

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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Representative TRINWARD of Waterville moved **INDEFINITE POSTPONEMENT** of the Bill and all accompanying papers.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Waterville, Representative Trinward.

Representative **TRINWARD**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to publicly thank the Appropriations Committee for their willingness to work with our committee and find a way to fund one veteran officer position in this difficult budget. The position will help Maine by bringing more dollars into Maine for veterans through their claims, and by getting more veterans off MaineCare and into the veteran health system. This could not have happened without the hard work and cooperative manner that the Appropriations Committee approached this issue and worked so diligently with our committee to find a solution. From all the members of Legal and Vets and the veterans in the State of Maine, we thank you.

Subsequently, the Bill and all accompanying papers were **INDEFINITELY POSTPONED** and sent for concurrence.

RESOLUTION, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine To Reduce the Size of the Legislature

(H.P. 123) (L.D. 144)
(C. "A" H-135)

TABLED - May 7, 2009 (Till Later Today) by Representative PIOTTI of Unity.

PENDING - **PASSAGE TO BE ENGROSSED.**

On motion of Representative FLOOD of Winthrop, the rules were **SUSPENDED** for the purpose of **RECONSIDERATION.**

On further motion of the same Representative, the House **RECONSIDERED** its action whereby **Committee Amendment "A" (H-135)** was **ADOPTED.**

The same Representative **PRESENTED House Amendment "A" (H-252) to Committee Amendment "A" (H-135)** which was **READ** by the Clerk.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Winthrop, Representative Flood.

Representative **FLOOD**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. This House Amendment (H-252) makes two corrections to the amended bill that this body approved three weeks ago. As you may recall, the bill, LD 144, as amended by the committee and approved here on its first vote, proposes to reduce the membership of the House of Representatives from 151 to 131 members. I asked for this bill to be tabled after that vote because I felt it was important to make these two clarifications before sending it to the other body.

The first change is to clarify that the legislation becomes effective with the 2014 election, after the next scheduled reapportionment of districts. That had been the intent of the original bill as presented to the committee, as well as the amended version, but the language required that to be spelled out more clearly and this amendment accomplishes that.

The second change is to remove an inadvertent residual reference to the other body. Since the amended bill, as amended by the committee at the suggestion of the Representative from New Gloucester, Representative Van Wie, has no effect on that body. It was important to remove that short section before sending it to them for their consideration. The House Amendment before you makes no further changes and establishes the final form of the bill for this body's consideration. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Subsequently, **House Amendment "A" (H-252) to Committee Amendment "A" (H-135)** was **ADOPTED.**

Committee Amendment "A" (H-135) as Amended by House Amendment "A" (H-252) thereto was **ADOPTED.**

Representative PIOTTI of Unity **REQUESTED** a roll call on **PASSAGE TO BE ENGROSSED.**

More than one-fifth of the members present expressed a desire for a roll call which was ordered.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Farmington, Representative Harvell.

Representative **HARVELL**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. Since the reading of this bill three weeks ago, I did a little research. The House has been at the same size since 1843, and I ran a few numbers. In 1843, Maine was, in relation to the rest of the nation, at its apex. There were eight Congressmen from Maine. There was one Representative, when they made it 151 per 3,300 people. This was when there were no railroads, very poor roads, no television, no radio, etcetera, etcetera. Since that period of time, Maine's population, at that period, was 500,000. There were 700,000 sheep in the state. In 1900, our population went to 700,000, the representation changed to 4,600 for this body. Our Congressional Delegation was at four, which is 175,000 per Representative. In 1950, we went to 900,000. That changed the Representative's role to 6,000; the Congressional Delegation was at three, that was 300,000. By 2010, our projected population is 1.3 million. That would change this body's representation to 8,600. Our Congressmen now is 650,000.

The amenities that we have in 2009 versus what they had in 1840 cannot be calculated. They had run for election every year until 1880. They had to do their constituent work from horseback when they got back home, because they had to spend their time down here, because they couldn't race back and forth every day. This bill is not an undue convenience. It would represent an increase of 1,400 people per representation and if any one can look themselves in the mirror and say I can't take upon myself a workload of 1,400 people when I have a laptop, a phone, a television and a radio and, by the way, electric lights, when in 1840, they could do work that by today's standards is immeasurably more. I think that that's not a thing.

To the other side of the aisle I say think of this bill and hearken back to 1840. It was when Hannibal Hamlin was a Democrat, Lincoln was a Whig and none of us existed as the Republican Party. Vote for this if for no other reason than you want 18.6 more inches of leg room when it's done.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Wilton, Representative Saviello.

Representative **SAVIELLO**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. It's difficult to rise after that. I'd like the 18 inches, that's where I shoot my seatmates. Originally I voted for this bill, but I thought about it and went home and had a little counseling from some of my constituents, and I will change my vote today. I have a rural area as most of you know. It takes me an hour and a half to drive around it. Now if my good friend Representative Harvell would let me use his horse, it would probably take me a little bit longer, because I'd probably get thrown from it four or five times on the way around. I often joke at home that my seatmates have eight traffic lights they have to go through in order to cover their 8,000 people. I think many of you know in fact that I spend a lot of time out with my constituents, because they really need that kind of representation, they need to know somebody cares about them. If you make a district bigger, like my district, it will take forever to get around it. It might be as big as Representative Pinkham's district which is humongous, and Representative Crockett's, who actually covers the top of my district and it takes him longer to drive around. We are still in many ways a rural state and I would

ask you to turn down this recommendation. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Bethel, Representative Crockett.

Representative **CROCKETT**: Madam Speaker, thank you for the opportunity. Madam Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. When I was 16 years old, I worked on a campaign for a guy who was running for Governor. He had a 99-33 plan—members of my caucus have already heard this story—and it was to reduce the size of the House to 99 and the Senate to 33. When I was 16, I thought that was the greatest thing on earth. On its face, it looked like efficiency, it looked like it just made so much sense, it was going to save so much money. It was so last year, I was campaigning up in Kingfield which, by the way to get to, I have to either go to New Hampshire and then cross through my district and then drop through Representative Pinkham's, then go to my Kingfield, or I have to go through three other legislative districts to get to. I'm knocking on businesses and I come across this attorney and I ask him if there's anything I should be working on. The attorney was from Portland originally, but he's like oh no you're all set and I go down the road and he chases me down. He approaches me and he yells "The size of the legislature." I was like, well yes, we need to reduce it. Efficiency, set an example for our people, restructure. He turns to me and he says "No, I'm in Kingfield talking to a guy from Bethel. How often are you going to make it up here?" That's the reality. If you want a citizen legislature and you want to keep it part-time, you keep it the same size. It doesn't make sense for those who have the expectations it's going to reduce the number of bills, that's not going to be the case because we're still going to represent the same amount of people. For those people who really want efficiency, you could do away with the House all together and just have the other body do everything, but that's a little radical for us. If you really want real substantial savings, cut our insurance benefits. No other part-time job in the State of Maine has health insurance like we do and I'm sure we can all attest to that, or take the pay. I noticed everything started to quiet down there when I said that, but the reality is if you want to keep a part-time Legislature and you still want to represent the people in rural Maine the way we do now, we need to vote against this motion. Thanks.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Bowdoinham, Representative Berry.

Representative **BERRY**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise also to change my vote and to explain why I am doing so. It's nice to know that I'm not alone in the halls here today. To everything there is a season and, from some of us, there's a season to vote for this bill and there's a season to vote against it.

