

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

**STATE OF MAINE
ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE
FIRST REGULAR SESSION
JOURNAL OF THE SENATE**

In Senate Chamber
Friday
June 19, 2015

Senate called to order by President Michael D. Thibodeau of
Waldo County.

Prayer by Senator David C. Burns of Washington County.

SENATOR BURNS: Thank you, Mr. President. Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. We have a continuing theme that I hear here about asking for wisdom and I think it's a very good theme. I particularly recall a few days ago Dr. Grattwick's brief history lesson that he gave us in the prayer and I want to follow up on that just a little bit. I really appreciated that, so please bear with me for a second. I want to read excerpts out of a speech that Benjamin Franklin gave to the First Constitutional Convention after a long stalemate. I'll be very brief here.

Mr. President, the small progress we have made after four or five weeks close attendance and continual reasoning with each other, our different sentiments on almost every question, several of the last producing as many no's as yeas, is, methinks in melancholy, proof of the imperfection of human understanding. We, indeed, seem to feel our own want of political wisdom since we have been running about in search of it. In this situation of this assembly, groping as we are in the dark to find political truth, scarce able to distinguish it when presented to us, how has it happened, sir, that we have not hitherto once thought of humbly applying to the Father of Lights to illuminate our understanding? In beginning of the contest with Great Britain, when we were sensible of danger, we had daily prayer in this room for divine protection. Our prayers, sir, were heard and they were graciously answered. All of us that were engaged in the struggle must have observed frequent instances of superintending providence in our favor. I have lived, sir, a long time and the longer I live the more convincing proof I see of this truth, that God governs in the affairs of men. If a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, it is probable that an empire cannot rise without His aid. We have been assured, sir, in the sacred writing that except that the Lord build a house they labor in vain that build it. I firmly believe this and I also believe without His concurring aid we shall succeed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel. We shall be divided by our little partial local interests, our projects will be confounded and we, ourselves, shall become a reproach and a bye word down to future ages. What is worse, mankind may hereafter, from this unfortunate incident, despair of establishing government by human wisdom and leave it to chance, war, and conquests. I therefore beg leave to move that henceforth prayers imploring the assistance of heaven and its blessings on our deliberations be held in this assembly every morning before we proceed in business, that one or more clergy of this city be requested to officiate in that service.

Thankfully we continue on in that vein. I just ask you to bow your hearts and your heads in prayer please. Father, in heaven, we just thank You for the opportunity to come here before You.

Thank You that You have sent us here. Father, we do ask this morning for the wisdom, patience, and guidance that only You can provide to us. We pray for our President. We pray for our Governor. We pray for the House of Representatives. We pray for the men and women that You have called to serve in this Body. Father, too, this morning, we pray for peace and comfort and guidance for all those in Charleston, South Carolina who have suffered such great loss. Father, give them the grace that they need to get through this tragedy and help their brethren come together with them. Father, I thank You for these things. In His name, Jesus Christ, I pray. Amen.

Pledge of Allegiance led by Senator Scott W. Cyrway of
Kennebec County.

Reading of the Journal of Thursday, June 18, 2015.

Off Record Remarks

Senator **SAVIELLO** of Franklin requested and received leave of the Senate that members and staff be allowed to remove their jackets for the remainder of this Legislative Day.

Off Record Remarks

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

COMMUNICATIONS

The Following Communication: H.C. 243

**STATE OF MAINE
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
1 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0001**

June 18, 2015

The 127th Legislature of the State of Maine
State House
Augusta, Maine

Dear Honorable Members of the 127th Legislature:

Under the authority vested in me by Article IV, Part Third, Section 2-A of the Constitution of the State of Maine, I am hereby executing line-item vetoes of a number of allocations contained within LD 1019, "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." These vetoes are included on the attached sheet.

Mainers want a budget that can be used as a blueprint for prosperity for our great state. Instead, legislators delayed the process for five months, then presented a business-as-usual budget patched together at the last minute. Secretive, late-night decisions made under the cover of darkness and behind locked doors have led to a budget based on the best interests of a handful of politicians, not what is best for all the people of Maine.

