

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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Senate Legislative Record

One Hundred and Twenty-Seventh Legislature

State of Maine

Daily Edition

First Regular Session
beginning December 3, 2014

beginning at Page 1

Senate at Ease.

Senate called to order by President Pro Tempore
GARRETT P. MASON of Androscoggin County.

All matters thus acted upon, with the exception of those matters being held, were ordered sent down forthwith for concurrence.

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:

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

House

Divided Report

The Majority of the Committee on **APPROPRIATIONS AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS** on Bill "An Act Making Unified Appropriations and Allocations for the Expenditures of State Government, General Fund and Other Funds and Changing Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2016 and June 30, 2017"

H.P. 702 L.D. 1019

Reported that the same **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-415)**.

Signed:

Senators:

HAMPER of Oxford
KATZ of Kennebec
VALENTINO of York

Representatives:

ROTUNDO of Lewiston
FREY of Bangor
GRANT of Gardiner
JORGENSEN of Portland
MARTIN of Eagle Lake
SANBORN of Gorham

The Minority of the same Committee on the same subject reported that the same **Ought To Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "B" (H-416)**.

Signed:

Representatives:

NUTTING of Oakland
SIROCKI of Scarborough
TIMBERLAKE of Turner
WINSOR of Norway

Comes from the House with the Majority **OUGHT TO PASS AS AMENDED BY COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" (H-415)** Report **READ** and **ACCEPTED** and the Bill **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED AS AMENDED BY COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" (H-415) AS AMENDED BY HOUSE AMENDMENTS "A" (H-439) AND "B" (H-448)** thereto.

Reports **READ**.

On motion by Senator **HAMPER** of Oxford, the Majority **OUGHT TO PASS AS AMENDED BY COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" (H-415)** Report **ACCEPTED**, in concurrence.

READ ONCE.

Committee Amendment "A" (H-415) **READ**.

On motion by Senator **HAMPER** of Oxford, Senate Amendment "A" (S-287) to Committee Amendment "A" (H-415) **READ**.

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

Senator **HAMPER:** Thank you, Mr. President. Ladies and gentlemen of the Senate, this budget got started the first week in January, five months and one week ago. We divided it into committee reports and sent it out to various committees, getting started with public hearings on the budget the third week in February in order to keep things moving forward, knowing full well that the taxation portion was going to be the hardest part to overcome. We finished up public hearings in March and since then there's been a load of compromising. A lot of work by the committee. A lot of work by the policy committees. We listened and we put it together as best as we possibly could. Here is the final product for your perusal this evening. As a birthday present, I'd really appreciate it if we could get this thing done tonight. Thank you, Mr. President.

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

Senator **VALENTINO:** Thank you very much, Mr. President. I just wanted to clarify. Are we talking about the amendment that was just offered or is the discussion on the Majority Report that we are accepting?

THE PRESIDENT: For clarification, I believe that we are now discussing Senate Amendment "A".

On motion by Senator **HAMPER** of Oxford, Senate Amendment "A" (S-287) to Committee Amendment "A" (H-415) **ADOPTED**.

On motion by Senator **HAMPER** of Oxford, Senate Amendment "B" (S-288) to Committee Amendment "A" (H-415) **READ.**

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

Senator **HAMPER:** Thank you, Mr. President. I'll keep my remarks to this amendment. This is a technical amendment to a portion of the budget, to Part BBBB, which is the 'put ME to work program.' Basically it's a technical amendment. Three different changes that clarify the language. Thank you, Mr. President.

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

Senator **VALENTINO:** Thank you, Mr. President. Men and women of the Senate, I rise today to lend my full support to this amendment to the Majority budget. As we are all aware, the Appropriations Committee did not reach a unanimous recommendation. This amendment decreases the income tax rates for all taxpayers in a fair and equitable way. It makes changes to General Assistance formulas and to the welfare cliff plus adds additional money to support Maine's emergency shelter infrastructure. It expands upon what we did in the Majority budget by further increasing the Homestead Exemption and instead of capping the exemption on military pensions it removed it entirely.