I have great respect for my colleagues on both sides of the aisle who have championed this issue and have brought it before us again this year and I think have come up with a bill that I certainly could support and in fact have supported. But today, I think that we have changed in our understandings of both of what the bill does and also of where we stand and the actions that we have already taken in this Legislature. We all want to lead by example and yet, Men and Women of the House, Madam Speaker, we have already led by example with the budget that we just passed a couple of days ago.

The bill before us would save less than a million dollars, and yet we found \$4.5 million, close to 10 percent of our legislative budget was cut in the budget that we just passed. We are leading by example with respect to costs, and I would remind you and remind the public as well, Madam Speaker, that the legislative budget is less than one percent of our overall General Fund budget, so the cuts that we have made already run deep. I

want to list just a few of them: We have eliminated the legislative COLA, the cost of living increase. We have included ourselves, the Legislature, in the health insurance adjustments that we have required of state employees. We have reduced the length of the legislative session by a week. We cut travel by 50 percent, we cut the study table by 50 percent, and our staff will be subject to the same sacrifices that we have asked our state employees to make, our staff who work so hard for us and help us to get the job done for our constituents and for the people of Maine. Shutdown days will be included in that, merit pay and longevity pay will be included in those cuts. So there is new information before us, and I would remind you Madam Speaker as well that, thanks to your leadership and the leadership of both sides of the aisle, we managed to cut the new bill introductions this session by roughly 30 percent. We have been extremely efficient. Committees have been extremely efficient in how they have processed those bills and we all hope that we might even be out of here a little early this year, and I say that at the risk of jinxing ourselves. But we have certainly been efficient, and I think that Yogi Berra said it best when he spoke about structure and the tools that we use versus the actions that we take. What we've done is use the actions that we take. Yogi said, "I never blame myself when I'm not hitting. I just blame the bat, and if it keeps up, I change bats. After all, if I know it isn't my fault that I'm not hitting, how can I get mad at myself?" Now clearly reducing the size of the Legislature is a little bit like changing bats, it's a way of allowing some people in the future to work with a different structure or requiring some people in the future to work with a different structure to try to represent the people of Maine as best they can. But I think, Madam Speaker, that we've already taken some actions that allow us to go home to our people and to say, yes, we have led by example, we have trimmed the size of the budget and made the same shared sacrifices that we've asked of the entire state to get through these tough times. This is new information, Madam Speaker.

I want to just end by reminding us all that once we make a change in our Constitution, it's very hard to go back and I think we all learned that with the change in term limits. It was a very popular measure, but it had some very unintended consequences. Madam Speaker, Men and Women of the House, thank you for listening.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Lewiston, Representative Wagner.

Representative **WAGNER**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I, like the good colleagues from Wilton, Bethel and Bowdoinham, supported the bill initially and now will change my vote, pretty much for the same reasons. If we want to maintain a citizen legislature, we should not increase the number of people who we represent. If we want to cut the number of bills, there is an easier way to do that, we just put a cap on the number. We have already made some very good efforts, as the Representative from Bowdoinham attested to, to cut our budget, so I will be not supporting the decrease of the number of Representatives. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from New Gloucester, Representative Van Wie.

Representative **VAN WIE**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. Madam Speaker, we have some very real fiscal issues to deal with this in this Legislature for years to come. Yes, we just passed the budget, but the pressure to address the fiscal challenges of this state, the pressure is no less. This bill is about change, change that we must make. Not just because of the recession, which is a short term hopefully, shorter term issue, but because of the long term demographic and structural changes we're seeing in our state. The population

in Maine is getting older. We're one of the oldest states in the country. Our health costs are skyrocketing, there are fewer kids in our schools and it's tougher for our citizens to pay for the type of education that we need to compete in the world market. Our incomes are not keeping pace with the rising costs of some of our services and our constituents are struggling to pay their fuel bills, their property taxes and their income taxes. So the voters are asking us to find ways to reduce the cost of government. The budget we just passed, we can congratulate ourselves for a very difficult and painful job, but it is a reminder of how difficult and necessary this task is. Looking ahead to the next budget, and the next, and the next, this bill is a modest but very important and, yes, symbolic opportunity to make a change, but it is not just symbolic and it is not just leading by example. As my good friend, the Representative from Bowdoinham, Representative Berry, has said, there is new information and we did make some changes, but I would say those are short term.

So why are we debating this bill and talking about a smaller House of Representatives? I know this is a significant change, but we're talking about this because we have to. Maine's population and economy is changing and we need to change with it. The people are asking us to do what we just asked every department in state government to do, and what we're asking every local government and every school district to do: find ways to deliver essential services in a different way at a lower cost to taxpayers. So we need to ask ourselves, is it necessary to have the same number of Representatives in 2009 as we had in the 1800's? Is this efficient? Is it effective? Is 151 any more correct than 131? People have asked me where did 131 come from? Why that number? Well, I wanted to propose a change that would generate significant savings but would not change the fundamental way that the House functions. I also wanted to propose a reduction that would be largely overshadowed by the impact of the upcoming census and the redistricting. I think the political impact, which I have to say that maybe the unspoken elephant in the room is the political impact of this change; I think it would in fact be overshadowed by how the districts are drawn. So I think 131 is a reasonable proposal to look for change. How important is it that we only have 8,400 constituents versus 9,600, when we're in fact reducing a wrongfully accused person's access to the courts or perhaps a troubled teen's access to mental health services.

Madam Speaker, the savings from this bill would be relatively small but significant. After living through this budget process, I have to ask my colleagues: If you had \$1.5 million to put back in, what would you spend it on? Would we spend it on higher education? I'm sure we could do a lot with \$1.5 million in our higher education system right now. Would we spend it on early childhood programs? Or we have a bill before us where we created funds for wastewater treatment plants, our Wastewater Treatment Fund, but we have no funds to put into that fund. I think \$1.5 million, biennium after biennium, would help out on that problem. So rather than say how much have we cut, I think we need to say what would we do with the money and compare it to how important is it to have 20 more people in this body.

The bill asks the people of Maine to vote on a proposed constitutional amendment. It's a very significant decision, but it's a modest proposal. It's one that will not make a fundamental change in how the Legislature operates. It will not create a professional Legislature, as argued by the very colorful, but I would say completely irrelevant, handouts that you've been receiving for the last two days. I've studied those and I've tried to figure out how in fact they argue in favor of professional-like Legislature, when we're going from 151 to 131 and I really can't see how the data support that argument at all. It will result in a

very modest cost savings while increasing efficiency. It won't change how we interact with our constituents, it won't require new staff, and it won't compromise the diversity and viewpoints of people in the chamber. If we're concerned about whether our constituents will lose contact with a citizen legislature, we should raise that issue and let the voters decide. If we're concerned about rural versus urban representation, we should raise that issue and let the voters decide. Madam Speaker, this bill isn't about us. It's isn't about how many doors we have to knock on or how many phone calls we have to answer. One thing I've learned in my six months here is that there will never be enough hours in the week to do everything we could do, to study every issue, to read every report, to recognize every good deed by a constituent or provide an informed reply to every communication. Whether there is 151 of us or 131 of us, we will fill every available hour doing the very best job we can. So to take on the challenge of the next decade, we need to make some changes and we need to do the responsible thing and find efficiencies everywhere we can. I think it's irresponsible for us to simply say not us, we're too important. We can adapt to the new reality and we must. I urge your support, the proposed referendum, and allow the voters to decide on this issue. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Auburn, Representative Bickford.

Representative **BICKFORD**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. I rise in support of LD 144. I submitted a similar bill and am very proud to have joined Representative Van Wie in cosponsoring Representative Flood's bill. There is a lot I had planned to say, but most of it's been said already. So I'm just going to say that some of those who oppose this bill, oppose it in fear of losing their legislative position and I would be very concerned if that's the reason that someone votes against this bill. If you do a good job and your constituents are happy with you, you will be back. We need to remember one other thing and that is all we're doing here is authorizing the citizens to vote. Is that mob rule? Well, we're elected by mob rule and if the citizens decide we should go to 131 legislators, then let's let them make that decision. I urge you to support the passing of this bill.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Greenville, Representative Johnson.

