

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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STATE OF MAINE
116TH LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION

BILL SUMMARIES
JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE
ON
UTILITIES

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&S XXX</i>	<i>Chapter # of enacted Private & 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 & 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.

4693NRG

LD 908 An Act to Eliminate the Seasonal Legal Researcher Position at the Public Utilities Commission and to Make Certain Other Changes

PUBLIC 118

SPONSOR(S)
CLARK

COMMITTEE REPORT
OTP

AMENDMENTS ADOPTED

SUMMARY

This bill eliminates 2 Seasonal Legal Researcher positions at the Public Utilities Commission pursuant to Public Law 1991, chapter 780, Part KKK and changes the titles of the utility financial analyst, chief utility accountant and utility accountant III positions in the finance division to utility analyst.

LD 926 An Act to Allow Disclosure of Residential Electrical Costs

PUBLIC 183

SPONSOR(S)
ADAMS

COMMITTEE REPORT
OTP-AM

AMENDMENTS ADOPTED
H-224

SUMMARY

This bill requires utilities to disclose to tenants and other customers or prospective customers residential electrical energy cost and consumption information for the preceding 12 months.

The committee amendment (H-224) makes several technical changes and reassigns the language to a new chapter in Title 14.

LD 927 An Act to Include a Waiver Provision for the Advance Notice Required by the Public Utilities Commission for Energy Agreements and Contracts

PUBLIC 119

SPONSOR(S)
HOLT

COMMITTEE REPORT
OTP

AMENDMENTS ADOPTED

SUMMARY

The Maine Revised Statutes, Title 35-A, section 3133, subsection 2 currently has a "notice of intent to file" requirement and explicitly permits the Public Utilities Commission, in its discretion, to waive the advance notice requirement. Title 35-A, section 3133-A, subsection 1 has a similar "notice of intent to file" requirement but provides no explicit authorization for the commission to waive the advance notice requirement. This bill adds identical language to section 3133-A, subsection 1 that permits the commission to entertain requests to waive the advance notice requirement in that section.

LD 940 An Act to Minimize Electric Rates

PUBLIC 402

SPONSOR(S)
DUTREMBLE D
CARPENTER

COMMITTEE REPORT
OTP-AM MAJ
OTP-AM MIN

AMENDMENTS ADOPTED
S-159
S-306 VOSE

SUMMARY

This bill proposed to require that the Public Utilities Commission, in considering and adopting an electric rate design, to minimize rates. The bill also proposed to require utilities to submit proposals for rate design which include incremental-use rates or maintenance-of-existing-use rates.

Committee amendment "A" (S-159), which was the majority report of the committee, strikes and replaces the bill.

The current Electric Rate Reform Act encourages the Public Utilities Commission to set electric rates to promote efficient utilization of natural energy resources in order to promote the use of indigenous resources, to the extent that this reduces overall electric costs.

Under the committee amendment, the commission is encouraged to achieve the same rate design goal of promoting indigenous resources, but the counter-balancing goal, reducing overall electric costs, is changed. Under this amendment, the commission is directed to give equivalent consideration to the goals of reducing costs and reducing rates.

Current law also requires the Public Utilities Commission to order electric utilities to submit rate design proposals. Under current law, the proposals are required to be designed to encourage energy conservation, minimize the need for new generating capacity, minimize costs and take into account the needs of low-income customers.

Under the committee amendment, the commission, in approving an electric utility rate design proposal, is required to give equivalent consideration to the goals of minimizing costs and minimizing rates of electricity to consumers.

This amendment also adds an unallocated section to the bill to clarify the intent of the bill, as amended. This provision makes it clear that the bill, as amended, is not to be interpreted to discourage energy conservation and demand management programs or to encourage continued or additional use of electric baseboard resistance heating systems. It also makes clear that the bill, as amended, is not to be construed to encourage or discourage the development or implementation of any particular rate design.

The Senate amendment (S-306) provides that in approving any proposal for incremental-use or maintenance-of-existing-use rates, the commission is required to seek to ensure that rates for all customer classes will be lower than would otherwise be the case had the rates not been adopted.

The Senate amendment also provides that the commission may not, as a result of implementing any of the provisions of the bill, adopt a rate design that results in increased rates for residential customers with usage of less than 750 kilowatt hours per month.

Several House amendments, designed to further define the intent of the bill, as amended, were offered but were not finally adopted (H-592, H-522 and H-468).

LD 955 An Act to Provide Lower Electricity Costs to Utility Ratepayers

ONTP

SPONSOR(S)
KONTOS

COMMITTEE REPORT
ONTP

AMENDMENTS ADOPTED

SUMMARY

This bill proposed to allow electric utility ratepayers to purchase low-cost incremental energy in the years 1993 and 1994. (See LDs 312 and 940)