I also rise today to lend my support to the budget that we have before us, but in true Maine tradition I must start this speech with a story. When I was first elected to the other Body eleven years ago it was early in the morning before session and I was alone in the Chamber when the head of Taxation walked in. For all of us old timers, we can remember when we actually got a printed copy of the budget. I walked up to him with my budget in hand and asked him a question on the elderly tax deferral credit. He took one look at my budget, that was all color coded, highlighted, and tabbed, and asked, with surprise, "Did you actually read that?" I responded that we were told in caucus last night to read the budget and see if we had any questions. Almost laughing at me, he said, "I'm really impressed, but no one actually reads the budget." Well I am here to say that the Appropriations Committee not only read the 700 pages of the budget, but we agonized over every line that went into the budget. Why? Because the budget is not about the individual members of the Committee, it is for the Maine people. That is why I am proud of the work done on the budget and the end product.

I have been fortunate to work side-by-side with two highly respected Senators. I want to commend the good Senate Chair from Oxford. Even though we have served together in the Legislature for 11 years, I have never had the opportunity to serve on a committee with him. I found we worked extremely well together. We both liked to start on time, think in a very linear way, and like to get to the point very quickly, although he would say that I use a lot more words than he does to get to the point. I have also been fortunate to previously serve on the Workforce Committee with the good Senator from Kennebec and he always brings a wealth of negotiating skills, steadiness, and intellect to every discussion and debate.

I support the Majority Report and the amendment that is offered and I wish to mention a few of the good things that are in this. This is a real meat and potatoes budget. It provides an additional \$80 million for K-12 education; \$8 million for the Community Colleges; \$9.4 million for the U Maine System; and

\$10 million for the Maine State Grant Program to increase grants from \$1,000 to \$1,500. The budget helps lower individual property taxes by increasing the Homestead Exemption for all Maine homeowners, both young and old, and preserving revenue sharing to the towns. It creates a higher exemption for those who receive military pensions. It preserves Drugs for the Elderly and Medicaid savings plans. It funds wait lists for those with disabilities, increases funding for nursing homes, health homes, and primary care physicians. It increases the estate tax exemption so that Maine now follows the federal exemption of \$5.5 million, allowing more families to preserve family farms and homesteads. The budget also rejected the proposal of taxing non-profits. We rejected the expansion of the sales tax to hundreds of new services and items, and we rejected the elimination of itemized deductions such as the mortgage interest deduction.

These are the items that you will read about in the paper tomorrow, but there are over 700 pages of other items in this budget just as important to other agencies, committees, and Maine people. Items for courts and public safety; such as four new drug agents, two new Assistant Attorney General drug prosecutors, ten new Assistant District Attorneys, two new judges, two new law clerks, and additional marshals for court security. It protects vital forest services, sets reasonable limits on timber harvesting on public lands, and preserves our forest rangers and their duties. It extends the authority of the Department of Corrections to keep our county jails operational until a longer term solution is found, and establishes a wage parity program for our workers in the Department of Corrections. This budget not only follows our Constitutional obligation to have a balanced budget, but it does not create a hole that needs to be funded by those who come after. That is why I am asking each of my colleagues to vote in support of the budget. The budget is not about getting everything I want or what you want. We were elected to work together to find a common ground.

Before closing I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the work of others. I want to thank all of you, each and every one of you in this Chamber, for the tremendous amount of work you did in your committees to get Appropriations factual detailed report backs. I want to thank the OFPR staff and the staff of both the Democrat and Republican offices for the thousands of hours they worked on the budget. I also want to take a moment to thank Leadership on both sides of the aisle for their willingness to stay at the table and work out a compromise amendment. Most importantly, I want to thank the President of the Senate. If it was not for his strength, perseverance, and leadership when times became extremely difficult and negative we would not be in this posture today. He held steady and weathered the storm. I want you to know that I stand here today, albeit in silence due to protocol, but please note I am applauding you Mr. President.

