

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

The following document is provided by the
LAW AND LEGISLATIVE DIGITAL LIBRARY
at the Maine State Law and Legislative Reference Library
<http://legislature.maine.gov/lawlib>



Reproduced from scanned originals with text recognition applied
(searchable text may contain some errors and/or omissions)

LEGISLATIVE RECORD

OF THE

*One Hundred and Fourth
Legislature*

OF THE

STATE OF MAINE

Volume II

May 9, 1969 to June 17, 1969

**KENNEBEC JOURNAL
AUGUSTA, MAINE**

for us to evaluate today. So, I would hope that somebody would further table this until later on in this morning's session.

The PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes the Senator from Cumberland, Senator Stuart.

Thereupon, on motion by Mr. Stuart of Cumberland, retabled until later in today's session, pending Passage to be Engrossed.

The President laid before the Senate the third matter tabled earlier in today's session, by Mr. Wyman of Washington:

Bill, "An Act Creating the Unclassified State Employees Salary Board" (H. P. 1212) (L. D. 1541).

Pending - Passage to be Engrossed.

Thereupon, on motion by the same Senator, retabled and tomorrow assigned, pending Passage to be Engrossed.

The President laid before the Senate the fourth matter tabled earlier in today's session, by Mr. Minkowsky of Androscoggin:

Bill, "An Act Relating to Qualifications of Savings Bank Trustees and Other Officers." (S. P. 406) (L. D. 1370)

Pending — Passage to be Engrossed.

The PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes the Senator from Androscoggin, Senator Minkowsky.

Mr. MINKOWSKY of Androscoggin: Mr. President and Members of the Senate: This amendment is being prepared upstairs at the present time. It is the fifth one in line, and it might be advisable that it be tabled until tomorrow. I move that this item be tabled until tomorrow.

The PRESIDENT: The Chair would inform the Senator that the pending question before the Senate is the Adoption of Senate Amendment "B".

The Chair recognizes the Senator from Franklin, Senator Mills.

Thereupon, on motion by Mr. Mills of Franklin, retabled and tomorrow assigned, pending Adoption of Senate Amendment "B".

The President laid before the Senate the fifth matter tabled earlier in today's session, by Mr. Wyman of Washington:

HOUSE REPORT — from the Committee of Conference on Resolve, In favor of Town of Harrington for Medical Care of an Indigent. (H. P. 543) (L. D. 722)

Pending the motion by Mr. Berry of Cumberland that the Senate Insist and Ask for a Second Committee of Conference.

On motion by Mr. Wyman of Washington, retabled and tomorrow assigned, pending the motion by Mr. Berry of Cumberland that the Senate Insist and Ask for a Second Committee of Conference.

The President laid before the Senate the sixth matter tabled earlier in today's session, by Mr. Wyman of Washington:

Bill, "An Act Relating to Excise Tax on Motor Vehicles." (H. P. 841) (L. D. 1079)

Pending the motion by Mr. Martin of Piscataquis to Indefinitely Postpone the Bill.

The PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes the Senator from Washington, Senator Wyman.

Mr. WYMAN of Washington: Mr. President and Members of the Senate: I rise to oppose the motion of my colleague on the State Government Committee, the good Senator from Piscataquis, Senator Martin.

Historically, the excise tax was enacted in lieu of the personal property tax on motor vehicles. However, unlike the personal property tax, the excise tax mill rates have remained the same for many years. One may argue that the cost of cars has increased, but also has the value of real estate, and we all know how much the real estate tax rate has risen.

This modest increase of only one mill in the excise tax rate seems moderate and reasonable. Our revenue problems at the municipal level are staggering. This will only in a measure lighten the burden of the property tax at the local level, but it will help. Now, we have spent considerable time this session discussing how additional revenues can be provided to meet

the needs of the cities and towns. Here is an opportunity to make a small effort in this direction. This proposal should result in a 5% to a 7% increase in the revenue received by municipalities for the excise tax. This increase amounts to only one mill in the excise tax rate, or a three dollar increase for a \$3000 car. This tax rate has not been increased for thirty years. So, I hope the Senate will oppose the motion of Senator Martin.

The PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes the Senator from Piscataquis, Senator Martin.

Mr. MARTIN of Piscataquis: Mr. President and Members of the Senate: I would like to express a few comments on this bill relative to this increase. It has been my experience that most of the towns at present are not taking advantage of the item known as "accessory," which is a taxable item. Most of the towns use the base factory list price of the car or the truck, as the case may be, and the towns that desire more revenue through this item of property, all they have to do is to use the accessories which will give them substantially more than the proposed one mill increase.

I am against this increase because of the fact that we are hitting the motor vehicles too hard. We repealed a couple of weeks ago the exemption on the auto trade-in. We are presently taking, and will be discussing, an increase in the gasoline tax. We have a bill before us that deals with an increase of 20% on the registration of the motor vehicles, and I feel that an increase in the excise tax is creating a burden which will be unfair to the motor vehicle owners, which involves almost every family throughout the State.

