

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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One Hundred and Twenty-Third Legislature

State of Maine

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Pending - motion by same Senator to **ACCEPT** the Majority **OUGHT TO PASS AS AMENDED** Report, in concurrence

(In House, March 4, 2008, the Majority **OUGHT TO PASS AS AMENDED** Report **READ** and **ACCEPTED** and the Bill **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED AS AMENDED BY COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" (H-640)**.)

(In Senate, March 5, 2008, Reports **READ**.)

On motion by Senator **WESTON** of Waldo, 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 Lincoln, Senator Dow.

Senator **DOW:** Thank you, Madame President, ladies and gentlemen of the chamber. This bill has the potential to increase the expenses of the Department of Transportation, according to my notes, up to \$10.5 million of money they won't have in order to do needed highway repairs. Thank you.

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

Senator **STRIMLING:** Thank you, Madame President. Just to clarify what this bill does for those who don't know prevailing wage issues, it is try to make sure the workers of Maine get paid what their work is worth. There are two rates they can go, the state rate or the federal rate. What this is basically saying is whichever rate is higher is the one that we should be moving forward with, what we should be paying our workers. I think we all know in these economic times people are struggling out there. People can barely make ends meet. As the gap gets wider and wider between the super rich and everybody else it becomes harder for Maine families to heat their homes. It becomes harder for Maine families to put their kids through college. It becomes harder for Maine families to find a way to retire. What this bill does is make sure we pay people what we should pay them so they can support their families. We're not talking about some outrageous wages. We are talking about middle class wages. The kinds of jobs that we all recognize are vital to sustaining our economy. The kinds of middle class jobs that really built this country in the last 100 years. Back in the '50's and '60's when folks were paid a reasonable wage for doing the work that the public demanded be done, building our roads, building our bridges, building our schools. This is doing work for all of us and they should be paid enough so they can support their families on those wages. What this bill does is say let's pay them that wage so they can then go spend the money in the economy so that it can flow throughout and everyone can do better and prosper. Madame President, I encourage all of my colleagues to support this bill because it will support the people of Maine and strengthen our economy over and over again. Thank you.

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

Senator **PLOWMAN:** Thank you, Madame President, men and women of the Senate. What I heard from my people were,

'please fix the roads. We're tired of having bent rims and busted tires. We're tired of replacing our mufflers. We're tired of taking the long way around because gas costs so much. We're tired of having to cut down on what our family gets to do and what we can do because of what's going on with the roads.' That's what they told me first. They said let's make sure we take care of the roads of the state of Maine. When the fiscal note reads as follows, 'Highway construction projects will need to be deferred or delayed to compensate for these wages.' In addition Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management is going to have to put off their projects too. That's not what the people of the state of Maine have been saying for the last two years. They didn't say, 'Go down to Labor and see how you can drive up the cost of business in the state of Maine.' They said, 'Take care of our roads.' I hope that you will keep that in mind when you vote. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: The pending question before the Senate is the motion by the Senator from Cumberland, Senator Strimling to Accept the Majority Ought to Pass as Amended Report. A Roll Call has been ordered. Is the Senate ready for the question?

The Doorkeepers secured the Chamber.

The Secretary opened the vote.

ROLL CALL (#388)

YEAS: Senators: **BRYANT, STRIMLING, THE PRESIDENT - BETH G. EDMONDS**

NAYS: Senators: **BARTLETT, BENOIT, BOWMAN, BRANNIGAN, BROMLEY, COURTNEY, DAMON, DIAMOND, DOW, GOOLEY, HASTINGS, HOBBS, MARRACHE, MARTIN, MCCORMICK, MILLS, MITCHELL, NASS, NUTTING, PERRY, PLOWMAN, RAYE, ROSEN, ROTUNDO, SAVAGE, SCHNEIDER, SHERMAN, SMITH, SNOWE-MELLO, SULLIVAN, TURNER, WESTON**

3 Senators having voted in the affirmative and 32 Senators having voted in the negative, the motion by motion by Senator **STRIMLING** of Cumberland to **ACCEPT** the Majority **OUGHT TO PASS AS AMENDED** Report, in concurrence, **FAILED**.

On motion by Senator **MARTIN** of Aroostook, the Minority **OUGHT NOT TO PASS** Report **ACCEPTED**, in **NON-CONCURRENCE**.

Sent down for concurrence.