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

Senator **KATZ:** Thank you very much, Mr. President. Men and women of the Senate, I, too, join in rising in support of the pending motion and particularly want to emphasize the last point that my good friend, the Senator from York, made about your leadership, Mr. President, over the last several weeks in the face of some storms that, frankly, were completely unnecessary. Thank you for your leadership. I also want to thank my colleagues in the Senate on the Appropriations Committee.

Senator Hamper for his solid leadership throughout these many months. His values that he was never willing to move away from and for his sense of humor. Also to my good friend from York, Senator Valentino, for her dogged advocacy for what she believes in, her pragmatism, and her incredible organization. To pass a two-thirds budget at the best of times isn't easy. This is my second time on the Appropriations Committee. The first time was in the 125th when one party controlled all three branches here, if you will. Even then it wasn't easy. In a divided government it's even more so. With two political parties, 186 individual legislators, trying to find that right balance has been allusive. Every two years it seems we play out our version of Goldilocks and the Three Bears, trying to find a soup that's not too hot, not too cold, but just right. I think that we can all agree that, although this soup took way too long to cook, we are getting it right. I hope all of my colleagues in the Chamber will support this motion. Thank you, Mr. President.

On motion by Senator **HAMPER** of Oxford, Senate Amendment "B" (S-288) to Committee Amendment "A" (H-415) **ADOPTED**.

On motion by Senator **VOLK** of Cumberland, Senate Amendment "C" (S-289) to Committee Amendment "A" (H-415) **READ**.

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

Senator **VOLK:** Thank you, Mr. President. I am very aware that it's getting late and all of my colleagues here in the Senate are tired. I just want to speak for a few moments about why this amendment is important to me. My family and I started attending a church in Portland about ten years ago and one of the things that attracted us to that church was the diversity that we found there. The diversity was mostly found in a number of people who had come from Burundi Congo and Rwanda. We learned about their stories and what brought them here. The thing that most impressed me was how driven they were to succeed and how hard they worked to learn our language, learn our customs, adapt to our weather conditions even. I cannot imagine going from living in Africa to living in Maine, where we have a six or seven month winter. Yet they were happy to be here and just felt so blessed to be safe. I was incredibly impressed by that.

Over that period of time I've been able to watch as their families have grown, as they've established lives here. They've all gone to work as soon as they were able to. They've all learned English. Their children have come over from Africa, if they were separated initially. They've been successful. They've graduated from high school. If they had the ability to afford it, they've gone on to school. Usually it's SMCC because they're living at home. Then they transfer to USM. Some of the adults even have gone back to school.

It strikes me that, considering the workforce issues that we face in this state, a frightening statistic is that over the next two decades the ratio of seniors to prime working age adults, which is 25 to 64, in Maine will increase by 93%. If you think we have a problem now, 20 years from now we'll have an even bigger problem. I've done my part. I had four children. Unfortunately, those children, two of them, have basically already left the state and I don't see either one of them returning and that makes me sad. We need to figure out how we are going to attract people to our state. How are we going to grow our workforce when we're not, frankly, having enough babies? This is one way that we're

going to be able to do it. I feel like encouraging these asylees to create lives here in Maine, to invest in our communities, is an investment in our future, particularly when you see that they're actually sending their children at a faster rate than Maine-born children are going to college. I'm not alone in this. The Maine Chamber of Commerce also supports doing what we can to help these people remain here in Maine so that they can be a part of our workforce going forward and a part of our educational institutions.

I do offer this amendment which would allow them to obtain GA for up to 24 months and that gives them enough time, and with a little bit of security buffer, so that they are able to get through their application process, get through the immigration process if that's what they're going through, and get their work permit and be able to get themselves out of poverty. I guarantee you that more often than not they are doing that at a higher rate than a lot of our native Mainers. I applaud them for that. I understand the way that a lot of amendments go regarding the budget and I have no illusions and I look forward to continuing this conversation at a later date.

