

# Senate Legislative Record

# One Hundred and Eighteenth Legislature

State of Maine

# Volume 1

First Regular & Special Session December 6, 1996 to May 19, 1997

Pages 1 - 980

The Bill READ ONCE.

Committee Amendment "A" (S-61) READ and ADOPTED.

The Bill as Amended, TOMORROW ASSIGNED FOR SECOND READING.

Senator LIBBY for the Committee on STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT on Bill "An Act to Amend the Charter of the Loring Development Authority as It Pertains to Immunity of the Authority" (Emergency) S.P. 46 L.D. 156

Reported that the same Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-63)

Which Report was READ and ACCEPTED.

The Bill READ ONCE.

Committee Amendment "A" (S-63) READ and ADOPTED.

The Bill as Amended, TOMORROW ASSIGNED FOR SECOND READING.

Senator LIBBY for the Committee on STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT on Bill "An Act to Include Operation and Maintenance in the Life-cycle Costs Analysis Required for Public Improvements" S.P. 129 L.D. 408

Reported that the same Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-62).

Which Report was READ and ACCEPTED.

The Bill READ ONCE.

Committee Amendment "A" (S-62) READ and ADOPTED.

The Bill as Amended, TOMORROW ASSIGNED FOR SECOND READING.

Under suspension of the Rules, all matters thus acted upon were ordered sent down forthwith for concurrence.

### **ORDERS OF THE DAY**

#### **Unfinished Business**

The following matter in the consideration of which the Senate was engaged at the time of Adjournment had preference in the Orders of the Day and continued with such preference until disposed of as provided by Senate Rule 516.

The Chair laid before the Senate the following Tabled and Later (3/21/97) Assigned matter:

Bill "An Act Making Unified Appropriations and Allocations for the Expenditures of State Government, General Fund and Other Funds, and Changing Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operation of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 1998 and June 30, 1999" (Emergency) H.P. 832 L.D. 1137

Tabled - March 21, 1997, by Senator PINGREE of Knox.

Pending - ADOPTION OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" (H-15) AS AMENDED BY HOUSE AMENDMENTS "FF" (H-73); "HH" (H-75) AND "JJ" (H-82) thereto, in concurrence. (Roll Call Ordered)

(In House, March 20, 1997, the Majority OUGHT TO PASS AS AMENDED BY COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" (H-15) Report READ and ACCEPTED and the Bill PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED AS AMENDED BY COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" (H-15) AS AMENDED BY HOUSE AMENDMENTS "FF" (H-73); "HH" (H-75) AND "JJ" (H-82) thereto.)

(In Senate, March 21, 1997, Senate Amendment "R" (H-50) to Committee Amendment "A" (H-15) INDEFINITELY POSTPONED. Senate Amendment "A" (S-19) to Committee Amendment "A" (H-15) READ and INDEFINITELY POSTPONED. Senate Amendment "S" (S-51) to Committee "A" (H-15) READ and INDEFINITELY Amendment POSTPONED. Senate Amendment "K" (S-40) to Committee and Amendment "A" (H-15) READ INDEFINITELY POSTPONED. Senate Amendment "J" (S-38) to Committee "A" READ and INDEFINITELY Amendment (H-15) POSTPONED. Senate Amendment "O" (S-45) to Committee "A" and READ INDEFINITELY Amendment (H-15) POSTPONED. Senate Amendment "H" (S-36) to Committee "A" READ and INDEFINITELY Amendment (H-15) POSTPONED. Senate Amendment "T" (S-52) to Committee "A" Amendment (H-15) READ and INDEFINITELY POSTPONED. Senate Amendment "N" (S-44) to Committee "A" INDEFINITELY Amendment (H-15) READ and POSTPONED. Senate Amendment "C" (S-25) to Committee "A" Amendment (H-15) READ and INDEFINITELY POSTPONED. Senate Amendment "G" (S-35) to Committee "A" Amendment (H-15) READ and INDEFINITELY POSTPONED. Senate Amendment "D" (S-26) to Committee "A" Amendment (H-15) READ and INDEFINITELY POSTPONED. Senate Amendment "L" (S-41) to Committee "A" Amendment (H-15) READ and INDEFINITELY POSTPONED. Senate Amendment "V" (S-58) to Committee Amendment "A" (H-15) READ and RULED NOT PROPERLY BEFORE THE BODY. Ruling APPEALED and SUSTAINED. Motion to RECOMMIT Bill and Accompanying Papers in NON-CONCURRENCE, FAILED. Senate Amendment "M" (S-43) to Committee Amendment "A" (H-15) READ and INDEFINITELY POSTPONED. Senate Amendment "P" (S-46) to Committee Amendment "A" (H-15) READ and INDEFINITELY POSTPONED. Senate Amendment "U" (S-53) to Committee "A" Amendment READ INDEFINITELY (H-15) and **POSTPONED.)** 

