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Senate Legislative Record

One Hundred and Thirty-First Legislature

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Beginning with Page S-387

The Chair noted the absence of the Senator from Kennebec, Senator **HICKMAN**, and further excused the same Senator from today's Roll Call votes.

The Doorkeepers secured the Chamber.

The Secretary opened the vote.

ROLL CALL (#477)

YEAS: Senators: BENNETT, BRAKEY, CURRY, FARRIN, GUERIN, HARRINGTON, INGWERSEN, LAFOUNTAIN, LIBBY, LYFORD, MOORE, NANGLE, POULIOT, STEWART, TIMBERLAKE, VITELLI, PRESIDENT JACKSON

NAYS: Senators: BAILEY, BALDACCI, BEEBE-CENTER, BRENNER, CARNEY, CHIPMAN, DAUGHTRY, DUSON, GROHOSKI, LAWRENCE, PIERCE, RENY, ROTUNDO, TIPPING

EXCUSED: Senators: BLACK, HICKMAN, KEIM, RAFFERTY

17 Senators having voted in the affirmative and 14 Senators having voted in the negative, with 4 Senators being excused, the motion by Senator **VITELLI** of Sagadahoc to **INSIST PREVAILED**.

Sent down for concurrence.

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

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

House

Divided Report

The Majority of the Committee on **APPROPRIATIONS AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS** on Bill "An Act Making Unified Appropriations and Allocations from the General Fund and Other Funds for the Expenditures of State Government and Changing Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2023, June 30, 2024 and June 30, 2025" (EMERGENCY) H.P. 163 L.D. 258

Reported that the same **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-717)**.

Signed:
Senators:
ROTUNDO of Androscoggin
BENNETT of Oxford
DUSON of Cumberland

Representatives:
SACHS of Freeport
BLIER of Buxton
CARLOW of Buxton
COLLINGS of Portland
FAY of Raymond
GATTINE of Westbrook
MATLACK of St. George
MILLETT of Waterford
MILLETT of Cape Elizabeth

The Minority of the same Committee on the same subject reported that the same **Ought Not To Pass**.

Signed:

Representative:
DUCHARME of Madison

Comes from the House with the Majority **OUGHT TO PASS AS AMENDED** Report **READ** and **ACCEPTED** and the Bill **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED AS AMENDED BY COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" (H-717) AS AMENDED BY HOUSE AMENDMENTS "A" (H-721) AND "B" (H-722)** thereto.

Reports **READ**.

Senator **ROTUNDO** of Androscoggin moved the Senate **ACCEPT** the Majority **OUGHT TO PASS AS AMENDED** Report, in concurrence.

THE PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes the Senator from Androscoggin, Senator Rotundo.

Senator **ROTUNDO**: Thank you, Mr. President, Colleagues of the Senate. I rise today to speak in support of LD 258, the second phase of the biennial budget. It's a strong, responsible, and bipartisan budget that reflects what Maine values most; its people. Before I delve into the contents of what I believe to be a transformational budget, I want to talk a little bit about how we got here. At the outset, this Legislature was tasked with responding to the growing crisis in childcare, housing, and emergency medical services. There was a shared consensus that these were priorities that matter to all of us, regardless of party. These were services our communities and economy depended upon. The question that remained was would we be able to come up with a bipartisan budget that delivered on these key issues. For months, the Legislature's Appropriation Committee pored over the Governor's proposal, held public hearings and consulted with each of the Joint Standing Committees on initiatives relative to their jurisdiction. We did our due diligence and crafted a budget that is transformational. This proposal makes key investments in childcare. It doubles the wage stipend for childcare workers and helps more families afford the cost of care. This will ensure workers can remain in this industry, parents can go to work, and employers have a strong workforce. This proposal confronts the housing crisis head on by establishing the Housing First program, investing in short-term emergency housing and directing funding to expand affordable rental and ownership housing options through the Rural Affordable Rental Housing program and the