Representative **JOHNSON**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. This is an idea whose time has come and overwhelming support in my district is to lower the cost of the Legislature and the size of the Legislature. I've had no one tell me to increase it. I have the second largest House district. I enjoy driving my big, red truck around that district. I enjoy going to the bean suppers. I enjoy going to the town meetings. The people know me; they know how to get in touch with me. So I think this idea of not being able to do the job with 20 less legislators is a red herring. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Biddeford, Representative Beaudette.

Representative **BEAUDETTE**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. When we first voted acceptance of this report, it was a count of 122 to 23. By anybody's measure, a one-sided vote. It appears that there is some change of heart here on a number of those members of this body who opted to support this report at that time. Sometimes when we have an idea come before us that seems very attractive, we vote with our gut, and then sometimes we change our mind and many times when we change our mind, we wish we hadn't, we wish we had gone back to that first inclination. I'm hoping that some of the folks who seemed to have changed their mind at this point will realize that that happens quite often,

maybe more often than we care to admit.

This would save admittedly not a larger sum of money but a significant sum of money, and there should be some additional efficiencies, which should come in the form of either, one would hope, less bills that would be submitted, although I recognize from a previous statement that we're representing the same of people, but we still have to generate the bills ourselves. We also would have less duplicate members on committees and I think that's a better service for our constituents, when we have public hearings, that all of us will have less conflicts, that we're more likely to be present at that public hearing and hear the statements of the public that come before us. As the good Representative from Farmington stated earlier, we've had 151 members since the 1840's and of course much significant change has occurred since then, particularly in modern communication methods.

There is a concern that was expressed that we wouldn't be able, even with all these advances in modern communication, that we wouldn't be able to serve our constituents as well as we do now, and we have a number of documents, multicolored, as was referred to earlier, that talked about the possibly or at least the undesirability of going from the people's House to the professional's House. Well I fail to see how going from roughly representing 8,440 people to 9,700 people, which would be an estimated increase of 1,260, without making an other changes as far as how many days we're going to be here, how much we're going to be paid, how much more staff we're going to receive, that somehow we become a professional Legislature as opposed to a citizen's Legislature. Many of these documents that were distributed talked about legislatures that are two-thirds to full-time. They talk about how much salary they make because they're full-time positions; how many constituents they represent, which all of them are significantly more than the roughly 9,700 that we would represent as we go further; and the states that we use to compare I think, are, quite frankly, not relevant to the debate that we have before us. Granted New Hampshire and Vermont have significantly larger, I mean Vermont has 150, New Hampshire of course has 400, it's very unique, but that may be more a reflection of how we look at governing in New England. In New England and New York, we have municipalities, many municipalities. We don't govern from the county level, which is done in most other states. So there is that desire, obviously, to have that closer contact. I think we still maintain that closer contact, even though we adjust it, again, by only 1,260 people.

There has been discussion about geographically how much more difficult it would be to represent that additional 1,260 people. Well, if you're going to compare our Legislature to other states rather than comparing us to much larger states, with full-time or at least two-thirds professional legislatures, which have significant staff and their own offices and a number of other appurtenances that you would gain if you had a held office in one of those states. The more valid comparison is states that are relatively close to us in population that also have citizen legislatures. The ones immediately close to us in population would include states like Idaho, West Virginia, New Mexico, Montana and Nebraska. In Idaho, they have a 70 member House of Representatives and a much larger geographic area. Apparently, they are perfectly capable of representing their constituents, even though it's a much larger geographic area. West Virginia, I would say, was probably about our size geographically, their House has 100 members. In New Mexico, much larger geographically with 1.8 million people, 70 members of the House of Representatives. In Montana, they have 100 members of their House of Representatives for 900,000 people. I forgot to mention West Virginia 1.8 million and Idaho is 1.3 million, virtually the same population as the State of Maine.

Nebraska is even more unique. They have a unicameral legislature. They have 49 members of their legislature that represent 1.7 million. Somehow, are we less capable, are we less able as Mainers, independent as we are, with the spirit that we have, with the will to govern efficiently with the will to represent our constituents to the best of our abilities, are we not able to match the ability of legislators from these other states to represent many more people and much wider geographic areas? I would say that we are absolutely up to the task of being able to represent another 1,300 or so representatives, do it very effectively and demonstrate to the citizens of the State of Maine that we are efficient, we are effective, and we represent our constituents well and to the best of our ability.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Winslow, Representative Fletcher.

Representative **FLETCHER**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. I'll try to be brief. This is a very popular issue. If you listen to what people are saying, I think it goes something like this: They ask me why does Augusta keep on taxing me more and spending more of my money? Then the logical conclusion is, well if we had fewer of you down there, you would not have as much opportunity to keep doing that. There may be logic to that, but I would contend, I can remember one of the first people I went to work for. He said, "Your job is not to tell me what I want to hear, but tell me what I need to hear." I consider that what our job is from the people and reporting to the people who hired us. They hired us to be their representative, their eyes, to make sure that we were providing the critical oversight, the critical analysis and the informed decisions when we decide pretty much their future in many cases.

Now it is very easy. I could write the newsletter. I voted to reduce the size of the Legislature and I'm going to save you all kinds of money, but I, the more I thought of it, that was tempting to do but, you know what, I don't believe it's the truth. I believe the real facts are these: If there is 20 of us less here representing the people, providing the oversight, asking the questions, doing the analysis, we've essentially said, you know, our role isn't that important, we can show up, we can let state agencies tell us what they want us to hear, and maybe we're more of a token effort. I don't believe that, I don't believe you believe that. We have got a very critical job, very important job. Now do I do my job 100 percent? Absolutely not. Do I wish I had made another decision, do I wish I had read a little bit more before I made a decision? Yes. But in good faith, I cannot sell a product to the people of the State of Maine and make them believe that they're going to be taxed less and their money is going to be spent more efficiently. If we really want to cut our costs by 11 percent, here is a couple of ideas: 18 days a session. Maybe we would work a little longer, maybe we work a little harder and we're out of here the 1st of June rather than, hopefully this year, June 12th and I commend the Speaker, because I think you're going to do it, Madam Speaker. I contend that we need to improve the productivity of what we do, do it better with greater quality and simply reducing a number will not produce the results.

Now I know that when I get home everybody's going to say you changed your vote, you flip-flopped, you folded like a cheap suit, whatever phrase they want to use. But in good conscience, I can tell them I would much rather have 20 more pairs of eyes, 20 more people asking questions, 20 more people looking at ways to make government more efficient and hopefully make more informed decisions than I would to tell them what I want to hear. I think this is, it would be a really exciting thing to have it in the newspaper, but in good conscience, from what I've learned

and I'm in my fourth term, I think we have a great job, all of us do a great job and we can do a lot better and cutting down on 20 people is not a solution to the problem. There was an old class of problem solving and I'll end with this: state the problem as it seems, get the facts, restate the problem. I think what we need to do it restate the problem. Is it us? Are we doing such a terrible job that 20 of us shouldn't be here next time, because we don't do enough work, we are nonproductive? There are days I could probably make that judgment myself, but it's not because there's too many of us. I contend it's because maybe we don't have a chance to focus in the right areas. Thank you very much, I appreciate your attention.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Portland, Representative Harlow.

Representative **HARLOW**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. I want to tell my story that I tell every year about Mark Twain. Mark Twain said giving a speech is like drilling for oil. If you go more than five minutes, you're boring.