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

Senator **ALFOND:** Thank you, Mr. President. Ladies and gentlemen of the Senate, I first want to thank the good Senator from Cumberland, Senator Volk, for putting this amendment in. It takes a ton of courage, it takes commitment, it takes personal stories, and it takes a vision to put an amendment like this because her words exemplify a lot of things that I'm going to say, but also what our state is facing. Before I begin, just imagine, and you don't have to imagine but just think about it, in your community in a couple of weeks a thousand people being homeless. A thousand people being homeless. What would you be doing right now? You'd be doing everything you possibly could to make sure that we come up with a solution. This is what this amendment is doing. It is a solution to a crisis that our state is going to be facing within weeks. Recently our state's economist, Amanda Rector, came out and said something that I thought was incredibly provocative. She said, "Look, our rankings. They surprise us all. What do you think our rankings, our Poor's economic rankings, being 47th in the country means?" She said, "Our state's population is too old." She hit it right on the head. She said exactly what we all know. We have a shortage of skilled workers in our state. I'll ask all of you: what is our plan, what is our blueprint, to attract talent to Maine? Tell me anything that we have done, are going to do, that is attracting talent to Maine. We have hundreds and hundreds of immigrants coming to our state and they want to be here. They want to start their lives. They are fleeing from their countries, being persecuted, horrible, horrible situations. They are coming to our state because they want to be here. They want to be in our state. They want to send their children to our schools. They want to start businesses. This is not just me talking. Go to Lewiston. Go to Portland. Go to Bangor. Go to rural parts of our state. They are starting their businesses. They're starting their future because they want to be in the state of Maine.

There are some things that we can't fix. I wish we could. Under federal law, for six months they can't work. What are we going to do about it? Are we going to put our head in the sand and say tough luck? Are we going to do something together? I think tonight, in this amendment, provides an opportunity, not just

an opportunity short-term but to shock all the pundits out these who said there's no way you can tackle welfare reform like this, there's no way. The sides are too separate. There's no way. Democrats think this way. Republicans think this way. When I look at the 34 of you I think of Mainers. I think of Mainers all thinking one way. Our future, our economy, our health, our compassion. Look folks, this doesn't have to be a hard decision. I know a lot of you are spiritual. I know a lot of you have strong family roots here in Maine. I know a lot of you think about our state all the time. Tonight, with this amendment, we have something that we can do together. We can do together for our future. We can do together for our economy. I would just hope that when you think about what you're going to press tonight you think about your family's history. Not one of us came here without a history. History from Europe. History from wherever your family has come from. We have an opportunity to make Maine a welcoming place. This is an opportunity to do that and I hope that we can do it together tonight. 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, I rise in support of this motion. I, too, want to thank the good Senator from Cumberland for this proposed amendment. While back in the Education Committee, we heard hours of incredible, compelling testimony from new Mainers in support of a bill sponsored by Representative Espling. I'm going to read some of her testimony that she offered. "We offer ministry to help immigrants with immigration paperwork. We offer a household goods ministry and clothing ministry, often helping immigrants move from the shelter into an apartment with a few basics. Our Sunday school includes an English as a Second Language class. I believe in what our immigrants and new Americans have to offer our Maine economy. New Mainers have a positive impact on Maine's economy in helping Maine's employers meet their workforce needs." That, indeed, is the crux of the issue that we face over and over again in the Education Committee. We have been tasked with developing a workforce that will help grow our economy and this is an important, incredibly critical aspect of that. We also had testimony in support of this from the Department of Labor saying, and this is for the New Mainer's Center, "The Center's primary focus is working with educated immigrants and refugees who need guidance and advice regarding their various career options and who lack the requisite job readiness skills necessary to be competitive in Maine's workforce." This amendment before us provides us a way to help these passionate, dedicated, motivated new Mainers become a part of our community. Thank you, Mr. President.

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

Senator **HASKELL:** Thank you very much, Mr. President. Ladies and gentlemen of the Senate, a couple of things I heard today really have struck me. I will join the crowd and thank the good Senator from Cumberland for putting this forward. I can't refer to another amendment that has not been suggested here yet, but I will tell you that I'm interested in seeing this budget pass. I'm interested in making sure we do all we can. We have come so far and I'm in a position where, while I might prefer some other

avenue, I would be glad to compromise in order to be able to see us move forward, as a group. I want to talk a little bit about maybe my experience. My grandmother on my mother's side came here from Ireland in the Potato Famine. Maybe some of you have heard that story from some of your grandparents or relatives. They came to Canada. That was the quickest route for them. A lot of them migrated south. She migrated all the way south to West Stewartstown, New Hampshire, which is probably this far over the Canadian border. Not very far. She never became a citizen here. She always thought voting was for men, not for women, so I didn't get all of my political opinions from her. There are a lot of folks who came that way.