Low-Income Housing tax credit. This proposal invests more than $31 million in emergency medical services. It establishes a grant program to increase sustainability and resiliency of Maine-based emergency medical service entities. The program will shore up the most precarious areas of immediate risk of failing and leaving the communities without access to adequate emergency medical services. There are so many more incredible initiatives included in this budget that are important to all of us. It's not a perfect budget but it is a good budget and it's a bipartisan budget. I would like to express my appreciation to so many people who have made this budget possible. I want to start with the Senate President for his patience and time that he gave to the committee to reach a bipartisan agreement. Bipartisan budgets are good policy. I also want to thank the fabulous staff in the Revisor's office and OFPR, whose expertise, professionalism, patience, and kindness are truly remarkable. I want to give a special shout-out as well to the appropriations principal analyst, Maureen Dawson. Finally, I want to express my deep appreciation to my Appropriations colleagues in the other chamber for their extraordinary care and dedication to the work of putting this budget together. Thanks to the Senator from Cumberland, Senator Duson, whose wisdom and sense of fairness are reflected in this budget. And to the Senator from Oxford, Senator Bennett, for his contributions to this budget and for staying at the table even as the hopes of a bipartisan agreement and our committee were slim. With that, I hope you will join me in voting for LD 258. It will improve the lives of Maine families, strengthen our communities, and bolster our economy. Thank you.

On motion by Senator **VITELLI** of Sagadahoc, supported by a Division of one-fifth of the members present and voting, a Roll Call was ordered.

The Doorkeepers secured the Chamber.

The Secretary opened the vote.

ROLL CALL (#478)

YEAS: Senators: BAILEY, BALDACCI, BEEBE-CENTER, BENNETT, BRENNER, CARNEY, CHIPMAN, CURRY, DAUGHTRY, DUSON, GROHOSKI, INGWERSEN, LAFOUNTAIN, LAWRENCE, NANGLE, PIERCE, RENY, ROTUNDO, STEWART, TIPPING, VITELLI, PRESIDENT JACKSON

NAYS: Senators: BRAKEY, FARRIN, GUERIN, HARRINGTON, LIBBY, LYFORD, MOORE, POULIOT, TIMBERLAKE

EXCUSED: Senators: BLACK, HICKMAN, KEIM, RAFFERTY

22 Senators having voted in the affirmative and 9 Senators having voted in the negative, with 4 Senators being excused, the motion by Senator **ROTUNDO** of Androscoggin to **ACCEPT** the Majority **OUGHT TO PASS AS AMENDED** Report, in concurrence, **PREVAILED**.

Bill **READ ONCE**.

Committee Amendment "A" (H-717) **READ**.

House Amendment "A" (H-721) to Committee Amendment "A" (H-717) **READ** and **ADOPTED**, in concurrence.

House Amendment "B" (H-722) to Committee Amendment "A" (H-717) **READ** and **ADOPTED**, in concurrence.

Committee Amendment "A" (H-717) as Amended by House Amendments "A" (H-721) and "B" (H-722) thereto, **ADOPTED**, in concurrence.

Under suspension of the Rules, **READ A SECOND TIME** and **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED AS AMENDED BY COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" (H-717) AS AMENDED BY HOUSE AMENDMENTS "A" (H-721) AND "B" (H-722)** thereto, in concurrence.

All matters thus acted upon were ordered sent down forthwith for concurrence.

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

PAPERS FROM THE HOUSE

Non-Concurrent Matter

An Act to Eliminate the Current Net Energy Billing Policy in Maine (EMERGENCY)
H.P. 861 L.D. 1347

In Senate, July 6, 2023, on motion by Senator **LAWRENCE** of York, the Minority **OUGHT NOT TO PASS** Report **READ** and **ACCEPTED**, in **NON-CONCURRENCE**.

Comes from the House, that Body having **INSISTED** on its former action whereby the Majority **OUGHT TO PASS AS AMENDED** Report was **READ** and **ACCEPTED** and the Bill **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED AS AMENDED BY COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" (H-605) AS AMENDED BY HOUSE AMENDMENT "A" (H-714)** thereto.

Senator **VITELLI** of Sagadahoc moved the Senate **ADHERE**.
Senator **STEWART** of Aroostook moved the Senate **RECEDE** and **CONCUR**.

On motion by Senator **LAWRENCE** of York, supported by a Division of one-fifth of the members present and voting, a Roll Call was ordered.

The Doorkeepers secured the Chamber.

The Secretary opened the vote.

ROLL CALL (#479)