March 10, 2004, **REFERRED** to the Committee on **TAXATION**, in concurrence.)

On motion by Senator **STANLEY** of Penobscot, Bill and accompanying papers **INDEFINITELY POSTPONED**.

Sent down for concurrence.

The Chair laid before the Senate the following Tabled and Later Today Assigned matter:

SENATE REPORT - from the Committee on **TAXATION** and the Committee on **EDUCATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS** on Bill "An Act To Reduce the Cost of Local Government through Increased State Education Funding and Provide Property Tax Relief"

S.P. 761 L.D. 1924

Report - **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-545)**

Tabled - April 27, 2004, by Senator **TREAT** of Kennebec

Pending - **ACCEPTANCE OF REPORT**

(In Senate, April 27, 2004, Report **READ**.)

THE PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes the Senator from Androscoggin, Senator Douglass.

Senator **DOUGLASS:** Madame President, although I realize there will be no debate on this bill because it is the unanimous bill through two committees, I rise because I think it is important to note that this is a bill that will provide for great property tax relief for the people of Maine. I think it is important to remember that our local tax payers have said that they want to see the state share more in the cost of education and this bill does that.

Report **ACCEPTED**.

READ ONCE.

Committee Amendment "A" (S-545) **READ**.

On motion by Senator **BRENNAN** of Cumberland, Senate Amendment "A" (S-550) to Committee Amendment "A" (S-545) **READ**.

THE PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes the Senator from Oxford, Senator Bennett.

Senator **BENNETT:** Thank you, Madame President. I request permission to pose a question through the Chair.

THE PRESIDENT: The Senator may pose his question.

Senator **BENNETT:** Thank you, Madame President. Perhaps the sponsor or some other informed party could inform this Senator as to the intentions of this amendment.

THE PRESIDENT: The Senator from Oxford, Senator Bennett poses a question through the Chair to anyone who may wish to answer. The Chair recognizes the Senator from Androscoggin, Senator Douglass.

Senator **DOUGLASS:** Madame President, this bill provides what we called in our two committees a 'ramp up' of the percentage share that the state provides to local education. The amendment speaks to another part of the bill in which a so-called 'ramp down' was established which was not actually a ramp but a municipal budget analysis committee that is established to ascertain whether, in deed, local property taxes are going down. The amendment simply changes the amount by which those revenues must shrink from what was a unreasonably ambitious goal of 3.5% to, as the language states, less than last year. It gives us a more realistic goal that localities would, as a result of having the increased state money for local education, be able to keep their property taxes for education at the same level, or below, as last year. The original bill called for a 3.5% decrease each year, which might be a bit unrealistic to achieve.

On motion by Senator **BRENNAN** of Cumberland, Senate Amendment "A" (S-550) to Committee Amendment "A" (S-545) **ADOPTED**.

Committee Amendment "A" (S-545) as Amended by Senate Amendment "A" (S-550) thereto, **ADOPTED**.

Under suspension of the Rules, **READ A SECOND TIME** and **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED AS AMENDED BY COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" (S-545) AS AMENDED BY SENATE AMENDMENT "A" (S-550)** thereto.