There are a lot of folks who came here from Canada. There are still a lot of folks living here who have emigrated from Canada. My first husband was a Frenchman. His folks came over here to work. That was the time, and I can remember seeing some of these, there were old signs in stores that said no French need apply, or no Italians need apply. That was the way people were treated then. Up on Munjoy Hill in my city there was a dividing line and two Catholic churches, one that the French went to and one that the Italians went to. Hard to imagine we were so divided then. There are stories and many of us know some of these stories from our past.

I went to Deering High School and about one-third of my class was Jewish. We learned a lot about Jewish history, which was fascinating to me because it was not something that kind of came down through the family. They learned about the M.S. St. Louis that left Germany in 1939 with immigrants who were fleeing from Nazi oppression and they fled to Cuba first and were refused because Cuba had changed their rules. They tried to land here. They thought it was going to be a very nice trip across the water. It turned out to be a great tragedy for those people because they were turned away from the United States as well. When they went back, they finally had to go back because they were not allowed to land anywhere here, many of them ended up, as the story goes, in concentration camps where they were killed. These people died. They went back to the persecution that they came from. We don't want to repeat any of that and nobody here intends to repeat any of that.

I think what we need to do now is remember that all of us came from somewhere. All of us came from somewhere. There are some great people who have come to our community and we've had a lot of these stories in front of us, passed around on our tables, but I would tell you, as I look at these faces, I want you to know these are my neighbors. These are people I know. I know them personally. I know their children. I've been to the schools where they go to school. These are real people with real lives and real difficulties and real talents to bring to us. I'm hoping that we're going to be able to move forward. I'm hoping that we're going to make sure that, as we provide these services, we're not doing it for folks who were here illegally, and this bill does that, but to make sure those people who are lawfully present here, who have done things the way they're supposed to do them, who have received the paperwork that they need to receive and are simply waiting for our federal partners to act, would be able to stay fed and housed until they are able to go to work and contribute to our community. Asylum seekers who are coming here have been fleeing unsafe and very dangerous conditions. They've already suffered unfathomable hardships. They want to come here for a path to what we have and participate in the American Dream. I really hope you will join me in supporting this amendment in order

to see if we can't give a hand out and a hand up to this great group of people. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes the Senator from Penobscot, Senator Gratwick.

Senator **GRATWICK:** Thank you very much, Mr. President. Ladies and gentlemen of the Senate, I rise this evening to speak in favor of this pending amendment. I speak partly in my own voice and partly in the voice of Representative Craig Hickman from the House. I think we share a common concern. I believe, and I think we all do, that every person in this Chamber is a proud American. Our ancestors come from different places. They practice different faiths. They eat different meals. We share one nation and one set of ideals. We share a belief in the greatness of our country, a belief that what makes us a great nation isn't our sameness but our diversity. Today, for example, in the hallway of this great building we saw of Maine's diversity. There are people here who hail from Mangola, from Burundi, from Canada, from Mexico, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Congo Brazzaville, from Ireland, Djibouti, Rwanda, Somalia, and many others I don't even know. To quote Representative Hickman, "These people hail from the continent of my ancestors, who did not come to these shores by choice, ancestors who did not come to these shores fleeing anything. Still I love America more than any other country on earth and I wish to be nowhere else." We all hear, and I think we know very well, the words: "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed, to me. I lift my lamp beside the golden door." I'm certain, Mr. President, that every person here knows that these closing lines from Emma Lazarus' 1883 sonnet entitled "New Colossus" are emblazoned on a bronze plaque on the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty, placed there in 1903. Mr. President, we are a nation of immigrants. Let us never forget. As Thomas Jefferson challenged us, "Shall we refuse the unhappy refugees from distress that hospitality which the savages of the wilderness extended to our fathers arriving this land? Shall oppressed humanity find no asylum among this globe?" We are a nation of immigrants. Let us be reminded by the International Community through the Universal Declaration of Human Rights for which the United States voted that everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy another country's asylum from persecution. Mr. President, we are a nation of immigrants. Let us never forget.

