

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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

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beginning at Page 1

The Doorkeepers secured the Chamber.

The Secretary opened the vote.

ROLL CALL (#94)

YEAS: Senators: BOYLE, BURNS, CAIN, CLEVELAND, COLLINS, CRAVEN, CUSHING, DUTREMBLE, FLOOD, GERZOFKY, GOODALL, GRATWICK, HAMPER, HASKELL, HILL, JACKSON, JOHNSON, KATZ, LACHOWICZ, LANGLEY, MASON, MAZUREK, MILLETT, PATRICK, PLUMMER, SAVIELLO, SHERMAN, THIBODEAU, THOMAS, TUTTLE, VALENTINO, WHITTEMORE, WOODBURY, YOUNGBLOOD, THE PRESIDENT - JUSTIN L. ALFOND

NAYS: Senators: None

35 Senators having voted in the affirmative and no Senator having voted in the negative, was **PASSED TO BE ENACTED** and having been signed by the President, was presented by the Secretary to the Governor for his approval.

Ordered sent down forthwith.

An Act To Strengthen the Law Regarding Texting and Driving
H.P. 408 L.D. 589
(C "A" H-112)

On motion by Senator **KATZ** of Kennebec, supported by a Division of one-fifth of the members present and voting, a Roll Call was ordered.

The Doorkeepers secured the Chamber.

The Secretary opened the vote.

ROLL CALL (#95)

YEAS: Senators: BOYLE, BURNS, CAIN, CLEVELAND, COLLINS, CRAVEN, CUSHING, DUTREMBLE, FLOOD, GERZOFKY, GOODALL, GRATWICK, HAMPER, HASKELL, HILL, JACKSON, JOHNSON, KATZ, LACHOWICZ, LANGLEY, MASON, MAZUREK, MILLETT, PATRICK, PLUMMER, SAVIELLO, THIBODEAU, THOMAS, TUTTLE, VALENTINO, WHITTEMORE, WOODBURY, YOUNGBLOOD, THE PRESIDENT JUSTIN L. ALFOND

NAYS: Senator: SHERMAN

34 Senators having voted in the affirmative and 1 Senator having voted in the negative, was **PASSED TO BE ENACTED** and having been signed by the President, was presented by the Secretary to the Governor for his approval.

Ordered sent down forthwith.

An Act To Increase Funding to Schools

H.P. 459 L.D. 667
(H "A" H-125)

On motion by Senator **JACKSON** of Aroostook, supported by a Division of one-fifth of the members present and voting, a Roll Call was ordered.

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

Senator **CLEVELAND:** Thank you Mr. President. Even though I support the concept of increased funding for education, which I've done consistently throughout the years, this particular bill is particularly onerous to my communities, particularly the city of Auburn. It requires that the local community, notwithstanding the State's lack of support for public education, must come up with their 45% share of that educational cost. Let me just share with you what that means for the city of Auburn. The city of Auburn would have to come up \$2.7 million of additional funding for its educational program. This year alone the school committee had requested a budget that doesn't come up to the requirement but is a 7% increase to the property tax payers of Auburn solely to do that. Auburn currently has one of the highest mill rates in the state of Maine. It's not for the lack of asking our local voters to support it; it is just simply lack of the ability to come up with the amount of funds necessary. This is particularly true when the State of Maine fails to increase its support to education. This is true when the State of Maine is going to require an additional half of a million dollars' worth of cost for the city of Auburn to cover its share of the retirement fund in Auburn alone. The estimated increase, should the recommended school budget pass, and there is some doubt to that, and the municipal increase, all of which barely keeps the shop open with no new additional programs or services, to a medium valued home in Auburn next year would be an increase of \$300 already. It seems to me that when there was just a relatively small number of communities who haven't reached this goal, not for the lack or desire to do it or the will to support education, but simply because the local funds are not available to do it, it is a harsh penalty and I'll be voting against this L.D.

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

Senator **CRAVEN:** Thank you Mr. President. Men and women of the Senate, I join my colleague across the river from me. Lewiston, as a result of this bill, will be losing \$2 million per budget cycle. With 41% of our student body living in poverty, it's a terrible blow to our community. We struggle as it is. As my friend, Senator Cleveland, has just said, we have never reached our 55% of school funding from the State of Maine. I think that the waiver that had been in place was a useful tool for us to get through the worst of this situation in our town. I will also be voting against this measure. Thank you, Mr. President.

