

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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Senate Legislative Record
One Hundred and Twenty-Fifth Legislature

State of Maine

Daily Edition

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Pages 1 - 1494

Emergency Measure

Out of order and under suspension of the Rules, the Senate considered the following:

PAPERS FROM THE HOUSE

Non-Concurrent Matter

Bill "An Act To Prevent the Spread of Milfoil in the Songo River" (EMERGENCY)

H.P. 195 L.D. 242

In House, February 1, 2011, REFERRED to the Committee on ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES and ordered printed.

In Senate, February 8, 2011, REFERRED to the Committee on INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE, in NON-CONCURRENCE.

Comes from the House, that Body ADHERED.

On motion by Senator SAVIELLO of Franklin, the Senate INSISTED.

Sent down for concurrence.

Senator PLOWMAN of Penobscot was granted unanimous consent to address the Senate off the Record.

Senator SAVIELLO of Franklin was granted unanimous consent to address the Senate off the Record.

Senator GOODALL of Sagadahoc was granted unanimous consent to address the Senate off the Record.

RECESSED until the sound of the bell.

After Recess

Senate called to order by the President.

Out of order and under suspension of the Rules, the Senate considered the following:

ENACTORS

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

An Act To Make Supplemental Appropriations and Allocations for the Expenditures of State Government and To Change Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2011

H.P. 86 L.D. 100

(C "A" H-2)

THE PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes the Senator from Cumberland, Senator Alford.

Senator ALFOND: Thank you Mr. President. Ladies and gentlemen of the Senate, I rise to speak to thank all the members of the Appropriations Committee, including the three Senators on the committee from Hancock, Kennebec, and York Counties. From this vantage point it seems the passing of the supplemental budget went along with relative ease, but of course I'm not on that committee. I think it is safe to say that one of the major reasons for the committee's success was the unexpected \$111 million left over from the previous administration's budget. Over the last four years we have made a lot of difficult decisions together. We remained disciplined and it is because of that fiscal responsibility that we are in the position to say that today's state budget is in the same position it was in FY 2005. There are many highlights to the supplemental budget. I'd like to point out one; perhaps the one that has received the most attention. During this budgeting process we are finally close to wrapping up an endeavor that started under the previous administration; paying our hospitals. By completing this payment agreement with the hospitals we are finally close to ending this chapter. On Friday night, as I sat there watching the last votes be cast by the Appropriations Committee on this unanimous bi-partisan budget, a committee member spoke up about how disturbing that it was that the hospital issue has become so politicized. I, too, really to this day do not understand how this agreement with the hospitals with all of us has become a political football. I think it's important that we speak about the facts in this chamber. Let me reference the payments made to the hospitals over the last seven years. These are just the State of Maine payments. In 2003 \$66 million. In 2004 \$119 million. In 2005 \$119 million. In 2006 \$125 million. In 2007 \$150 million. In 2008 another \$150 million. Finally, in 2009 \$267 million. That grand total is over \$1 billion paid by the State of Maine to hospitals here in the state. Today I rise very proud to support the supplemental budget and thank you colleagues for their tireless and bi-partisan efforts and look forward to more. Thank you Mr. President.

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

Senator HOBBS: Thank you Mr. President. First of all I think I should join along with everyone else in thanking the Appropriations Committee for their incredible diligence during this appropriations process. Looking at the budget process from this seat and not the seat where I used to reside, which is now the good Senator from Aroostook, Senator Sherman's seat, is a lot different. When I sat at that seat for six years at the end of the session I witnessed the same type of process. Sometimes that process was the process using majority budgets, other times it was using a two-thirds budget and there were supplemental budgets. Quite frankly, I don't think I appreciated, and I really