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

Senator AMERO: Thank you Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen of the Senate. Before we do vote on Committee Amendment "A", I just have a few comments about the procedures that have led up to the vote this afternoon. First of all I'd like to discuss briefly, the actions that were taken on Friday, in which we put forward about 20 proposed amendments to this budget. I believe, that as Republicans, the amendments were brought forward in good faith. I was very concerned that there were very few people here, in the Senate Chamber, to hear those deliberations and I'm also concerned about the fact that Committees were meeting all day on Friday. Committees have been meeting all day today while the Senate has been in session. And, I'd like to just quote from Mason's Manual of Legislative Procedure, section 628, regarding Committee meetings, while a House is in session (House, referring to either Body). 1. "Committees may not meet during the sessions of the House, without the consent of that House. To secure consent, the Chair of the Committee should present a motion requesting the consent. 2. Whenever the House goes into session, it is the duty of a Committee, upon receiving notice, to immediately discontinue it's meetings and attend in the House. Committees may not continue in session when the time for convening of the House has arrived". I think it was a real disservice to the deliberations on the budget, as well as the deliberations that were taking place in the various Committees, that people spent all day Friday and this morning running back and forth, trying to be in two places at once. It really, I think, shows that this accelerated pace that we have been working under is making us act in haste. And, I'm very concerned for the process that has long been tradition in the Maine Legislature, that that process is impeding us making good decisions. I'm also disappointed that the way in which we began our deliberations in January, in this Body, began with hope from our presiding officer that we would be able to forge a new majority in this Senate. I'm really disturbed to see what that has come to mean because I felt at that time his new majority meant bringing both sides of the aisle together, to come to a real consensus. We're now about to put through a budget that consists of a majority of one side only and it completely excludes the other. I'm always optimistic that there can be negotiation and there can be compromise, but at this point I'm very pessimistic because I think that the majority is anxious and ready to go forward with this majority budget. I know we could do better. I wish we had more time, that we could put out the education piece and that we could spend some real time deliberating, where we gave each other a chance to hear what each side is saying. Thank you for your attention.

THE PRESIDENT: The Chair will just remind the Chamber the motion before the Body is Adoption of Committee Amendment "A" As Amended. Committee Amendment "A" is an emergency measure requiring two-thirds, therefore it is inappropriate to debate passing a budget by a majority vote at this time. The Chair would encourage members to keep their comments solely to Committee Amendment "A". The Chair recognizes the Senator from Cumberland, Senator Harriman.

Senator HARRIMAN: Thank you Mr. President, good afternoon ladies and gentlemen of the Senate. On behalf of my

Republican colleagues, I'd like to take this opportunity to say thank you to the Senate for it's indulgence last Friday, as we considered amendments that I and others believe were worthy of consideration in the context of the budget before us. While some members may have viewed these amendments as obstructing the legislative process, I viewed them as fair and reasonable and clearly within the rules of procedure to protect the rights of the minority.

**THE PRESIDENT:** The Senator will defer. The Chair will again say that we are debating Committee Amendment "A", not amendments offered last week. The Senator will confine his comments to Committee Amendment "A".

Senator HARRIMAN: Please forgive me Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: The Senator may proceed.