When I saw this vote come first, I was embarrassed because I had never seen a spreadsheet on any of the savings that we're going to have, so I went right to Commissioner Low. He said there are little or no savings by doing this, we're going to need more staff. And this also won't affect my district very much because there are people all over the place, but he did say some of the districts, for example, Greenville, will be the size of Rhode Island and that will be a small district compared to the one up in Rangeley. I will be voting against this. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Portland, Representative Cohen.

Representative **COHEN**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, Men and Women of the House. We have asked every one in state government to do more with less. We legislators need to step up to the plate and do the same. This is not a move away from a professional Legislature or move away from a citizen Legislature. We need only to look at the other body, who earns the same, works the same and has four times more constituents. We can add a few more constituents and represent them well. I urge you to support reducing the size of the Legislature. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Whiting, Representative Burns.

Representative **BURNS**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. I must rise to speak to this issue because it's a very important issue I think. It's one that I've been concerned about before I came here. As I went around campaigning, I heard a lot of comments from people, but the two that I heard most frequently were "What on earth are you folks doing down there in Augusta?" and "What are going to do to make state government more efficient for us?" So those are two very common statements. The interesting thing that I'm thinking about right now, they were bipartisan statements, just as the debate that we are hearing here today has nothing to do with parties, it has everything to do with what the people that we represent expect out of us. I question as to whether or not we're talking about an insignificant amount of money that we'll save. I don't think there's any way to know how much money we'll save by cutting 20 of our positions, I think that will only be known after we do it, if we do it, and I think it will have a way of snowballing. I think you'll see an increasing amount of savings as a result of 20 less people in this body. I was taught a long time ago in my profession that if you want to lead, then you learn to lead by example, and I think that's what this is all about. We've gone through some drastic cuts here, we've made some tough decisions that will affect a lot of people in our area, a lot

state employees, and I don't think this decision is too drastic to make. We need to set an example that's not just symbolic, but the symbolic part of it is important. It's also going to be meaningful and I think it would be a good thing. If it means my position, so be it. I don't think that's what my constituents are concerned about. They're concerned about efficiency so that things are done in a more efficient manner on their behalf and that's what we're here for. I think it's time to move ahead and make this decision and I think it's time to put this in front of the people, if that's what they want then that's what they'll vote to do. If they don't want to do that then you've lost nothing but trying. So I would urge you to support this bill. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Eddington, Representative Pratt.

Representative **PRATT**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, Men and Women of the House. I can say I'll try to be brief. Twenty fewer members of the House. What does it mean? Could we do it? If this passes will we do it? Yes. But will that be a positive thing for the people of your district? To me, I question that. I also question that this only one attempt, this one idea is what we're talking about. Reduce the size of the Legislature and just the House of Representatives, not the other body. To me, I question that as well a little bit, I guess. Maybe I'm a little biased and I question people saying I think it's feel-good. When I go back home and I talk to my people, and I heard exactly the same things you folks did when I knocked on the doors. There's too many of you down there, you're wasting our time, you're wasting our money, get rid of half of you. When I sat down and I explained to them, I said, I'm sorry, I disagree with you. I think that you reduce the size of the Legislature you reduce your voice in government and, at this time when you're talking about all the cuts, I think we should be opening up avenues to state government, not shutting them down, making it more difficult. You say, hey, we can get rid of all of us and just go with one body or the other and you're still not saving that much money and what are you losing?

A couple things I'd like to talk about. I definitely enjoy the good Representative from Farmington, Representative Harvell, because I am a history guy, a history major, that's what I'm into, and he's absolutely right when you talk about numbers. But I would also like to point out that, in the 1840's, you didn't have to worry about women constituents because they didn't get to vote, and you didn't have to worry about minority constituents because they didn't have to vote, so of those 3,000 people you were representing, the people who were voting for you were significantly less. We can say that we should be representing all of our people and I like to think that I do, but you always want to make sure you hit the people that are going to go vote when you knock on doors. Fourteen hundred, twelve hundred more people, I've heard a bunch of numbers. For me, that's two or three more towns. It might not seem like a lot, but that's two or three more town meetings, two or three more select boards, two or three more school budgets, school committees. I have a hard time as it right now in a citizen's Legislature, being down here as much as I'd like to be. Now I apologize to my constituents about it, because I also have to work. I can't do this solely, I can't. I would love to. I think I would be a better representative to the people if I could, but I can't.

Now I also think that the idea of a citizen's Legislature is something we should espouse, that's something that we want, very different groups of people, different backgrounds. I think the Clean Election Fund and these things that we've supported in these bodies are good things. I think they help get people here who want to be here and who will do a good job for the people.

When you're talking about 20 fewer people and that's it, I don't think that's the debate we should be having. I think debates about efficiency are good to have. I think talk about, if we're talking about the size of this body, we should be talking about the size of the other body. I think if we're talking about simply reducing the size of this body, we should be talking about term limits; we should be talking about a host of other things. I worry that the Executive Branch in this government has gained a lot of power since term limits have come into effect, and I agree wholeheartedly that more eyes are better, more people down here keeping an eye on what's going on is a good thing. If this passes, we will do it, no doubt in my mind, and the people that are left here will work just as hard, if not harder, than they are now. But I ask you once again, if you truly believe that's going to benefit the people of your district, then vote that way. I can go home to my folks, as I have before, and I've said it already, I can go home to those folks and I think I can say that we've made an effort, that we've cut ourselves back, that we're trying to be part of the solution, but that democracy and our democracy and the citizen's Legislature is something we're preserving. I thank you for your time.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Alna, Representative Fossel.

Representative **FOSSSEL**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. I promise to be not quite as brief as I was last time. This is an interesting thing that's going on here. What we find normally is we have highly organized citizen's lobbies that produce piles of postcards or whatever and, here for the first time I've seen in a long time, we actually have people talking to us about what they care about, not what some group cares about. So what I see happening here is we can kick this can down the road to another Legislature and we may well do that, but if I were a lobbyist out there looking for a cause to take before the voters or take back to the legislators in another two years, boy this is a ripe one, because I can tell you that overwhelmingly my constituents believe in this and want to vote on it and want me to represent them and that's what I intend to do and I intend to vote for this. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Sanford, Representative Boland.

Representative **BOLAND**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. This being about representation, I just had one idea that I wanted to put before you and that is that when we reduce the numbers in the House, of course, we increase the importance of the powers that be, the state agencies and whatnot, and that's one way we would diminish the voice of the people that we represent. Another way I'd like to have you think about it is that for those of us here who are average legislators, like myself, who don't chair a committee, when we push our light, we get one vote. When the chair of that committee pushes his or her light, they get 16 votes because, with little exception, all the chairs vote together and so does the leadership. Now we all respect the hard work of the chairs and we look to them for guidance, but relative to some people in the Legislature, we don't all have the same voice and so, as we make this kind of a change, we diminish the voice for those of our constituents who are not represented by chairs. I'd also request that the Clerk read the Committee Report.

Representative **BOLAND** of Sanford **REQUESTED** that the Clerk **READ** the Committee Report.

The Clerk **READ** the Committee Report in its entirety.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Mount Vernon, Representative Jones.

Representative **JONES**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, Men and Women of the House. I stand in

support of this resolution and I don't have much new information to add other than those who have stood and supported it, but I just want to say that I think it is time that we show an effort to be as efficient as we can and not to be self-serving. I want to remind you that this resolution is only to send this to the people to make the decision. I wonder if we're not too close to the issue to be truly objective about this vote. I've had people in my district speak on both sides. They've come to me and said "We don't want to enlarge our district. We want more participation or connection with our legislator." There are others who have said, "Yes, you need to become more efficient and you need to make the district larger." So I am thinking of them and how the vote will turn out if they the people go to the polls and vote on this, and I want them to have the right to do that. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Augusta, Representative Blodgett.

