

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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Pages 737-1487

PENDING - Motion of Representative CLARK of Millinocket to **ACCEPT** the Minority **OUGHT TO PASS AS AMENDED** Report.

Representative TRAHAN of Waldoboro **REQUESTED** a roll call on the motion to **ACCEPT** the Minority **Ought to Pass as Amended** Report.

More than one-fifth of the members present expressed a desire for a roll call which was ordered.

The **SPEAKER**: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Augusta, Representative Lerman.

Representative **LERMAN**: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Men and Women of the House. I rise to speak in favor of this motion and to just give you a little bit of background information. This is one of the recommendations of the livable wage commission. As I have mentioned to members of this body before, we looked at a wide range of issues that were important to working people in this state and we identified a number of different recommendations in a variety of areas including the need to invest more in research and development and education as well as childcare and a variety of other things including public transportation. This is one of three bills that we reported out regarding tax policy and this is an area that we believe is very important and that there are a number of folks who earn less than a livable wage who could potentially lose their homes because the taxes on their homes have gotten to the point where they cannot afford to pay the taxes any longer. Because their wages don't give them the wages necessary to make ends meet including paying their property tax bills.

I do want to say some general things though. When we discussed a previous recommendation of the livable wage commission, which were the changes in the earned income tax credit the point was made that we shouldn't make false promises and that we should not build up expectations. At the same time I would say that it is easy for us to say what we can't do and it is sometimes rare that we say what we are committed to, whether we can do it at that point in time or not. I would suggest to you and hope that you would vote accordingly in favor of this ought not to pass. This is an important message to send to the taxpayers of this state and that is that we do care about their ability to keep their homes. We do care about making sure that the tax policy is fair and that it is sensitive to the needs of low and moderate income families in our state and that we are committed to comprehensive tax reform, this being a piece of that.

I have been around for four years and was actually foolish enough and one of the few willing to admit that I actually volunteered to be on the Taxation Committee. So if any of you ever had any doubt about me that probably is the final nail in the coffin. Volunteering to be on the Taxation Committee is something I will let speak for itself, but it was out of hope that we could do something that would be significant in this state and that we would be able to accomplish as a body something that hasn't been accomplished for decades quite frankly. This is symbolic of that. It is time to send through this bill and others that will be before us having to do with tax policy that we are committed to tax reform, that this is a part of it and that this is what we promised to the people of the State of Maine. Whether or not we can fund it this year this is a very important symbolic vote as to where our values lie and what our commitments are to the taxpayers of Maine. I appreciate your consideration of this and I urge you to vote in favor of the minority Ought to Pass Report and I appreciate your time. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

The **SPEAKER**: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Scarborough, Representative Clough.

Representative **CLOUGH**: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. When I spoke on

one of these bills the other day that related to the livable wage concept I reminded everybody that this is not a concept that is universally accepted and we do have a number of bills that are tied to it. This bill would raise the benefit base, which is presently \$3,000 for a single member household and \$4,000 for a two-member household to \$5,000. It would increase the renters program to 22 percent. I would like to remind everybody that last year with LD 1 we raised the benefit base, we raised the amount that was payable to \$2,000 and now we have this concept back to us at a cost of \$20 million for '06-'07, \$23 million for '07-'08 and \$24 million for '08-'09 and would ask you to vote against the pending motion and Mr. Speaker could we have the House Clerk read the committee report.

Representative **CLOUGH** of Scarborough **REQUESTED** that the Clerk **READ** the Committee Report.

The Clerk **READ** the Committee Report in its entirety.

The **SPEAKER**: A roll call has been ordered. The pending question before the House is acceptance of the Minority Ought to Pass as Amended Report. All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

ROLL CALL NO. 440

YEA - Adams, Ash, Babbidge, Barstow, Beaudette, Blanchard, Blanchette, Bliss, Brannigan, Brautigam, Bryant, Burns, Cain, Canavan, Clark, Craven, Cummings, Driscoll, Duchesne, Dudley, Dunn, Duplessie, Eberle, Eder, Faircloth, Farrington, Finch, Fischer, Fisher, Gerzofsky, Goldman, Grose, Hanley S, Harlow, Hogan, Hutton, Jackson, Jennings, Koffman, Lerman, Lundeen, Makas, Marley, Marraché, Mazurek, Miller, Mills, Moody, Norton, O'Brien, Paradis, Patrick, Percy, Perry, Pilon, Pineau, Pingree, Piotti, Rines, Sampson, Schatz, Simpson, Smith N, Smith W, Thompson, Tuttle, Twomey, Valentino, Walcott, Watson, Webster, Wheeler, Mr. Speaker.

NAY - Annis, Austin, Berube, Bierman, Bowen, Bowles, Browne W, Bryant-Deschenes, Campbell, Carr, Cebra, Churchill, Clough, Collins, Cressesey, Crosby, Crosthwaite, Curley, Curtis, Daigle, Davis G, Davis K, Dugay, Duprey, Edgecomb, Fitts, Fletcher, Flood, Glynn, Greeley, Hall, Hamper, Hanley B, Jacobsen, Jodrey, Joy, Lansley, Lewin, Lindell, Mearan, McCormick, McFadden, McKane, McKenney, McLeod, Merrill, Millett, Moulton, Muse, Nass, Nutting, Ott, Pinkham, Plummer, Rector, Richardson D, Richardson E, Richardson M, Richardson W, Robinson, Rosen, Saviello, Seavey, Sherman, Shields, Sykes, Tardy, Thomas, Trahan, Vaughan, Woodbury.

ABSENT - Bishop, Brown R, Emery, Hotham, Kaelin, Moore G, Stedman.