As the drug epidemic continues to ravage our state—with nearly 1,000 babies born each year addicted to drugs and 208 Mainers dead of drug overdoses in 2014—it is appalling that politicians would rather fund their own pet projects than prevent ruthless out-of-state drug traffickers from infiltrating our communities and killing our children.

Because politicians are so busy capitulating to special interests and kowtowing to social-justice activists prowling the halls of the State House, they ignore our elderly, disabled and mentally ill citizens. These Mainers are rightfully entitled to healthcare, but they are left sitting for years on waitlists without basic services. Politicians have submitted a budget that provides only \$6 million toward the waitlist, when the true need is another \$40 million—which I allocated in my original budget.

They also rejected my plan to overhaul the state's General Assistance program, which encouraged cities like Portland to spend more of local taxpayers' money so they could get more funding from the state. Politicians watered down General Assistance reform to reward cities that insist on giving local taxpayers' money to illegal aliens.

Clearly, the health and public safety of Mainers was not a priority of the 127th Legislature. Instead, Augusta politicians snuck in a \$4 million "Christmas tree" adorned with piggy projects for legislators, such as buying federal land in Kittery, building an unneeded "Francis Perkins Homestead," paying for a commission disguised as initiative to end hunger and creating entirely new projects.

Maine taxpayers deserve to know how every dollar of their money is being spent, but this "Christmas tree" with gifts for certain legislators was presented with no public notice or input. This is exactly the kind of back-room politics the people of Maine sent me here to prevent.

Too many Augusta politicians are willing to disenfranchise the Maine people in exchange for feeding off the public trough, even at the expense of our most vulnerable and needy citizens. The days of pork-barrel spending—and Christmas in June—must end. At the very least, I will bring these politicians' actions to light for Mainers to see.

My administration has been working for five years to create an efficient government, but that is an oxymoron to Augusta politicians. They must put aside their petty political agendas and put the hard-working people of Maine first. Mainers deserve to have a say in how their money is being used, and they should be included in the budgeting process. I took my budget directly to the people of Maine, holding public town hall meetings up and down the state.

Until Augusta politicians bring transparency to their budget process, I will continue to veto legislation that is not in the best interest of all Mainers. I ask each one of you to stand up for the Maine people and support these vetoes.

Sincerely,

S/Paul R. LePage
Governor

READ and ORDERED PLACED ON FILE.

Pursuant to Article IV, Part Third, Section 2-A the accompanying line item vetoes on:

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 (EMERGENCY)

H.P. 702 L.D. 1019
(S. "A" S-287, S. "B" S-288
and S. "C" S-289 to
C. "A" H-415)

The accompanying line item veto:

Fund for Efficient Delivery of Local and Regional Services - Administration Z047

Initiative: Provides one-time funding of \$750,000 in each year of the 2016-2017 biennium to foster the efficient delivery of local and regional services.

OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS 2015-16
All Other ~~\$750,000~~ \$0

Comes from the House with the line-item veto Overridden notwithstanding the objections of the Governor.

The President laid before the Senate the following: "Shall this Section become law notwithstanding the objections of the Governor? In accordance with Article IV, Part Third, Section 2-A, of the Constitution, a vote of yes will be in favor of the Section. A vote of no will be in favor of sustaining the veto of the Governor."

The Chair ordered a Division. 31 Senators having voted in the affirmative and 1 Senator having voted in the negative, it was the vote of the Senate that the veto of the Governor be **OVERRIDDEN.**

LD 1019 - the accompanying line item veto:

Fund for Efficient Delivery of Local and Regional Services - Administration Z047

Initiative: Provides one-time funding of \$750,000 in each year of the 2016-2017 biennium to foster the efficient delivery of local and regional services.

OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS 2016-17
All Other ~~\$750,000~~ \$0