



MEMORANDUM

To: Senate Chair Bill Diamond, House Chair Emily Cain
Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs

From: Joseph R. Phillips, Museum Director

Date: August 31, 2009

Subject: The Initiative to Streamline State Government – Priority Programs

2009 SEP -1 AM 11:50
O.F.P.R.

The Maine State Museum has **one program**, formally established by the Legislature and accredited by the American Association of Museums.

Background: The basic concept for the museum was approved and funded by the legislature in 1836 with the first exhibit established in the State House one year later. After having been overseen by a variety of multi-priority departments for well over a century, the museum was made a separate professionally staffed institution in 1966.

Structure: The museum's staff structure is organized into professional specialties, all of which interact together to accomplish our program for educating Maine people and visitors about our state's natural and cultural heritage.

Facilities: The museum's program is most visible through the exhibition of scientific specimens and historical artifacts in the Cultural Building, State House and Blaine House. Four off-site locations are also used for long-term collection preservation and care. Museum education staff coordinates group visitation to the museum, State House and Blaine House.

Measures of Success: Fiscal Year 2008-2009 museum visitation increased by 8.4% over the previous year in spite of reductions to staff and hours of operation. Two major exhibits opened in this period were largely funded by federal and foundation grants, and by gifts from private citizens. Out of over 17,000 museums in the United States, the Maine State Museum is one of only 850 to be fully accredited by the American Association of Museums.

Summary: The Maine State Museum has **one** under-funded but highly successful **program** that directly benefits thousands of school students, Maine people and tourist visitors every year. The importance of this will be even more apparent as the bicentennial of statehood approaches.