want to apologize to all those members of the Appropriations Committee that maybe served at that time, all their efforts. I never really had focused upon it until I sat here in this position. The work that the good Senator from Hancock, Senator Rosen, did was incredible. He was able to demonstrate clear leadership and he had a very difficult task. Fortunately, he had the assistance of two new members of the Appropriations Committee; the Senator from Kennebec, Senator Katz, and the Senator from York, Senator Hill. Along with ten other members, they were able to accomplish something over this period of time that, when you think about the political climate, was pretty incredible. To come out with a bi-partisan budget at a time when the state has flip-flopped in politics, there was a trifecta, if you want to use analogies that we've used this evening, that occurred here in Maine. With all of that, this Body and the other Body have been able to reach consensus because of the leadership that was demonstrated by the Appropriations Committee. Besides the Appropriations Committee, those who serve on the committees of jurisdiction, the policy committees, also played an important role in the process. I want to commend the committee members of all the committees and the Chairs and the Leads because they played an instrumental role. As you can see from this unanimous committee report that was approved, all of the initiatives that were proposed by the Governor are included but there were other important components that were brought to the attention of the committees of jurisdiction and to many legislators that were needed in order to make this a better document. I do want to thank every one who participated in this process: the staff, who did an incredible job in the legislature and in the process of putting together the budget, the policy committees and everyone else. As they say, this is only the beginning of the process. I think the good Senator from Kennebec made a good analogy. I wish he'd made a basketball analogy but he did make a baseball analogy. The analogy, though, I think will go one step further. It is my hope that everyone in the Legislature, after we go through the arduous process which we will, will win the good sportsmanship award. That's my hope after the end of the day when the budget is all done. Thank you.

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

Senator **COURTNEY:** Thank you Mr. President. Men and women of the Senate, I also want to rise and congratulate the Senate Chair, the Senator from Hancock, Senator Rosen. You have truly proceeded in the tradition of the previous Senate Chair, the Senator from Cumberland, Senator Diamond, with another unanimous report. We know the lifting is going to get a little bit harder in the next few months but I think we're all committed to persevere and continue to try to work together to come up with better solutions than either side can come up with alone. I also want to thank the Senator from Kennebec, Senator Katz, and the Senator from York, Senator Hill. I think being thrown into Appropriations right off the bat and having to come up with a budget in forty or so days is quite an amazing task. It's even more amazing when you do it in a unanimous manner as has happened. I also want to thank the committees of jurisdiction. I know that through their support, especially with the Agriculture Committee, there is more support for the farmers and the dairy farmers. The Taxation Committee took on a very difficult issue and came up with a better solution than originally proposed. I think that it not only recognizes the importance of the

municipalities but recognizes that they are a partner in this. As they have been a partner in the down turn so shall they be a partner in the recovery. Most important, it's a promise kept, I think, with repaying the hospitals. I don't stand here to take credit for paying the hospitals. I feel it's our duty to pay the hospitals. It's a duty to pay a past due bill. I don't think we need to take credit on either side. It's just part of what we are sent here to do. If we incur a charge we're obligated to pay for it. It's a pleasure to be part of that process. Finally, I'd like to thank Kathleen Newman from the Governor's Office, who has been an integral part of the success and Ryan Lowe. Sawin Millett, as most of you know, has had some health challenges and Ryan stepped up to the plate and he's been a great service to the State of Maine in his time as Commissioner. We appreciate what you have done. It's very difficult. The new Governor comes in and all of a sudden has to put a budget together. Frankly, it's pretty difficult. You don't have any time. You don't have your Commissioners in place. I was very pleased to see Ryan step up and it showed what a true professional he is. With that, Mr. President, I look forward to working together with the leadership on the other side of the aisle. We may end up having some differences over the next few months but there are not two other people I'd rather be in the room with and we'll have a good time doing it. Thank you Mr. President.

This being an Emergency Measure and having received the affirmative vote of 34 Members of the Senate, with no Senators having voted in the negative, and 34 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 his approval.

On motion by Senator **COURTNEY** of York, **ADJOURNED** until Thursday, February 10, 2011, at 10:00 in the morning, in memory of and lasting tribute to Duncan Iain Rosborough of Mt. Desert.