

## **Senate President Statement on Polling of the Legislature**

"There is universal agreement in Maine that the governor has crossed several lines that should never be approached ever again. His behavior has created headlines across the nation for all of the wrong reasons.

"For many, his apology on Tuesday was sufficient. But more people were interested in results. The governor, and the governor, alone, is responsible for his behavior and I believe there is no doubt he would benefit from additional help to address his explosive behavior.

"Many Senate Republicans have expressed a desire to return to the State House for a special session to hold the governor accountable.

"I find myself disappointed with the decision by the House Speaker to initiate a poll of his caucus regarding the governor's recent actions without specific language for the question.

"It is clear to me that Democratic leadership is not interested in holding the governor accountable for his actions but is more focused on the political advantage this situation presents. With Democratic leadership favoring impeachment, and the House Minority Office unwilling to

call back legislators for any reason, I see no path for the Legislature to reconvene.

"At yesterday's meeting among Democrat and Republican leaders, we agreed to meet again to find a path forward to address the situation with the governor. No sooner had it ended that Democrat leadership went to the media and called for the resignation of the governor. They said one thing behind closed doors and quite another to the TV cameras.

"Many members of the Senate Republican caucus had expressed a desire to come back into session to consider a narrowly defined resolution to force the governor to take meaningful corrective action that would have demanded he seek professional help and make it clear that his explosive behavior would no longer be tolerated. It is the governor's actions that have forced us into this unfortunate position and is not the fault of our senators. We will not be the party of "Clintonian ethics"-making excuses for bad behavior.

"It is regrettable that Democratic leadership, with their actions, has made the goal of holding the governor accountable much more difficult.

"The question, as prepared by the Speaker sets no timetables nor does it present guidance for the actions of the Legislature. It could result in a session lasting days or



even weeks with potentially dozens of individual legislators offering their own resolutions. I also believe it violates many aspects of the section of the Maine Constitution that addresses calling the Legislature into session. Any action taken by the Legislature would be challenged in court.

“The last thing our state needs now is to have the Legislature look even more like a circus, and I have no desire to be the ringmaster.

“There is nothing the Legislature can do to heal the hurt we have experienced. My only hope is Governor LePage understands the pervasiveness of the pain he has caused our state.