

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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LEGISLATIVE RECORD

OF THE

Ninetieth Legislature

OF THE

STATE OF MAINE



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pass", but the Highway Department has not at its disposal money enough to take care of it in addition to the other road work which ought to be done.

This bill is L. D. 189 which transfers to the State certain road maintenance costs that have previously been borne by the towns and cities of the State.

The reason the department cannot take care of it is because much more Federal money is coming into the State than previously, for Defense Roads, which require the Department to set aside a small amount to go with it, in addition to our regular program.

It is thought that after a couple of years, when the peak in payments on the outstanding bonds will have been passed, that the Department can carry this program without extra funds.

It seems, also, that now is the opportune time to start this program of relief for the general property taxpayer.

The plan we have in mind, therefore, is to amend this gas tax bill so it will add only one-half cent to the present tax and will be effective for two years only; after that it will be discontinued.

The added revenue under this plan will give the Department about \$800,000.00 more money, and the cost of taking over the road maintenance provided in L. D. 189 will be about \$900,000.00.

The Committee on Ways and Bridges feels that the Department can handle that program with that extra revenue.

The proposed amendment which we will offer also stipulates that the money must be used to carry out the provisions of L. D. 189.

Now, we would like to substitute the bill for the report and then offer this amendment and pass the bill along to the engrossing stage and then lay it on the table until we see L. D. 189 brought out and passed, then we can pass this L. D. 615.

If L. D. 189 does not pass, however, we certainly do not want L. D. 615 to pass.

I know we have a lot of support for this plan. It will be the first piece of constructive legislation that has ever been put through a Maine Legislature to relieve the tax burden on real estate.

We are reading a lot in the papers

lately about what the Legislature will probably do, what prominent members think about certain measures, and that we ought to take a million dollars from the Highway Department and give it to Old Age Assistance and then go home.

Now, Ladies and Gentlemen, that is pretty much all propoganda to divert the thoughts of the members of this Legislature from a most excellent tax program that seems to be taking shape at this time.

I hope we will continue to cooperate and work together to carry out that program, and not let the politicians and tax dodgers balk our efforts.

When this bill L. D. 615 was heard before the Committee on Taxation, we told them we would like to have them hold the bill in the Committee until we knew whether we actually needed the revenue provided by it. We do not need the full amount that it will produce in its present form, and I don't know that any evidence has been presented to that Committee to show that we need any of it, but the members of the Ways and Bridges Committee have advised us within the last two or three days that we do need the revenue that a one-half cent tax will provide.

That may explain why the report of the Committee is "Ought not to pass."

Now, Mr. Speaker, if my motion prevails, that I may substitute the bill for the report, I will then present House Amendment "A" and move its adoption, and then, if it gets to the engrossing stage, and we find out that L. D. 189 is sure to pass, we will put on another amendment making it an emergency measure, and I move that the bill be substituted for the report.

The SPEAKER: The question before the House is on the motion of the gentleman from Dixfield, Mr. Holman, that the bill be substituted for the "Ought not to pass" report of the Committee.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Unity, Mr. Farwell.

Mr. FARWELL: Mr. Speaker and Members of the Ninetieth Legislature: We have had the so-called Holman Bill before the Ways and Bridges Committee, and this morning we unanimously voted "Ought to pass" on the general highway act. Under this general highway act we were not able to find sufficient funds to do the things that Mr. Holman