Senator HARRIMAN: Thank you. Before the vote is taken this afternoon, I'd like to speak up and stand up, not for the needs of government, but for the hard working Maine citizens who pay the bills, for at the end of the day, it is their money we are spending. I'm always mindful of the families who are working as hard as they know how, just to stay even and hopefully have a little something left over in their pay to save for college expenses or retirement. Their voice speaks clearly and deserves to be answered. When they ask, "Why is it that we have a snack tax or why did State government stop indexing my income taxes for inflation in 1992, as a technique to balance the budget, but why hasn't the sales tax reverted back to 5%, as promised?" I believe the answer is, is that government continues spending at a rate faster then our citizens personal incomes are growing and our inability to create a vibrant economic environment, where more tax payers can be created. If we could demonstrate the courage to look beyond the headlines and see the horizon, we would recognize that Maine citizens can no longer afford the growths in spending that we are debating here today. Especially when we consider what other states are doing to create hospitable economic environments, like we see in New Hampshire, in Massachusetts, New York, Michigan, New Jersey. And, as the State Planning Office reports, Mr. President, Maine's population is stagnant and at best, may grow slightly, if at all, The budget we'll be voting on will approach almost \$4 billion. Yet, total State government spending is almost double that, and most of those monies are dedicated money until we don't have enough money in the general fund, then we see proposals to take money from those dedicated resources, like the Underground Tank Removal Fund, \$1 million from the Bureau of Banking and Securities, \$900 thousand or \$250 thousand for the Workers Compensation Fund for State employees, and I could go on and on. Also, within this budget is spending for additional services and projects. Most have been inserted into this spending plan, without public hearings or legislative floor debate. And, if we continue to look at the horizon, the Bureau of the Budget projects today that the next legislature, the 119th legislature, will have to grapple with yet another, another spending increase beyond tax revenues. The figures they've recently released show that the general fund in the next biennium would be out of balance by almost \$115 million and the Highway Fund would be out of balance by almost \$42 million and that's before the new programs that are contained in this budget are considered. Before I yield the floor Mr. President, let me

close by expressing how much I enjoy taking the time out of our hectic schedule here to visit with Maine citizens who come to their State House, especially the school children. I particularly enjoy talking with them about the history of this great Chamber and the people who serve here. Indeed, from the moment they walk in the South wing, there's a marquee there with a welcoming letter from our Governor, as there is by the Speaker of the House's Office, as there is here in the Senate. And, the welcoming message here in the Senate says in part, "When I was elected Senate President, I asked the other 34 members to join with me in forging a new majority in the Maine Senate that recognizes that we all have valid opinions on issues that face us as a State. The challenge is to find, within our disagreements, the foundation for our solutions. For only together can we meet the growing challenges of tomorrow and renew ourselves and our government a commitment to democracy, civility and compromise." Mr. President, I accepted that challenge and I still do, with open arms and an open mind. Hopefully, we can take a fresh look at the disagreements between us with an eye towards the horizon. For our very future depends upon it. Thank you Mr. President.

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

Senator LIBBY: Thank you Mr. President, good afternoon men and women of the Senate. My remarks will be extremely brief today because I only intend to discuss what I believe is the most egregious part of this particular budget that we're looking at today and that is, the State liquor policy in the State of Maine. I don't understand how I can have a constituent in a town, in Senate District 34, who's been asking to open up a retail liquor store for the past 15 years and the State has said no for that entire stretch of time, up to this day. But without a public hearing, we can open up new State liquor stores on both sides of the turnpike in Kennebunk, Maine without a public hearing. We're ignoring the recommendations for privatization of the liquor stores that have come from across the State. We're ignoring editorials and many, many newspapers up and down the coast of Maine, west to east and we've had no opportunity to discuss what the options should be. This is an egregious policy. We have no right to do it and it's one of my severe complaints about this amendment. What we need to do, we need to take that policy, put it back where it belongs, give it a fair hearing, talk to the people of Maine and then listen to the people of Maine and decide where we should head, and in one direction. Thank you very much.