Throughout this conversation we have heard arguments that we can't even afford to take care of our own, we can't help our own disadvantaged, our elderly, and our infirmed, so we can't help these new people. For me, I say why not? Why can't we? From the long perspective of human history, from before the times of the pharaohs to now, in the wealthiest nation ever to exist on earth, can we really claim poverty in good faith? Throughout this conversation we've heard fears like this; they don't look like us, they don't speak our language, they worship differently than we do, they have strange ways, they can't be trusted, they've just come here to take from us, to pick our pockets, to live off the dole. If we haven't walked in their shoes who are we then to judge? Mr. President, men and women here in the Senate, have we forgotten what makes us human? Have we forgotten what makes us humane? Have we forgotten the purpose of our government? Our purpose for existing, the principles that guide us and guard our work in this Chamber are laid out in our State's Constitution. "We have formed the

government of the State of Maine to establish justice, ensure tranquility, promote our common welfare, and secure to ourselves and our prosperity the blessings of liberty." Is not the welfare of all of God's children our common welfare? Is treating all of our residents with fairness and equality, indeed, justice? Is it our responsibility to truly secure the blessings of liberty for those who sought refuge amongst us, fleeing tyranny and civil war?

In closing, I turn script around. I'm not going to call these people we're talking about immigrants or asylum seekers or legal non-citizens. I'm going to call them exactly what they are: human beings seeking a better life in the greatest country on earth. How can we, in good conscience, throw a decent human being out onto the streets because our sometimes cold and insensitive language around welfare cheats, and illegals has been repeated so often that we have lost our ability to see the human beings behind these labels? In order to live with my conscience, I cannot, ought not, and will not vote against human beings who need our help. I cannot, I ought not, and I will not pit them against other human beings who need our help. I cannot, ought not, and will not fear what happens at the ballot box in the next election. Mr. President, it's a privilege to be able to vote on this amendment tonight. I urge us to accept this. Thank you, Mr. President.

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

Senator **LIBBY:** Thank you, Mr. President. Men and women of the Senate, we've spent a lot of time in this Body talking about welfare reform, and the need for more and better welfare reform, year after year after year. We work on compromise legislation that ends up being defeated because of politics. We bring it back here year after year after year. Before us we have a decision to make that is quite out of the scope of welfare reform. We're talking about a hand up for people who have come to this country to work, to pay taxes, to put their kids through school, to raise their families. The motion before us would at least give those folks, who are here legally, a chance to succeed; the same chance that we all have to succeed in this country. I think it's important to think about some of the individuals that may be affected by the failure of this amendment to be attached to the bill before us, some of the folks that are going to have to make very difficult decisions about packing up their lives that they just started to get settled and moving on because the last line of defense has been taken away from them. I represent the City of Lewiston. I proudly represent the city, one of the most diverse communities in the state. It's always been a diverse community. It's a community of immigrants. It has been since its founding. I've come to know a lot of individuals who have fled any number of circumstances to establish their lives in the Lewiston/Auburn area. Folks of lots of different generations, recent immigrants who fled war torn situations in Africa, as well as senior citizens who emigrated from parts of Europe and Canada, leaving very similar situations.

A few folks that I've met had some very powerful stories. One of them is Ms. Pemba. Ms. Pemba is from Magnolia where she was a gospel singer. She recorded a song that was critical of her government and found herself a target. One of her cousins was killed as a result and another seriously injured. She fled to the United States. She got a little bit of assistance and was very grateful for that assistance. I helped her get through that period of time when she was applying for a work permit because, as she

told us over and over again, she was eager to work, ready to work. That little bit of assistance helped her become independent.

Mr. Mwamba came from the Congo. His wife and daughters were raped and a son was beaten by government thugs before he could send them to safety. He made it to the United States. Again, in his situation, a little bit of assistance helped him get his life settled.