Representative **BLODGETT**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, Members of the House. I rose the first time in support of this bill and I do, again, I feel in a way that we're still talking about wine with a different spelling today. I never really looked at this as an issue of just money. I look at it as a change of doing things, as the state workers, I'm sure, are worried about doing their jobs now in less time. We approved that. I think that we should look at ourselves and think of the ways that we can do our jobs as well with less. We are the people's Legislature and I hope that we let the people decide. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Portland, Representative Hinck.

Representative **HINCK**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. All the Members of the Maine House of Representatives, we voted on this a week ago. The tally was 122-23. I was in the majority a week ago and I have had some conversations since. One was very notable. A constituent, a former member of this body, not someone who I understand anyone served with because his service was awhile ago, we had a phone conversation and he told me over the phone that my vote was stupid. He said that was a bad mistake, you really shouldn't do that. He said it's going to hurt Portland. Then he proceeded to tell me, and I listened for 25 minutes, how it was going to hurt Portland, how the committees were going to be affected, how Portland is barely keeping its own in the Legislature, how it's such a struggle for Portland, how a smaller Legislature was going to be a problem for Portland in asserting ourselves in leadership, about being represented in committees. Twenty five minutes, I'll spare you. He went into great detail. At the end, I said I'd listen pretty closely, I had two answers. The first one is I feel I'm doing my job to represent my district and that includes watching out for the interests of other people in Portland and the City of Portland and I think I do that well, but I feel as though what we do here is for the State of Maine. When we decide something like this, it's going to affect the State of Maine for many, many years. If he is right, it's temporary for how it might affect Portland. But over and beyond that, the second answer to him, I said I think that analysis was totally mistaken. I cannot figure how this would hurt Portland anymore than anywhere else. To me, it's like taking some water out of the bathtub. It's not going to hurt the back of the bathtub or the front of the bathtub or the middle of the bathtub. We would go from 151 units of fluid down to 131 units, and we would redistribute the responsibilities, we redistribute any power and authority we have. So I was with the 122 last week, a week later I'm still there. I did hear from other constituents and, by in large, their words could be summarized with a big thumbs up. We would like to see the Legislature a little smaller.

There are two questions in my mind: The first one is can 131

Representatives do the job for the people in Maine in this body? Can 131 people do what we take 151 to do today? I'd say looking at what we do and how we do it the answer would be yes. Looking at other states, and we've gotten some literature on other states. It hasn't gone by in large to the issue. We are an outlier. We represent fewer people than almost all legislatures in the country. We represent fewer people than states that are smaller than us geographically, than states that are larger than us geographically. We represent fewer people than states that have less population and have more population. We represent fewer people than some that are professional and some that are not. We have a sheet that lists all the professional legislatures, that's about nine, some people count eleven. Most of them are not. We are an outlier state in terms of how many, how few people we represent in our Legislature. I believe that democracy flourishes in those other places, I like the way Maine does it, I wouldn't want to see us change things radically, but making this small change in the interest of the people of the State of Maine is still a good idea. I think I'll keep my vote. Thank you. I hope my constituent is actually listening and we can continue this discussion. I hope I'm going to be able to demonstrate to him that the Legislature functions just as well with 131 members and that the City of Portland is going to be doing just fine along with the State of Maine. Thank you very much.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Blue Hill, Representative Schatz.

Representative **SCHATZ**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, Men and Women of the House. I was not the person who talked to Representative Hinck's constituent. I'm innocent. I'm always intrigued that the assumption that reducing in size or consolidating is somehow a pathway to efficiency and the savings of money. It seems to be a theme that we all have been part of, or at least my five years here. Also, the discussion about comparable states and the size of the legislatures, and I would only question how effective are those? We don't get into that. I think that those of us who represent the 8,400 people feel that we work hard to do so. Whether that's true of these other legislatures that have different sizes and different size districts and I'm not sure, so I don't think those discussions are as relevant as we think they are.

Finally, I would think that the idea that we're just putting this before the people, I think that's more significant than one might think because we're leaders, we are elected to make decisions, and we're not going to put something out in a frivolous way to see how do they think. I think our constituents are going to feel, to some extent, that if we put something out there, we might think it's a good idea. Women and Men of the House, I don't think it's a good idea. I don't think there's any basis, the experience that we've heard or the recommendations being made, that would lead us to such a conclusion. So I'm still in favor of opposing the pending motion. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Farmington, Representative Harvell.

Representative **HARVELL**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. Just a few clarifications on some of the discussion I've heard over this event. One is that we're moving towards a professional Legislature. If size, if moving more people under a legislative district means that we've become a professional Legislature or move that way, that would mean, since 1843, we would have bred ourselves into a professional Legislature. We haven't.

To the good Representative Pratt: A constituent is a constituent, whether it was in 1843 or now. I serve a constituent who is my wife. She can't vote. I didn't give her the right to yesterday. She's from the Netherlands. Representative Russell

spoke of people who aren't citizens and yet they are our constituents and we serve them.

For those that worry about taking upon themselves more work and more constituents, look around. Some of these very people that are doing this want to run for the other body, which will take upon 4.5 times the size, and both bodies have people that have been in both bodies and even though there are over 30,000 constituents in that body, it pays the same, they still desire to do the work and when you talk to most of them, it isn't that much more.

The reality is that this sets this vote five years away. For those that maybe have got our their map wondering what the districts may or may not look like, the reality is we don't know what they're going to look like because there's going to be a census in 2010 and that's going to shake itself out. This is the timing to do this. Most importantly though, the people that don't get a say in this, unless we give them a say, are the voters. We are merely putting this out to them saying do you desire a constitutional amendment to change this, and if there are people that say they don't want it then it's no problem. But the reality is we all pretty much know what that vote's going to look like, so if you don't think they want it give them a change to say no.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Bath, Representative Watson.

Representative **WATSON**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, Men and Women of the House. This is a bad idea. Now don't get me wrong, I know a lot of people outside this body feel it's a great idea. My wife thinks it's a great idea. I would think it's a great idea if I could pick the 20 of you who are going to go. But look at your own workload. When you sit down in your committee, how much time do you waste trying to get a quorum because two or three of your committee members are either presenting bills to other committees or they're serving on other committees? How many of your bills have been stymied by the three Senator rule, where you can't get three Senators, you can't move a bill one way or the other? That is not going to go away when you cut 20 bodies out of this House. That is going to get worse. There's going to be a significant shift of power to that end of the hall. Now the example made just a minute ago, everybody wants to go in the other body. Well sure, the other body is a little more powerful than we are right now and they're going to be more powerful later. There's a further shift of power outside of this House. Let's go out into the countryside. I was shocked and stunned into silence at the number of my rural counterparts who did stand up and oppose this. If you're tired of driving two and a half miles in your district now, add another hour or so to that. Portland is going to do fine, sure. Portland, Ladies and Gentlemen, will have more seats in this House than 11 other counties. Just the delegations from Cumberland, York, Androscoggin and Kennebec combined, will have two-thirds votes in this House. This is the urbanization of the House of Representatives. In you think that the power is shifting, you're absolutely right but watch where it's shifting. We are redistricting in 2010, or now 2013, in response to the census, and then we're going to lay this armageddon on top of that?