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

Senator **MACKINNON**: Thank you Mr. President, women and men of the Senate. I arise today to tell you that I don't think I can support this amendment. While I'm in favor of 99% of this budget, I think this rush to the budget because the cap doesn't fit all, is kind of a second priority with me. I want to thank you people for allowing me to be part of this institution, you made the transition here as a working legislator to be nice, it's been comfortable and we've worked together. Our Committee work has been tremendous. We get along, I think we put our time in. I don't think we have a chance to look at all the bills as close as I'd like. When I ran I promised to hold taxes, to look at, you know, the very tough decisions and to work together for the people of Maine. On Thursday the Honorable Senator from Penobscot, Senator Michaud, was great when he told me he could accept property but not the tax cap, I respect that, that's up-front, but he was willing to put in the \$10 million of hard money for that, I respected that and took that as a hope and a light for compromise. Before I get run over by this train. I hope that I'm not left at the station because I want to make a contribution. Right now I'm feeling left out. This institution is honorable, you're 35, 34 people plus myself, who are tremendous here. You have the interest of the State of Maine and the people of Maine. We, as a group, all want the same thing, security for the people of Maine but right now we're looking at ourselves as I's and not as we. I may have come from another institution about sports and education, where we work together, we try to do the best for the people. I don't want to be left at that station. I know we were told we had to be kept up to speed here, I'm not Michael Jordan, I feel more like Kenny Lofton in the ads now. This budget is up 7%, while our income is about 3%, to me that's overextended. We have to look at some budget cuts. I'm on a committee, the Business and Economic Committee. We need that as a tool to drive our economy, to put jobs here to help people. If I was a business person now, looking to relocate in the State of Maine with what's going on, I'm not sure I'd bring my people here and I think that's a sad state of affairs. We have to stop thinking in terms of 2 years and look at 10 years down the road, what's best for the people of Maine, not to pass one thing to take it away. Maybe we can compromise, maybe we can look at it. But, I feel that my word is my bond, my promises are there. I really feel as if, that I'm not used to, changing the rules. Last year it was passed under two-thirds and I know that that can be debated and how it was passed but it still looks like to me, it was changed and for that, I'm not sure. I would like to feel ownership of this budget. I'd like to feel ownership of this institution. You people have been great here. I hope that we can work together. I will hope that we stop this rush so that we can all get on the train and leave together, feel ownership of this and feel like we're doing something for the people of Maine. Thank you.

**THE PRESIDENT:** The Chair recognizes the Senator from Somerset, Senator Mills.

Senator MILLS: Thank you Mr. President, men and women of the Senate. My concerns about this budget are many, but the thing I'd like to focus on is the procedural posture of things. By my count there are at least 6 significant issues funded, or addressed, by this budget that represent fairly significant policy decisions that, as far as I can tell, were made by a subcommittee of 8 people who serve on Appropriations and were never addressed either in public hearings or in any thorough way by the committees that have jurisdiction over the policy issues at stake. The funding of \$2.1 million in reimbursement to the Maine State Retirement System, the allocation of \$2 million for the possible purchase of Sears Island, about \$2 million allocated to a new Research and Development Program at the University of Maine, the retaining of 2 additional District Attorney's for York County, the creation of a new Family Court System, as I recall, the public hearing was taking place up in Judiciary at the same time as the Appropriations Committee, or its subcommittee, in its wisdom, was putting this plan into law or attempting to, and finally the addition of 2 new State liquor stores at the south end

of the turnpike. As I understand it, there is money left, something approximating a third of a million dollars on the table with which to fund anything that might come out of approximately 1500 bills that are currently in the hopper and have not yet been acted upon by the Committees of Jurisdiction. I must ask, what hope is there for serious consideration of those 1500 bills, if the group of 8 people on the Appropriations Committee has all but decided how to spend all of the money at our disposal? Thank you.