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

Senator **MILLETT**: Thank you Mr. President. Ladies and gentlemen of the Senate, ten years ago the people of Maine demanded that the State pay 55% of public education. In 2008 the State got close with 54%. Since then we have slipped substantially. When the State doesn't meet its obligations local tax payers are forced to decide whether to increase property taxes or cut programs. This is something all of our communities have been struggling with and it is unfortunate. Just because the State isn't fulfilling its commitment, in my mind, it does not justify local districts doing the same. To do so only hurts our children and does nothing to advance the discussion among decision makers. Luckily, the majority of our committees are meeting, or even exceeding, the required contribution to public education and this bill would help the few dozen remaining districts pay their share over a number of years, thus giving them time to make their plans. This is the right thing to do for our schools and for our children. I urge you to support the bi-partisan majority vote of the committee and follow my light. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes the Senator from Hancock, Senator Langley.

Senator **LANGLEY**: Thank you Mr. President. Men and women of the Senate, I rise to support my committee chair. A majority of us supported this slow increase over the next three years to get that back up to the 45% for the local share. Strong, strong advocates for kids and education in our committee. That's the message that won the day. Thank you very much.

THE PRESIDENT: The pending question before the Senate is Enactment. Is the Senate ready for the question?

The Doorkeepers secured the Chamber.

The Secretary opened the vote.

ROLL CALL (#96)

YEAS: Senators: BOYLE, BURNS, CAIN, COLLINS, CUSHING, GERZOFSKY, GOODALL, GRATWICK, HAMPER, HASKELL, HILL, JACKSON, JOHNSON, KATZ, LACHOWICZ, LANGLEY, MASON, MAZUREK, MILLETT, PATRICK, PLUMMER, SAVIELLO, THIBODEAU, THOMAS, TUTTLE, WHITTEMORE, WOODBURY, YOUNGBLOOD, THE PRESIDENT - JUSTIN L. ALFOND

NAYS: Senators: CLEVELAND, CRAVEN, DUTREMBLE, FLOOD, SHERMAN, VALENTINO

29 Senators having voted in the affirmative and 6 Senators having voted in the negative, was **PASSED TO BE ENACTED** and having been signed by the President, was presented by the Secretary to the Governor for his approval.

Ordered sent down forthwith.

An Act To Expand the Sales Tax Exemption for Certain Public Libraries To Include Sales by Those Libraries or Their Supporting Organizations

H.P. 639 L.D. 915
(C "A" H-119)

On motion by Senator **CAIN** of Penobscot, placed on the **SPECIAL APPROPRIATIONS TABLE**, pending **ENACTMENT**, in concurrence.

An Act To Promote Fishing by Youth

H.P. 656 L.D. 932
(C "A" H-117)

On motion by Senator **CAIN** of Penobscot, placed on the **SPECIAL APPROPRIATIONS TABLE**, pending **ENACTMENT**, in concurrence.

An Act To Exempt the Sale of the United States Flag from the Sales Tax

H.P. 693 L.D. 979
(C "A" H-122)

On motion by Senator **CAIN** of Penobscot, placed on the **SPECIAL APPROPRIATIONS TABLE**, pending **ENACTMENT**, in concurrence.

An Act To Amend the Social Work Education Loan Repayment Program

H.P. 731 L.D. 1036
(C "A" H-111)

On motion by Senator **CAIN** of Penobscot, placed on the **SPECIAL APPROPRIATIONS TABLE**, pending **ENACTMENT**, in concurrence.

An Act To Support the Maine Downtown Center

S.P. 409 L.D. 1172
(C "A" S-59)

On motion by Senator **CAIN** of Penobscot, placed on the **SPECIAL APPROPRIATIONS TABLE**, pending **ENACTMENT**, in concurrence.

An Act To Further Reduce Student Hunger

S.P. 472 L.D. 1353
(C "A" S-70)

On motion by Senator **JACKSON** of Aroostook, **TABLED** until Later in Today's Session, pending **ENACTMENT**, in concurrence.