Yes, 73; No, 71; Absent, 7; Excused, 0.

73 having voted in the affirmative and 71 voted in the negative, with 7 being absent, and accordingly the Minority **Ought to Pass as Amended** Report was **ACCEPTED**.

The Bill was **READ ONCE**. **Committee Amendment "A" (H-910)** was **READ** by the Clerk and **ADOPTED**. The Bill was assigned for **SECOND READING** Wednesday, April 5, 2006.

HOUSE DIVIDED REPORT - Majority (7) **Ought Not to Pass** - Minority (5) **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-911)** - Committee on **TAXATION** on Bill "An Act To Implement Recommendations of the Study Commission Regarding Liveable Wages Concerning Conformity with Federal Tax Laws"

(H.P. 1427) (L.D. 2026)

TABLED - March 30, 2006 (Till Later Today) by Representative CLARK of Millinocket.

PENDING - Motion of same Representative to **ACCEPT** the Minority **OUGHT TO PASS AS AMENDED** Report.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Scarborough, Representative Clough.

Representative **CLOUGH**: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. Again the same remarks that relate to this particular series of bills pertains to this one also. I won't take a lot of time, but this bill has been amended and the amendment would allow a tax credit to every resident taxpayer, non-resident taxpayer and part of the year resident taxpayer with a fiscal note of \$47.5 million in '06-'07 and \$185 million in '07-'08 and \$186 million in '08-'09. I would ask you to vote against the pending motion and I would request a roll call.

Representative **CLOUGH** of Scarborough **REQUESTED** a roll call on the motion to **ACCEPT** the Minority **Ought to Pass as Amended** Report.

More than one-fifth of the members present expressed a desire for a roll call which was ordered.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Augusta, Representative Lerman.

Representative **LERMAN**: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Men and Women of the House. Similar to the good Representative from Scarborough's comments you have heard my comments before. It is probably unlikely that there is enough money on the table to fund this bill, but, at the same time, it is symbolic. I think that we all would prefer to see more federal tax conformity than is currently the case, especially those aspects of the federal tax code that really do effect low to moderate income families. So I urge your support for this bill again as a symbolic measure. This is about creating a politics of possibility. This is about telling people what we are committed to creating over time. We are not saying that it will happen tomorrow, but we are saying that it provides a direction and it gives people a sense of hope and possibility for what we as a body can provide for direction in this state as opposed to saying, well, sorry, this is yet another thing that we can't do. Even though it makes sense to us we simply don't believe that it is the right thing to do at this time. It is time, I suggest, to get beyond that and to let the people of the State of Maine know what we are committed to as opposed to our willingness to not do anything. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Biddeford, Representative Twomey.

Representative **TWOMEY**: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Men and Women of the House. I will be supporting this, however I am tired of having symbolisms. I want to deliver the real thing. We just gave corporations a tax break and I think it is time that we start thinking about the people we represent. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: A roll call has been ordered. The pending question before the House is acceptance of the Minority Ought to Pass as Amended Report. All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

ROLL CALL NO. 441

YEA - Adams, Ash, Babbidge, Barstow, Blanchard, Blanchette, Bliss, Brannigan, Brautigam, Bryant, Burns, Cain, Canavan, Clark, Craven, Cummings, Driscoll, Duchesne, Dudley, Dugay, Dunn, Duplessie, Eberle, Eder, Faircloth, Fischer, Fisher, Gerzofsky, Goldman, Grose, Hanley S, Harlow, Hogan, Hutton, Jackson, Jennings, Koffman, Lerman, Lindell, Lundeen, Makas, Marley, Marraché, Mazurek, Miller, Mills, Norton, Paradis, Patrick, Percy, Perry, Pilon, Pineau, Pingree, Piotti, Rines, Schatz, Simpson, Smith N, Smith W, Thompson, Tuttle, Twomey, Valentino, Walcott, Watson, Webster, Wheeler, Mr. Speaker.

NAY - Annis, Austin, Beaudette, Berube, Bierman, Bowen, Bowles, Browne W, Bryant-Deschenes, Campbell, Carr, Cebra,

Churchill, Clough, Collins, Cressey, Crosby, Crosthwaite, Curley, Curtis, Daigle, Davis G, Davis K, Duprey, Edgecomb, Finch, Fitts, Fletcher, Flood, Glynn, Greeley, Hall, Hamper, Hanley B, Jacobsen, Jodrey, Joy, Lansley, Lewin, Marean, McCormick, McFadden, McKane, McKenney, McLeod, Merrill, Millett, Moody, Moulton, Muse, Nass, Nutting, Ott, Pinkham, Plummer, Rector, Richardson D, Richardson E, Richardson M, Richardson W, Robinson, Rosen, Sampson, Saviello, Seavey, Sherman, Shields, Sykes, Tardy, Thomas, Trahan, Vaughan, Woodbury.

ABSENT - Bishop, Brown R, Emery, Farrington, Hotham, Kaelin, Moore G, O'Brien, Stedman.

Yes, 69; No, 73; Absent, 9; Excused, 0.

69 having voted in the affirmative and 73 voted in the negative, with 9 being absent, and accordingly the Minority **Ought to Pass as Amended** Report was **NOT ACCEPTED**.

Subsequently, the Majority **Ought Not to Pass** Report was **ACCEPTED** and sent for concurrence.

By unanimous consent, all matters having been acted upon were **ORDERED SENT FORTHWITH**.

On motion of Representative **BABBIDGE** of Kennebunk, the House adjourned at 1:11 p.m., until 9:00 a.m., Wednesday, April 5, 2006.