Just today another individual's in this State House. Her name is Nemah. She came from Djibouti. In Djibouti America has a military installation that serves as a platform for operations to carry out the war on terrorism. The war on terrorism, as you know, is a conflict where actually a few members of this legislature have served their country and fought. Nemah, who is here today, came here with her husband and they were beneficiaries of general assistance for less than a year. This little bit of assistance allowed them the support they needed to apply for asylum and for that to be granted and for their work permit to be processed. Her husband now has a job at L.L. Bean and has been working there for more than three years. Nemah works for a non-profit organization, helping others who were in her situation. She's working on her college degree and she's pregnant with her first child, who will be an American citizen.

Mr. President, I ask members of the Senate to join us in supporting this amendment to provide for a humane end to the level of assistance that we've been providing immigrants to the state of Maine. Thank you, Mr. President.

Senator **HAMPER** of Oxford moved to **INDEFINITELY POSTPONE** Senate Amendment "C" (S-289) to Committee Amendment "A" (H-415).

On motion by Senator **ALFOND** of Cumberland, 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 (#269)

YEAS: Senators: BAKER, BRAKEY, BURNS, COLLINS, CUSHING, CYRWAY, DAVIS, DIAMOND, DUTREMBLE, EDGEComb, HAMPER, HILL, KATZ, LANGLEY, MASON, MCCORMICK, ROSEN, SAVIELLO, VALENTINO, WHITTEMORE, WILLETTE, THE PRESIDENT - MICHAEL D. THIBODEAU

NAYS: Senators: ALFOND, BREEN, DILL, GERZOFsky, GRATWICK, HASKELL, JOHNSON, LIBBY, MILLETT, MIRAMANT, PATRICK, VOLK, WOODSOME

22 Senators having voted in the affirmative and 13 Senators having voted in the negative, the motion by Senator **HAMPER** of Oxford to **INDEFINITELY POSTPONE** Senate Amendment "C" (S-289) to Committee Amendment "A" (H-415) **PREVAILED**.

House Amendment "A" (H-439) to Committee Amendment "A" (H-415) **READ**.

Senator **HAMPER** of Oxford moved to **INDEFINITELY POSTPONE** House Amendment "A" (H-439) to Committee Amendment "A" (H-415), in **NON-CONCURRENCE**.

On motion by Senator **ALFOND** of Cumberland, 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 (#270)

YEAS: Senators: BAKER, BRAKEY, BURNS, COLLINS, CUSHING, CYRWAY, DAVIS, DIAMOND, DUTREMBLE, EDGEComb, HAMPER, HILL, KATZ, LANGLEY, MASON, MCCORMICK, ROSEN, SAVIELLO, VALENTINO, VOLK, WHITTEMORE, WILLETTE, WOODSOME, THE PRESIDENT - MICHAEL D. THIBODEAU

NAYS: Senators: ALFOND, BREEN, DILL, GERZOFsky, GRATWICK, HASKELL, JOHNSON, LIBBY, MILLETT, MIRAMANT, PATRICK

24 Senators having voted in the affirmative and 11 Senators having voted in the negative, the motion by Senator **HAMPER** of Oxford to **INDEFINITELY POSTPONE** House Amendment "A" (H-439) to Committee Amendment "A" (H-415), in **NON-CONCURRENCE, PREVAILED**.

House Amendment "B" (H-448) to Committee Amendment "A" (H-415) **READ**.

Senate at Ease.

Senate called to order by the President.

On motion by Senator **HAMPER** of Oxford, House Amendment "B" (H-448) to Committee Amendment "A" (H-415) **INDEFINITELY POSTPONED**, in **NON-CONCURRENCE**.

Committee Amendment "A" (H-415) as Amended by Senate Amendments "A" (S-287) and "B" (S-288) thereto, **ADOPTED**, in **NON-CONCURRENCE**.

Under suspension of the Rules, **READ A SECOND TIME**.

