

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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STATE OF MAINE  
116TH LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION

BILL SUMMARIES  
JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE  
ON  
JUDICIARY

JULY 1993

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**ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTEENTH LEGISLATURE  
FIRST REGULAR SESSION**

**JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE  
BILL SUMMARIES**

**JULY 1993**

This document is a compilation of the bill summaries prepared by this office for the Joint Standing Committees and Joint Select Committees of the Maine Legislature. The volume is organized alphabetically by committee; within each committee, the summaries are arranged by LD number. A subject index is provided at the beginning of each committee's summaries.

The committee report or reports, the prime sponsor for each bill and the lead co-sponsor in each house if one has been designated are listed below each bill title. All adopted amendments are listed, by paper number (e.g., H-584 or S-222), together with the sponsor for floor amendments. Final action on each bill is listed to the right of the title. Various types of final action are abbreviated as follows:

<i>PUBLIC XXX</i>	<i>Chapter # of enacted Public Law</i>
<i>P&amp;S XXX</i>	<i>Chapter # of enacted Private &amp; Special Law</i>
<i>RESOLVE XXX</i>	<i>Chapter # of enacted Resolve</i>
<i>CON RES XXX</i>	<i>Chapter # of Constitutional Resolution passed by both Houses</i>
<i>EMERGENCY</i>	<i>Enacted law takes effect sooner than 90 days</i>
<i>CARRIED OVER</i>	<i>Bill carried over to Second Session</i>
<i>ONTP</i>	<i>Ought Not to Pass report accepted</i>
<i>ENACTMENT FAILED</i>	<i>Bill failed to get majority vote</i>
<i>INDEF PP</i>	<i>Bill Indefinitely Postponed</i>
<i>FAILED EMERGENCY ENACTMENT</i>	<i>Emergency bill failed to get 2/3 vote</i>
<i>FAILED MANDATE ENACTMENT</i>	<i>Bill imposing local mandate failed to get 2/3 vote</i>
<i>DIED BETWEEN BODIES</i>	<i>House &amp; Senate disagree; bill died</i>
<i>CONF CMTE UNABLE TO AGREE</i>	<i>Committee of Conference formed but unable to agree</i>
<i>VETO SUSTAINED</i>	<i>Legislature failed to override Governor's Veto</i>
<i>UNSIGNED</i>	<i>Not signed by Governor within 10 days</i>
<i>DIED ON ADJOURNMENT</i>	<i>Action incomplete when session ended; bill died</i>

These summaries were prepared by the analyst or analysts assigned to the committee. But, this document was produced by the efforts of all the office staff, including secretaries: Charlene Raymond and Valarie Parlin.

If you have any suggestions or comments on these summaries, please let us know.

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3. It would have allowed the Department of Human Services to refer child support debts of \$25 or more to debt collection agencies.
4. It would have established a low-interest loan fund for people who owe child support debts to pay their obligations.

**LD 840      An Act to Protect Maine Businesses and Consumers from Unfair and Deceptive Trade Practices      CARRIED OVER**

<b>SPONSOR(S)</b> HARRIMAN GWADOSKY	<b>COMMITTEE REPORT</b>	<b>AMENDMENTS ADOPTED</b>
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**SUMMARY**

The bill repeals and replaces the Maine Unfair Trade Practices Act. The procedures in the bill encourage early settlement of disputes by allowing statutory damages, attorney's fees and costs, when a person is in violation of the Maine Unfair Trade Practices Act and fails to make a reasonable offer of settlement. The claimant also has a corresponding incentive to settle, as the claimant who does not accept a reasonable settlement offer is not entitled to statutory damages, costs or attorney's fees under the law. Cases that normally are litigated until a settlement is reached should, under this bill, be settled before the commencement of an action. Consumers are aided by the demand provisions that will permit many such claims to be resolved without the need for retaining an attorney. The bill is also intended to reduce litigation by providing a mechanism for penalizing persons with claims, defenses, setoffs or counterclaims that a court determines to be frivolous.

**LD 844      An Act to Protect Civil Rights      ONTP**

<b>SPONSOR(S)</b> CATHCART	<b>COMMITTEE REPORT</b> ONTP	<b>AMENDMENTS ADOPTED</b>
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**SUMMARY**

The bill would have prohibited law enforcement agencies from corresponding with owners of motor vehicles in order to attempt to interfere with the owner's rights to freely travel and to freely associate with other persons.

**LD 845      An Act to Create a Cause of Action Against the State for Wrongful Imprisonment      PUBLIC 480**

<b>SPONSOR(S)</b> MARTIN J	<b>COMMITTEE REPORT</b> OTP-AM	<b>AMENDMENTS ADOPTED</b> H-280
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**SUMMARY**

The bill establishes the State's liability for wrongful imprisonment. The bill is modeled on Title 14, chapter 743, which was repealed on November 1, 1988, except that this bill establishes the limitation on damages at \$300,000.

Committee Amendment "A" (H-280) adds a fiscal note.