My friends on this side of the aisle, you choose, look around and choose which one of you is going to be running in a primary against your contemporary, again your seatmate, because that's what's going to happen to you and the majority that you currently enjoy is severely threatened. You just run through the numbers and think about that. On this side of the aisle you're going to watch power shift to that end of the House, that end of this building and to the urban centers. Portland, Lewiston, Bangor and Augusta will have the votes to run this place.

Now some of your problem is some of you, particularly if

you've unassured this with me, and when I was a freshman, the most irritating thing about this place was the feeling that decisions were being made without any of my input. Decisions were being made in small groups behind closed doors and I didn't know what they were until they were presented to me as a fait accompli and I was told to vote for them. That's not going to improve by cutting 20 people of this House, that's going to concentrate power further because leadership will be able to state far more effectively than they can even now how this is going to run.

Your committee work, I alluded to that earlier. You can't get a quorum now. How are we going to handle losing two bodies off of each committee? We're not losing two Senators; we're losing two House members off each committee. If you don't like the idea of consolidations, if you don't think the DMR and IFW can work together as agencies, then why did we consolidate Natural Resources and Agriculture?

The SPEAKER: Will the Representative defer. For what purpose does the Representative rise?

Representative **VAN WIE**: Point of Order. Madam Speaker, perhaps you could remind those members of the body to speak to the Chair if you would.

On **POINT OF ORDER**, Representative VAN WIE of New Gloucester asked the Chair to remind Representative WATSON of Bath to address the Speaker and not turn to the rest of the House.

The SPEAKER: The Chair would just remind members to face the Chair and I do believe the Representative is doing that. The Representative may continue.

The Chair reminded Representative WATSON of Bath to address his comments toward the Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Bath, Representative Watson.

Representative **WATSON**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. That's where power is going to go. The fewer bodies we have in here, the fewer people that are going to be making those decisions. If you don't think you've got a voice now, wait until you lose 20 of your compatriots. Now all things the proponents have proposed in terms of this being a good idea have other ways of solving them and you've already heard about it. You've already heard that the Legislative Council, under the leadership of our Speaker and the President of the other body, cut \$4 million out of the budget. That's how you save money. You don't save money by firing 20 of us and save \$800,000. You think this is going to cut down on the size of bills, it's not and that's been mentioned before as well, because look at your own bills, look at the ones you yourself sponsor. If we did 1,400 bills, everybody has an average of about 10, that's not including the other body. Let's say yours is five or six. I guarantee you that two or three of those, less than a third of your bills, were your own brilliant ideas. The rest of them came from constituents, who had ideas, or somebody who stopped you at the grocery store, or somebody who sat across from you uninvited at the diner for breakfast and gave you a great idea, or it came from the lobby because the Sportsmen's Alliance of Maine thinks you're pretty hot, they want you to sponsor one of your bills, Maine Municipal Association needs you to sponsor one of your bills. So the vast majority of your bills were brought at the request of others. That request is not going to go away when we cut 20 people out of here. Those bill requests are still going to be there. The load will just be shifted over on the rest of you who will remain. The way to solve too many bill problems is move the rule. We don't need a constitutional amendment to do that; we can do it with a joint rule, just as we can do with tightening the budget by the Legislative Council. There is nothing about this idea that would bring an

advantage to the State of Maine that cannot be done a different way.

I'll end with this note: We talk about giving this decision out to the people. The good Representative who preceded me admitted that the people think it's a pretty good idea. So we're not giving this decision out. You hit a green light and engross and enact this bill and you are cutting 20 people out of here, because this is going to be enacted, this is going to be approved by the people. There's no doubt about it. There's no question to present to them. They are going to approve it, and they are going to approve it because they've never worked in here. They've never shared your load, they've never seen how this process works, they've never had the complaints or the problems or the direction from leadership. They don't know how it works in here and you're giving them the decision to cut 20 of you out of a job. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Biddeford, Representative Beaudoin.

Representative **BEAUDOIN**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. As far as I'm concerned, I go the other way. I don't know about you, most of you all have another job that you go to. I don't. I'm retired, and being retired I have plenty to do with the people that call me and ask for all kinds of things and for me to take care of them. I can't imagine having a bigger load than I have right now. I can't imagine either that you people are answering all your emails that you talk to me about that you have so much of and so much work, and then you have another job. Can you imagine what it's going to be like if this goes through? That you'll have more work, more people to answer to. I cannot even fathom that right now. As far as I'm concerned, staying the status quo we are is fine with me. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Winterport, Representative Thibodeau.

Representative **THIBODEAU**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. I think we may be overestimating our own importance to this institution, but I just wanted to throw out, there's another result of enactment of this legislation and that will be that there'll be 20 less lobbyists in the hall waiting for us. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Sangerville, Representative Davis.

Representative **DAVIS**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I wasn't going to speak. Ten years ago when I was first a member of the other body, I come to realize that the time for me to speak is when my words can have some influence on the outcome of what is occurring. I also believe that if you don't speak real often, perhaps they listen to you a little closer when you do speak. One of the previous speakers though raised an issue that I have a great deal of knowledge about and that's serving in the other body. The issue that was raised was that if you speak to a member that has served in the other body, they'll tell you there's not much difference. Well Madam Speaker, I would take great exception to that. In the other body, you will represent nearly 40,000 people. In here you represent 8,500, maybe 9,000 depending on how the population is gyrating. It is a lot more work. In our body we have an aide that usually has 12 or 15 legislators. In the other body, you have an aide for every four or five legislators because of the volume of the work. Now my good friend from Greenville, Representative Johnson, said he liked to go to town meetings. Well, I understand too that he likes parades. If he'll agree to run for the other body, I'll help him, and I'll guarantee you that he will have all the parades and all the town meetings in the 42 towns in that district that he wants to go to. Most of them have two or three parades a year, most of them,

at least one town they didn't, a half a dozen other special town meetings. He'll be town meeting and paraded out by the end, I promise him.

There is one or two other things, Madam Speaker, and then I'm going to sit down because this has been beaten pretty hard. Piscataquis County has two legislators that represent our county. Actually we have one and 15/16ths because Representative Johnson represents the Town of Cambridge in Somerset County. If this goes through, we'll have probably one and a half legislators. It's less representation for our people. Our committees in the Legislature will be reduced. The number of people that you can find a consensus with will be reduced. Those of us in the minority will go from three or four to two or three. The majority will suffer a bit more. They'll go from eight or nine to seven or eight. It will be more difficult to find a consensus. Thinking of all of that, I believe this is real bad too for rural Maine. I don't agree with this bill at all and I would urge that everyone would vote and follow my light. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Winthrop, Representative Flood.

Representative **FLOOD**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. First, I wanted to say thank you to all for the great debate. I understand all those concerns and it makes me very proud to be a member of this body. Thank you also to Representative Van Wie for this co-authorship of this bill. It is designed to create structural and long term change. Naturally that's going to be difficult for some members of this body to agree with or accept and that's totally understandable. It will mean, after all, 20 less of us in the year 2015. However, we have just discussed that we brought the passage of significant, difficult and structural changes across many areas of government service, and I believe it's essential that we too look seriously at making such changes. This is a sincere and positive step to improve efficiency of government. It is not a gesture or an accommodation or an attempt to be like other states that don't have citizen legislators, as some people have suggested. It's about a serious system change to Maine's unique and I would say precious citizen's Legislature and, yes, change is very hard.

I do want to say that regarding the concerns voiced here about redistricting and changes in district size, there will be inconveniences, there will be inconveniences of primaries and such and redistricting. I believe though that the people of Maine would most likely say to us please try to deal with those politics, please try to manage those inconveniences and deal with the realities of today. The people have heard often what can't be done and I think there's a strong expectation that we too should be making long lasting and significant structural change in our manner of statewide representation. I believe the people expect us to change with the times and to change with the technologies available to us. They do not expect us to cower in fear of change; rather I think they expect us to embrace it.