The tax rate on real estate has increased throughout the years, and it is true that the excise tax rate has not increased, however, this has been offset by the increase in the factory list price of the vehicles. Years ago we used to have a minimum rate of five dollars for a vehicle. Now there is no vehicle that goes down to five dollars; they are all up above five dollars be-

cause of the fact that the factory list price was higher.

So, I hope that my motion to indefinitely postpone this bill prevails.

The PRESIDENT: Is the Senate ready for the question?

The Chair recognizes the Senator from Washington, Senator Wyman.

Mr. WYMAN of Washington: Mr. President and Members of the Senate: I agree with much that the good Senator from Piscataquis, Senator Martin, has said. We have hit the motorist on this repeal of the exemption for a u t o m o b i l e trade-ins and that does disturb me, but it doesn't help the towns one bit. This money is not going to the towns. While the value of motor vehicles has increased, the value of real estate has increased, the rate also has gone up, so the real estate owner is getting hit twice; both by an increase in valuation and by an increase in rate. The motor vehicle excise rate has not changed for thirty years.

Now, the good Senator from Piscataquis is a town manager, and I have had the privilege of being associated with him on the Taxation Committee this session. I can say that I have learned that he is a very efficient town manager, and I would say that if all the towns had a town manager as efficient and as able as Senator Martin, his theory of having the towns tax for accessories on the cars would be perfectly all right because it would be done. But I am sure the town managers aren't doing it, they are not going to do it, a great many of them, they don't know the value of these accessories, and it presents a problem. So, in the absence of having town managers throughout the State, very few of whom are as efficient and able as Senator Martin, I once more oppose his motion, and hope that the Senate will adopt this bill.

The PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes the Senator from Piscataquis, Senator Martin.

Mr. MARTIN of Piscataquis: Mr. President and Members of the Senate: I just want to add to the comment of Senator Wyman that if the town managers and the

tax collectors do not know the value of the accessories there are books that provide these values, they are available to every town, and they actually have to have this information in order to figure the factory list price. There is supplemental information connected with each vehicle that includes the added value for white - wall tires, radio and accessories, hydraulic brakes, and what have you, hydraulic steering, it all adds to the value. Again, I still hope that the Senate will kill this bill, because there are other ways that the towns can increase their revenue if they so desire.

The PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes the Senator from Washington, Senator Wyman.

Mr. WYMAN: Mr. President, when the vote is taken I request a division.

The PRESIDENT: A division had been requested. The pending question before the Senate is the motion of the Senator from Piscataquis, Senator Martin, that Bill, "An Act Relating to Excise Tax on Motor Vehicles," be indefinitely postponed. A division has been requested. As many Senators as are in favor of indefinitely postponing the bill will rise and remain standing until counted. Those opposed will rise and remain standing until counted.

A division was had. Eleven Senators having voted in the affirmative, and eighteen Senators having voted in the negative, the motion did not prevail.

Thereupon, the Bill was Passed to be Engrossed in concurrence.

The President laid before the Senate the seventh matter tabled earlier in today's session, by Mr. Katz of Kennebec:

Bill, "An Act Relating to Welfare Assistance" (H. P. 687) (L. D. 918).

Pending - Passage to be Engrossed.

The PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes the Senator from Kennebec, Senator Katz.

Mr. KATZ of Kennebec: Mr. President and Members of the Senate: L. D. 918, "An Act Relating to Welfare Assistance," was a rather lengthy bill, if you recall.

It had a tremendous price tag because of the medicaid features. I had a feeling that rather than summarily dispose of the bill, that I would give the Senate a chance to look at two different proposals. I would suggest that as these amendments are presented, and after we have had a brief discussion, that they be tabled until the next legislative day, so everybody can have a leisurely chance to look at them. Mr. President, Senate Amendment "A", which I present and move its Adoption, I would like to speak on it.

The PRESIDENT: The Senator from Kennebec, Senator Katz, offers Senate Amendment "A" and moves its Adoption. The Secretary will read the Amendment.

Senate Amendment "A", Filing No. S-223, was Read.

The PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes the same Senator.

Mr. KATZ of Kennebec: Mr. President and Members of the Senate: Senate Amendment "A", is a statement of policy. It strikes out the phrase "Pauper" in a couple of places. It gives a procedure on Page 2 for cases where the local assistance offices have refused to give approval to a particular case, and it gives a method of the State reviewing individual cases. There has been, of course, criticism in the State insofar as a hearing provision is concerned. There is a—Mr. President, I hope that you will excuse me — what I thought was Senate Amendment "A" is Senate Amendment "B". Senate Amendment "A" gets into the question of family life in Number 5.

The question is whether, when an ADC father has left the household, and he leaves specifically so that his family can become eligible for ADC payments, whether or not justice or social welfare is served at all. Part of this amendment would enable us to put some money into the family where the father is still living within the household. This is an area that I would suggest that the Senate consider and consider well.

Another portion of this pertains to commodities. Presently in the State we know that there are