**THE PRESIDENT:** The Chair recognizes the Senator from Knox, Senator Pingree.

Senator PINGREE: Thank you Mr. President, men and women of the Senate. I rise to speak briefly today about some of the issues that have been raised about our budget and the vote we're looking at right now. I want to reiterate again that no one needs to feel left out of this process. We would be very happy to have two-thirds of the members of the legislature vote on this and cooperate and work together on this budget. I do want to address some of things that have happened in the process. There have been over 39 days of public hearings and most of the committees submitted either unanimous or near unanimous budgets to the Appropriations Committee which were used in putting together this budget. So, I do think there's been a lot of impute and involvement by all of the members of the legislature in this budget, up until this point. We've spent the last couple of weeks looking for a compromise on the budget and I would have to say that the Democrats have floated at least 5 different compromise opportunities, none of which have been fully accepted in the budget to this point, but we have been trying very hard, I think. We've put in a lot of long days and long nights with the Appropriations Committee and members of leadership, looking for some common ground and we found that very difficult to find and felt it was important to continue to move on with this budget with the best compromise we thought we could come to, so that we never got into a position where government couldn't operate as efficiently as it needed to. I have to say that I think that this is a very good budget and that many of the things that people have been asking for are in this budget. There are still \$180 million of tax cuts, many of them proposed in the last session of the legislature that had to be funded in this session of the legislature and put into this budget. The hospital tax. Tax and Match is funded at \$116 million, the nursing home tax is funded at \$25 million, the BETR Program gets \$29 million in this budget, the tax relief fund for Maine residents gets another \$10 million, that's \$180 million. We also did our best to pay our bills in this legislative session in this budget. We paid \$6.3 million into the Tree Growth Tax Reimbursement Funds, we put more money back into county jails, we made sure that we covered our share of the teacher retirement costs, which was an important item to many of our communities. We added more money to General Purpose Aid to education, to the University of Maine System, then the governor had proposed and to the Maine Technical College System. I think we did a lot of things that both our constituents were asking for, that paid previous bills, that returned money to the communities to lower property taxes. I think there are very many good things in this budget and while I, like everyone else has to say, I only like 99 or 98% of it. I understand that it was a compromise, a compromise that I felt was the best one that we could come to and I think that it's something that I can go home and be proud of and speak to my

communities about and feel very good about the work that we've done. There's been a lot of talk about doing this early, getting everything done early, and I find it interesting to be on the other side of this coin, this legislative session because I have often heard in previous legislative sessions, many times from members of the other caucus, that we should shorten these sessions. There are often proposals to shorten our legislative sessions, saving, if you give them the time, they will fill it up. Well, this time we said, let's not take all the time. Let's get right down to work, let's work quickly, and let's get the job done. We tried very hard to meet our commitment to report back to our communities about school funding so that when they went to their school budget hearings, they would know exactly how much money they could expect from us, something they've been asking for a long time and are often unable to balance their budgets because they don't know that and we made sure that they had that information in attempting to pass this budget early. Also, we're operating under some other constraints. The last legislature cut the legislative budget, we won't have as much money to spend on taking our time up here and we tried to respect those constraints and again do our work as quickly as possible. So, I'm hoping that everyone will vote for this budget, in fact it would be nice to have a unanimous vote on this budget and I think we could all vote for it and move on and feel very good about the work that we've done. Thank you.

**THE PRESIDENT:** The pending question before the Senate is Adoption of Committee Amendment "A" (H-15) as Amended by House Amendments "FF" (H-73); "HH" (H-75) and "JJ" (H-82) a Roll Call has been ordered. Is the Senate ready for the question.

The Doorkeepers secured the Chamber.

The Secretary called the Roll with the following result:

### **ROLL CALL**

- YEAS: Senators: CAREY, CATHCART, CLEVELAND, DAGGETT, GOLDTHWAIT, JENKINS, KILKELLY, LAFOUNTAIN, LONGLEY, MICHAUD, MURRAY, NUTTING, O'GARA, PARADIS, PENDLETON, PINGREE, RAND, RUHLIN, TREAT, THE PRESIDENT - MARK W. LAWRENCE
- NAYS: Senators: ABROMSON, AMERO, BENNETT, BENOIT, BUTLAND, CASSIDY, FERGUSON, HARRIMAN, KIEFFER, LIBBY, MACKINNON, MILLS, MITCHELL, SMALL

EXCUSED: Senator: HALL

20 Senators having voted in the affirmative and 14 Senators having voted in the negative, with 1 Senator being excused, COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" (H-15) AS AMENDED BY HOUSE AMENDMENTS "FF" (H-73); "HH" (H-75) AND "JJ" (H-82) thereto, ADOPTED, in concurrence.