I do want to agree that just reducing the size of the Legislature is not enough on its own. Earlier in the year, I brought to this body an attempt to make a joint rule change to reduce the number of bills. That was eventually modified by our leadership into something less formal, but I think effective. I brought to the Legislature a concept to reducing the length of the legislative session. That was a concept that was embedded within the budget and I thank the legislative leadership for that. I brought also this proposal which is, admittedly, the more complicated and more controversial one. We have approved two of the three concepts in one form or another so far.

It has been said that obstacles are those frightful things that

get in the way when we take our eyes off the goal, and I would hope that we could stop focusing on and worrying about the obstacles and inconveniences and the politics and move forward with productive change. Let's not let our potential inconveniences be our focal point. Conveniences, not a condition or an expectation of our work or our representation.

For those in this chamber who are concerned about their ability to represent a larger number of constituents adequately, I completely understand that concern. I hope you will vote your conscience on that basis. It is a big issue, it requires a lot of thought, and I'm very glad that two or three weeks of time has lapsed to give each person here time to think this through. We've heard several legislators talk about that. All legislators here, from big districts, small districts and places rural, urban and suburban, in between, have unique circumstances of their own and life situations of their own that make his or her choice on this issue in fact a very unique choice. I completely respect that. It was difficult to deal with the harsh, brutal realities of the statewide changes that just passed before us in the most recent days of this Legislature. For months, we all deliberated those important and painful matters, but for sure, we face those truths there and we proposed real long-term solutions. In short, I think we did our job. I believe that same kind of soul-searching and decision-making is warranted with this bill. It is important that we face similar realism here today in our own House.

I wanted to close by again thanking everyone for their good debate, to say this bill, as presented by me and I believe Representative Van Wie, is not a gesture, it is not an accommodation, it is not patronizing to the public. It really is designed as a step change for productivity, combined with other actions here at the Legislature that our citizens expect of us, and I hope that we could let them decide on this issue in November. Thank you, Madam Speaker. Thank very much, Ladies and Gentlemen.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Portland, Representative Adams.

Representative **ADAMS**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, Men and Women of the House. I rise to put a few words on the record about the doubtful proposition that in a democracy smaller always equals cheaper and that both together always equals better somehow. The reality on this rainy Friday afternoon, before we all go home to get our own direct dose of direct democracy, I think can be found in the cold hard facts on the information fliers which have crossed our tables, and by a concrete example, I beg leave of you to give you one about my district, since we all know our own districts best.

For a few terms, I have been honored to serve on the smallest Maine House district. Because it is the most densely populated square mile of Maine, the most religiously, the most ethnically diverse square mile of Maine, home to the seat of the Catholic Bishop, the Mother Church of Maine Unitarianism, Maine's largest mosque, Maine's first Buddhist temple, over 40 languages and dialects are spoken at the high school, the middle school and the elementary school, just up the street, next to my phone, I have to keep a card with phonetically written phrases in other languages so I can catch a word or two about problems that people call me about before I go get the translator. Now, as described, that district is likely a little different than yours, but you've got to love it, just like yours, and it serves the same 8,400 people or so that each of us do. It's problems are different and sometimes difficult but, as a legislator, we need calls, we're expected to be there and to take care of it. Now to add another 1,400 or 1,600 constituents to the tiny House district I represent, as LD 144 would do, means just a score of new streets and a dozen new dialects for me. Territory is not the issue, turn the

coin over.

Back in my hometown, in the rural mountains of western Maine, 8,400 folks equals over 20 towns and territories. As it stands now, roads and regions well known to the likes of my friends Representative Briggs, Representative Crockett, Representative Millett, or, for example, Representative McLeod, my former seatmate on Utilities, who's 37 communities in his current district take up today two and a half column inches just to list in the register, much less to ride on the road. For legislators thus described, to pick up two dozen more town meetings would mean two things: Number one, you have a pickup truck big enough to pack two tons of spring fishing law booklets. Number two, you've got to know Buzz Aldrin, because he's the only guy that's going to teach you how to accept G-Force acceleration fast enough to get around in those three weekends of town meetings and hit every one of them, but as legislators, we're expected to be there and to do it when the need arises, it comes with the territory because it comes with direct democracy. Rural states have always had relatively large legislatures; it reflects our heritage, our town meeting tradition. The states of the west were settled by New Englanders and they started the same. Vermont's House has 150 members, much like ours. New Hampshire's House has 400 members, democracy to the extreme, which is why some define New Hampshire is just like Vermont except on steroids, but it works for them. Citizen legislatures mean low pay, shared staff, direct democracy, and changing any one of them depends on what kind of a democracy you want.

As has been said, a small House, smaller just for the sake of size, inevitably means a larger territory for each district. Draw the map of Maine to you, as I did last night, and start drawing circles in it. It means inevitably greater urban influence, larger towns will certainly have to predominate 1,400 and 1,600 new constituents, a new territory is added to your district. Look at the reality today. Where do you go to get your votes, the largest town in your district? Look at the fact sheets on our desks. A smaller House, said to be smaller just for the sake of size, may mean and I think does mean inevitably one larger step toward a professional Legislature and away from the citizen Legislature that we are. A smaller House means larger territory, it means more constituents, it means more work. More work, as has been pointed out, means more support staff, staff working and deserving a much different pay scale than ours. Add 1,400 or 1,600 new constituents to your district and it will be cheaper? When is the last time you had two more children and your household expenses went down? A reworked House with about 10,000 constituents a piece means inevitably urbanization and large town dominance. Between the cities alone and the sizeable suburbs of just greater Augusta, just Portland and South Portland, just Lewiston-Auburn, and just Saco and Biddeford on the new map I have described to you, those four delegations alone would have delegations bigger than currently 10 or 12 entire counties of our state do today with the physical territory to match.

You know, I think we should always think twice when we are trading for something that we are assuming. Direct democracy has things worth keeping. Democracy can be delightful, it could also be demanding. It requires that we always be aware of fads and passing themes that shift the main conversation away from the fundamental American debate going on now for 225 years about the meaning of democracy, and it switches it over to an advocacy of technology based on profit driven systems, in the name of the allure of some promised thing that's easier or cheaper or smaller or quick, as if technology and people are the same thing, as if contact with one is as good as contact with the other.

Colleagues, only people driven systems in democracy have stood the test of time so far. Colleagues, it is a blessing to live in Maine; it is a blessing to have a citizen Legislature in Maine; it is a blessing to have direct democracy in Maine against all the tides of time and urbanization and pressures from away that are pushing Maine in the other direction every single day. But I say all these blessings are worth fighting for in Maine and keeping in Maine, and when very shortly we adjourn to go home for the weekend and get our own dose of direct democracy and our good friend Representative McFadden and his new friend, Buzz Aldrin, tool the back roads of his district, as he told us yesterday, searching for a year for the lost Township Nine, among the 29 towns and other territories he already represents in huge House District #30, scoping out the new 1,600 constituents and territories this legislation would give him, I hope you will think of us. Colleagues, to keep Maine's blessing of direct democracy, it would be a great honor to have some of you join with those of us who will be voting no on LD 144 this rainy afternoon in the people's chamber.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Eagle Lake, Representative Martin.