The Chair laid before the Senate the following Tabled and Later (3/13/08) Assigned matter:

SENATE REPORTS - from the Committee on **LABOR** on Bill "An Act To Ensure Fair Wages"

S.P. 604 L.D. 1697

Majority - **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-452)** (8 members)

Minority - **Ought Not to Pass** (4 members)

Tabled - March 13, 2008, by Senator **STRIMLING** of Cumberland

Pending - motion by same Senator to **ACCEPT** the Majority **OUGHT TO PASS AS AMENDED** Report

(In Senate, March 13, 2008, Reports **READ**.)

On motion by Senator **WESTON** of Waldo, 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 Cumberland, Senator Strimling.

Senator **STRIMLING:** Thank you, Madame President. As everyone knows this is a bill dealing with the minimum wage. I won't speak about the specifics but on your desk there is an amendment that will be coming to this after we hopefully pass first reading. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: The pending question before the Senate is the motion by the Senator from Cumberland, Senator Strimling to Accept the Majority Ought to Pass as Amended Report. A Roll Call has been ordered. Is the Senate ready for the question?

The Doorkeepers secured the Chamber.

The Secretary opened the vote.

ROLL CALL (#389)

YEAS: Senators: BARTLETT, BOWMAN, BRANNIGAN, BROMLEY, BRYANT, DAMON, DIAMOND, HOBBS, MARRACHE, MARTIN, MITCHELL, NUTTING, PERRY, ROTUNDO, SCHNEIDER, STRIMLING, SULLIVAN, THE PRESIDENT - BETH G. EDMONDS

NAYS: Senators: BENOIT, COURTNEY, DOW, GOOLEY, HASTINGS, MCCORMICK, MILLS, NASS, PLOWMAN, RAYE, ROSEN, SAVAGE, SHERMAN, SMITH, SNOWE-MELLO, TURNER, WESTON

18 Senators having voted in the affirmative and 17 Senators having voted in the negative, the motion by Senator **STRIMLING** of Cumberland to **ACCEPT** the Majority **OUGHT TO PASS AS AMENDED** Report, **PREVAILED**.

READ ONCE.

Committee Amendment "A" (S-452) **READ**.

On motion by Senator **STRIMLING** of Cumberland, Senate Amendment "A" (S-570) to Committee Amendment "A" (S-452) **READ**.

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

Senator **STRIMLING:** Thank you, Madame President. Just quickly to outline this amendment, what this does is basically shoots down the bill that we just moved through that would have raised the minimum wage \$1. This cuts that in half to fifty cents, twenty-five cents the first year and twenty-five cents the second year and takes out the indexing that was in the original bill so there will not be an automatic adjustment to the minimum wage. To give it some context, just to recognize the importance of doing this is that as of next fall we will have the lowest minimum wage in all of New England. New Hampshire will have surpassed us if you can believe it. So the first twenty-five cents is making sure that we are at the same level as New Hampshire and the second twenty-five cents is a year after that to continue in the process of getting us competitive with the rest of New England because the rest of New England will still be above that at that point and New Hampshire may indeed put in another minimum wage increase. They have a bill going through now, so this bill is twenty-five cents a year to get us to what New Hampshire has. Thank you.

On motion by Senator **COURTNEY** of York, **TABLED** until Later in Today's Session, pending the motion by Senator **STRIMLING** of Cumberland to **ADOPT** Senate Amendment "A" (S-570) to Committee Amendment "A" (S-452).

Off Record Remarks

The Chair laid before the Senate the following Tabled and Later (4/2/08) Assigned matter:

HOUSE REPORTS -from the Committee on **AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY** on Bill "An Act To Amend the Laws Concerning Genetically Engineered Plants and Seeds" H.P. 1159 L.D. 1650

Report "A" - **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-851)** (8 members)

Report "B" - **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "B" (H-852)** (1 member)

Report "C" - **Ought Not to Pass** (1 member)

Tabled - April 2, 2008, by Senator **NUTTING** of Androscoggin

Pending - motion by same Senator to **ACCEPT** Report "A", **OUGHT TO PASS AS AMENDED BY COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" (H-851)**, in concurrence

(In House, April 2, 2008, Report "A", **OUGHT TO PASS AS AMENDED BY COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" (H-851)** **READ** and **ACCEPTED** and the Bill **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED AS AMENDED BY COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" (H-851)** **AS AMENDED BY HOUSE AMENDMENT "A" (H-887)** thereto.)

(In Senate, April 2, 2008, Reports **READ**.)