On motion by Senator **MASON** of Androscoggin, 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 (#271)

YEAS: Senators: ALFOND, BAKER, BRAKEY, BREEN, BURNS, COLLINS, CUSHING, CYRWAY, DAVIS, DIAMOND, DILL, DUTREMBLE, EDGEComb, GERZOFsky, GRATWICK, HAMPER, HILL, JOHNSON, KATZ, LANGLEY, LIBBY, MASON, MCCORMICK, MILLETT, MIRAMANT, PATRICK, ROSEN, SAVIELLO, VALENTINO, VOLK, WHITTEMORE, WILLETTE, WOODSOME, THE PRESIDENT - MICHAEL D. THIBODEAU

NAYS: Senator: HASKELL

34 Senators having voted in the affirmative and 1 Senator having voted in the negative, was **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED AS AMENDED BY COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" (H-415) AS AMENDED BY SENATE AMENDMENTS "A" (S-287) and "B" (S-288)** thereto, in **NON-CONCURRENCE**.

Ordered sent down forthwith for concurrence.

RECESSED until the sound of the bell.

After Recess

Senate called to order by the President.

The following proceedings were conducted after 12:01a.m., Wednesday, June 17, 2015.

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:

Emergency Measure

An Act Making Unified Appropriations and Allocations for the Expenditures of State Government, General Fund and Other Funds and Changing Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2015, June 30, 2016 and June 30, 2017

H.P. 702 L.D. 1019
(S "A" S-287; S "B" S-288
to C "A" H-415)

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

Senator **HAMPER:** Thank you, Mr. President. Ladies and gentlemen of the Senate, a new day. We missed my birthday. That's the way it goes. Now is my opportunity to say a little bit

about the budget. November 5, the die was cast. November 5, 2014 the die was cast. Votes were counted and we were a divided government. We've all, and will continue to, live for another year and a half under the specter of division between the bodies. As I've said many times, House blocks the Senate and the Senate blocks the House. My goodness, just look at the calendar that comes to you every day with the non-concurrent matters in the number ones in the front of the calendar. It's very obvious what we deal with on a daily basis. The budget did not have that option. We had to get it done. Within the committee we found unity where we could and compromised on so much of everything else. When we closed the budget at about 12:10 in the morning on June 6th, a full five weeks after my target date of getting the budget done, I spoke to the committee and I said there was absolutely no need for us to get to the point that we were at and, that late in the game, there was no need for it in a year where there was enough money to take care of what we needed to do, but we got hung up on policy. So much policy. I also told the committee that I could see a way, that there was a way, that I could see it. There was a way for compromise. There was a way for us to bring it together. My hat's off to leadership tonight for bringing that final bit of compromise to the budget process. We reached an agreement. We're at this point tonight. Thank you, leadership, for sticking with the task. There's plenty in this budget for me to like and there's plenty in this budget for me to dislike, as it is with everybody else in this Body. It's not one of those things that can end up on the non-concurrent part of the calendar. We've got to get it done. We've got to run state government. It has to happen.

The Senator from York, Senator Valentino, I've come to very greatly appreciate your abilities over the past six months. Your thoroughness is exemplary. Senator Katz, the Senator from Kennebec, it was good to have legal advice. We had a good team. I just really appreciate my Senate colleagues from the committee. I think we worked together well. I'll wrap it up. Let's get this job done. Let's go home. Thank you, Mr. President.

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

Senator **KATZ:** Thank you, Mr. President. Men and women of the Senate, I'll be brief. During the last week I think there were a lot of doubts around here, with a divided government, tough issues before us, that we would be able to get to "yes" and fulfill our most basic obligation, to keep government up and running and providing services critical to our citizens. We all know we've lived in the shadow of a shut-down now for weeks, but eventually we were able to get there. I think it's a budget that both parties can take pride in because it has the stamp not only of both parties but I think of each individual in this Chamber on that document. We debated. We argued. We challenged each other the last six months. Despite our differences, despite the distractions, and despite the attacks from without this Chamber, we were able to get our job done and get to "yes". This budget is no more perfect than any one of us in this Chamber who helped form it, but we did our best and I think that we did well. Thank you, Mr. President.