Representative **MARTIN**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I really had no intentions of speaking today, because I'm trying to get home and I'm a lot further away than almost every one in this body except one, and I do know what large districts are and I do know what large representation happens to be and you can do the job if you want to, whether it's 40,000 or 8,500. My concern today, after hearing all of the debate, is for people who are standing up and saying we know what the public wants, but we're not going to let them vote on it. We know if this goes out it's going to get adopted. That ought to tell us something, if nothing at all; because you've convinced yourself that you know what the public want. And yes my district will get larger and is already larger than Rhode Island and I do represent people on the Canadian border in Saint-Pamphile, Estcourt, that some of you have never even been to and they are, yes, American citizens, they may speak only French and they may get their electricity and telephone services from the Province of Quebec. So I find the argument that cutting the size is going to impact the representation. Keep in mind that when I became a member of this body, there were 16 people from Aroostook County. We're down to less than nine and once the census gets done, we're losing another one and a half regardless of what happens to this particular bill. But once the allocation is made on 151 or 131, the loss of representation will be across the board, whether it be Portland of Aroostook County, it will be the same impact, not less, not more. And yes I do know something about Piscataquis County, since I started school in Greenville and I do know the size of Piscataquis County because I visit it. But the representation issue is an issue you ought not to be concerned about because it will occur, whether you're 131 or 400. And the cost and savings may be very minimal, but after we went through an Appropriations Committee last year, when we asked the general public to email us, maybe a mistake, we got thousands of emails about what we ought to do in cutting costs in state government and roughly 95 percent of the emails and phone calls said cut the size of the Legislature. They didn't talk about services; they talked about what we ought to be doing here. That's what we ended up dealing with and we didn't satisfy them because we obviously couldn't, and that's when I changed my mind and I know that some of you were shocked when I stood up last time, but I made my decision after what happened in the Appropriations Committee. I felt that if that was what they really wanted and 95 percent of the people who were calling us and emailing us, we have to provide them something. I was not

willing to go to 99, but I felt the amendment that came out of the committee at 131 was something I could support. And yes, the debate has been long, but, hopefully, regardless of how you vote, know that if you're voting for this you know that the people will adopt it, if you're against it you know that if it went out to vote people would be voting for it.

The **SPEAKER**: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Lewiston, Representative Carey.

Representative **CAREY**: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Let me ask everybody a question as we're considering when we can get out of here. Is the only problem with the working of this building, that there are a few too many of us? Is that the only problem that we have, because if we try to solve the number of bodies in the building that will require a people's vote. If we try to change the number of terms that we serve, that too requires the people's vote, as that should require I should say. If we try to change whether we're paid more or less, or serve longer or less time in a year, that will require a people's vote. This is a problem that the people say needs to be fixed. We need to make this body work better, amen, so let's do that. But is this the only way we make this body work better because, on the face of them, I'm going to guess that none of them, if we went and asked right now, would go through necessarily at the ballot box. That means we need to be leaders if we think it's the right thing to do. If we need make this building work better, we need to make the case and this I am fully confident will be part of the discussion, should be part of the discussion. I'm not tied to 150, 153, I'm not tied to 133. We can be far less, but we need to look at the workings of the whole body.

I understand the lead by example argument and Representative Berry has pointed out how we have done that and others have done that. We've led by example by forgoing pay, by paying for some of our health insurance, by cutting our budget, those all appropriate things, because, as a legislator, those are all part of my compensation and, if I'm going to lead by example, I should cut things that affect me. This is not my seat. This is a seat entrusted to me by some 8,000 members of the town of Lewiston. I can't give that away for them. I'm not making a sacrifice by having a few more people represented by this seat. That's not my sacrifice. If the people need us to solve a problem, we should do that. We're here by a public trust. If we were to say, well, let's cut off a few of us and that's us sacrificing, that's like the families that go to bed not being able to sleep thinking about how they're going to be able to survive when someone loses a job. We don't think it's reasonable to those families who are caretaking their children. Those families sacrificing is not taking lunch from the children, it's making sacrifices for themselves. We've made sacrifices for themselves in the budget, we don't have to make our constituents less represented and that's why I'll be voting against this. Thank you.

The **SPEAKER**: A roll call has been ordered. The pending question before the House is Passage to be Engrossed. All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

ROLL CALL NO. 145

YEA - Austin, Ayotte, Beaudette, Beaulieu, Beck, Bickford, Blanchard, Blodgett, Browne W, Bryant, Burns, Cain, Casavant, Cebra, Chase, Clark T, Cleary, Cohen, Connor, Cornell du Houx, Cotta, Cray, Curtis, Cushing, Dill, Driscoll, Duchesne, Eaton, Eberle, Edgcomb, Eves, Finch, Flood, Fossel, Giles, Greeley, Hamper, Harvell, Haskell, Hill, Hinck, Hunt, Johnson, Jones, Joy, Knapp, Knight, Kruger, Lajoie, Legg, Lewin, Lovejoy, MacDonald, Martin JL, Mazurek, McFadden, McLeod, Miller, Millett, Nass, Nelson, Pendleton, Peoples, Perry, Pinkham, Piotti, Plummer, Prescott, Priest, Richardson D, Richardson W, Rosen, Sanborn,

Sarty, Sirois, Strang Burgess, Theriault, Thibodeau, Thomas, Tuttle, Valentino, Van Wie, Wagner J, Weaver, Webster, Welsh.

NAY - Adams, Beaudoin, Boland, Bolduc, Briggs, Butterfield, Campbell, Carey, Celli, Clark H, Crafts, Crockett J, Crockett P, Davis, Dostie, Fitts, Flemings, Fletcher, Gifford, Gilbert, Goode, Hanley, Harlow, Hogan, Innes Walsh, Kaenrath, Kent, Langley, Magnan, Martin JR, McCabe, McKane, Morrison, Nutting, O'Brien, Percy, Peterson, Pieh, Pilon, Pratt, Rankin, Rotundo, Russell, Saviello, Schatz, Shaw, Smith, Stevens, Stuckey, Sutherland, Sykes, Tardy, Trinward, Wagner R, Watson, Wheeler, Wright, Madam Speaker.

ABSENT - Berry, Flaherty, Hayes, Robinson, Tilton, Treat, Willette.

Yes, 86; No, 58; Absent, 7; Excused, 0.

86 having voted in the affirmative and 58 voted in the negative, with 7 being absent, and accordingly the **RESOLUTION** was **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-135) as Amended by House Amendment "A" (H-252)** thereto and sent for concurrence. **ORDERED SENT FORTHWITH.**

The Chair laid before the House the following item which was **TABLED** earlier in today's session:

Bill "An Act Regarding the Central Voter Registration System" (H.P. 1037) (L.D. 1484)

Which was **TABLED** by Representative **TRINWARD** of Waterville pending **FURTHER ACTION**.

Subsequently, the Bill was assigned for **SECOND READING** Monday, June 1, 2009.

The following items were taken up out of order by unanimous consent:

CONSENT CALENDAR

First Day

In accordance with House Rule 519, the following items appeared on the Consent Calendar for the First Day:

(S.P. 116) (L.D. 352) Bill "An Act To Encourage Veterinary Practice in Maine" Committee on **EDUCATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-258)**

(S.P. 157) (L.D. 454) Bill "An Act To Provide Representation for Dog Clubs on the Animal Welfare Advisory Council" Committee on **AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-243)**

(S.P. 429) (L.D. 1157) Bill "An Act To Improve the Use of Information Regarding Sex Offenders" Committee on **CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-264)**

(S.P. 507) (L.D. 1404) Bill "An Act To Enact the Maine Uniform Power of Attorney Act" Committee on **JUDICIARY** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-240)**

(S.P. 512) (L.D. 1428) Bill "An Act Regarding the Pay of Tribal Representatives" (EMERGENCY) Committee on **STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-256)**

(S.P. 519) (L.D. 1435) Bill "An Act To Amend Sentinel Events Reporting Laws To Reduce Medical Errors and Improve Patient Safety" Committee on **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-248)**