Under suspension of the Rules, READ A SECOND TIME.

**THE PRESIDENT:** The pending question before the Senate is Passage to be Engrossed as Amended, in concurrence. The Chair recognizes the Senator from Cumberland, Senator Amero.

Senator AMERO: Thank you Mr. President. I request a Roll Call.

On motion by Senator **AMERO** of Cumberland, supported by a Division of at least one-fifth of the members present and voting, a Roll Call was ordered.

The Doorkeepers secured the Chamber.

The Secretary called the Roll with the following result:

#### ROLL CALL

- YEAS: Senators: CAREY, CATHCART, CLEVELAND, DAGGETT, GOLDTHWAIT, JENKINS, KILKELLY, LAFOUNTAIN, LONGLEY, MICHAUD, MURRAY, NUTTING, O'GARA, PARADIS, PENDLETON, PINGREE, RAND, RUHLIN, TREAT, THE PRESIDENT - MARK W. LAWRENCE
- NAYS: Senators: ABROMSON, AMERO, BENNETT, BENOIT, BUTLAND, CASSIDY, FERGUSON, HARRIMAN, KIEFFER, LIBBY, MACKINNON, MILLS, MITCHELL, SMALL

EXCUSED: Senator: HALL

20 Senators having voted in the affirmative and 14 Senators having voted in the negative, with 1 Senator being excused, the Bill was PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED AS AMENDED BY COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" (H-15) AS AMENDED BY HOUSE AMENDMENTS "FF" (H-73); "HH" (H-75) AND "JJ" (H-82) thereto, in concurrence.

Senator PINGREE of Knox moved to RECONSIDER whereby this Bill was PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED AS AMENDED BY COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" (H-15) AS AMENDED BY HOUSE AMENDMENTS "FF" (H-73); "HH" (H-75) AND "JJ" (H-82) thereto.

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

Senator AMERO: Thank you Mr. President. I request a Division.

A Division was had. No Senators having voted in the affirmative and 33 Senators having voted in the negative, the motion by Senator PINGREE of Knox, to RECONSIDER whereby this Bill was PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED AS AMENDED BY COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" (H-15) AS AMENDED BY HOUSE AMENDMENTS "FF" (H-73); "HH" (H-75) AND "JJ" (H-82) thereto, in concurrence, FAILED.

Senator **PINGREE** of Knox, was granted unanimous consent to address the Senate off the Record.

## **Off Record Remarks**

Senator **AMERO** of Cumberland, was granted unanimous consent to address the Senate off the Record.

# **Off Record Remarks**

On motion by Senator **PINGREE** of Knox, **RECESSED** until the sound of the bell.

After Recess

Senate called to order by the President

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

#### **ENACTORS**

The Committee on **Engrossed Bills** reported as truly and strictly engrossed the following:

#### Emergency

An Act Making Unifies Appropriations and Allocations for the Expenditures of State Government, General Fund and Other Funds, and Changing Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 1998 and June 30, 1999

H.P. 832 L.D. 1137 (H "FF" H-73; H "HH" H-75; H "JJ" H-82 to C "A" H-15)

Comes from the House FAILED OF ENACTMENT.

On motion by Senator **PINGREE** of Knox, supported by a Division of at least one-fifth of the members present and voting, a Roll Call was ordered.

**THE PRESIDENT:** The Chair recognizes the Senator from Somerset, Senator Mills.

Senator **MILLS**: Mr. President, I'm sorry to interrupt, just a point of order. This bill comes from the House having failed of enactment, is that correct?

THE PRESIDENT: The Chair would answer in the affirmative.

The Doorkeepers secured the Chamber.

The Secretary called the Roll with the following result: