Senator DAMON: Thank you, Madame President, men and women of the Chamber. I want to just tell you about this particular bill, which would seem innocuous and you wonder why it would come before us because in essence it allows the Maine Turnpike Authority, at its various service centers along its highway, to sell products made or grown in Maine or products that promote Maine. It almost seems like a no-brainer, doesn’t it? That’s what we thought in the Transportation Committee when this bill came before us. In fact, the Maine Turnpike Authority is very heavily regulated by its rules of incorporation, its charter. It has determined that if a specific item is not spelled out in that, and it’s a narrow interpretation, they cannot do it. That charter does not specifically name Maine made products or products that promote Maine. They have come before us, the committee unanimously agreed and I would certainly hope that the Senate would unanimously agree that they could be able to do this. It will show itself first in the new service plaza that is being constructed between the Maine Turnpike and the intersection of Interstate 95 in West Gardiner. There will be a fairly elaborate service center plaza there and the area within that location is going to be designated for these products and then those same products will be moved to other locations along the highway. I would urge your support and I actually am quite pleased that the Turnpike Authority is taking this step to help promote Maine made products. Thank you, Madame President.

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

Senator BROMLEY: Thank you, Madame President, men and women of the Senate. I won’t add much to this except to say this sort of initiative was started by the Director of Tourism. I want to point out particularly how pleased we are with the collaboration between the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Conservation and the Department of Transportation. Any of you who chair committees, if there are such opportunities to do this sort of thing, which is fiercely promoting Maine and Maine products, that we are very interested in the BRED Committee and the Tourism Committee and will entertain any and all ideas. This is a good thing for us all to talk about. Thank you.

ASSIGNED FOR SECOND READING NEXT LEGISLATIVE DAY.

Ought to Pass As Amended

Senator BOWMAN for the Committee on EDUCATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS on Bill “An Act To Strengthen the Scientific Research Support Capability of the Maine State Museum” S.P. 209 L.D. 672