Mr. DIAMOND: Mr. Speaker, Men and Women of the House: This bill, 2066, is a result of legislation we passed last year. Last year, for a long time, we debated about how we finally wanted to have the Turnpike Authority end, or have it end up at all. What we decided last year, after a great deal of debate, was that we would keep the Authority and that we would also retain the closed system. That process generates this year a speculation of about $15.2 million, half of that money which is from out-of-state traffic.

Secondly, last year we also allowed for interchanges to be built near communities that might promote economic development. Thirdly, last year we were allowed for a commuter pass system which guaranteed those who travelled the turnpike daily or on a very routine basis at least 50 percent discount. Then, at the end of all that, we asked the Authority to find bond counsel and make recommendations, legal recommendations, for implementation of those recommendations plus a toll fare increase, an increase which has not been made, by the way, since 1958.

So the reason we are here today is to put those recommendations into effect, and the reason that you had this bill on your desks as of last Friday, and the hearing was last Friday, is because the printing just never got done, the final draft wasn't put together.

The Department of Transportation agrees with this fully, the Maine Turnpike Authority agrees with this fully. It came out of the Transportation Committee with an unanimous 'ought to pass' and the only reason we are trying to push it through quickly—and, by the way, this will not take place until Thursday because the other body has adjourned—but the only reason we are trying to push this through quickly is because the toll fare increase, which was part of that recommendation we made last year, takes a number of weeks to put together. If we are going to have this all come to a head by this summertime when, number one, the bonds are paid up and, number two, the summer traffic comes in, we need a few weeks to get ready for that.

What we decided last year, after a great deal of discussion, is that we have been facing a backlog of bills, new bills, and the legislative process has backed up, and my concern, again, is that with 13 days left and the size of this bill and the implications that it has I think could be unfortunate.

With that, I move that the bill be referred to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Thereupon, on motion of Mr. Higgins of Scarborough, the Bill was referred to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources in concurrence.

Passed to Be Engrossed


The following papers appearing on Supplement No. 3 were taken up out of order by unanimous consent:

From the Senate, the following Joint Order:

ORDERED, the House convening, that when the House and Senate adjourn, they adjourn to Thursday, March 18, 1982, at eleven o'clock in the morning.

The following papers appearing on Supplement No. 4 were taken up out of order by unanimous consent:

The following communication: (S. P. 927) State of Maine Senator Chamber President's Office March 15, 1982

Honorable Dana C. Deveo
Honorable Barry J. Hobbs
Chairmen
Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary
State House
Augusta, Maine 04333

By Committee Chairman:

Please be advised that Governor Joseph E. Brennan is nominating Millard E. Emanuelsen of Machias for reapportionment to the District Court for the Judicial District of

Pursuant to Title 4 MRSA Section 157, this nomination will require review by the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary and confirmation by the Senate.

Sincerely,

J. JOSEPH SEWALL
President of the Senate

J. JOSEPH SEWALL
Speaker of the House

Mr. Higgins, Mr. Speaker, I am sure you were prepared to recognize the gentleman from Scarborough, Mr. Higgins.

Mr. HIGGINS: Mr. Speaker, I am not sure. I am sure you were prepared to recognize the gentleman from Scarborough, Mr. Higgins.

Mr. Higgins, Mr. Speaker, I am not sure. I am sure you were prepared to recognize the gentleman from Scarborough, Mr. Higgins.