

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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**STATE OF MAINE
118TH LEGISLATURE**

**FIRST REGULAR SESSION
AND
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION**

**BILL SUMMARIES
JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE
ON
LABOR**

JULY 1997

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ONE HUNDRED EIGHTEENTH LEGISLATURE
FIRST REGULAR AND FIRST SPECIAL SESSIONS

Summary Of Legislation Before The Joint Standing Committees
August 1997

We are pleased to provide this summary of bills that were considered by the 15 Joint Standing Committees of the Maine Legislature staffed by this office. The document is a compilation of bill summaries which describe each bill, committee amendments and other relevant amendments, as well as the final action taken on the bill. Also included are statistical summaries of bill activity this Session for the Legislature and each of its joint standing committees.

The document is organized for convenient reference to information on bills handled by the joint standing committees. It is organized alphabetically by committees and within committees by bill (LD) number. The committee report(s), prime sponsor for each bill and the lead co-sponsor(s), if designated, are listed below each bill title. All adopted amendments are listed by paper number. Two indices, a subject index and a numerical index by LD number are provided for easy reference to bills. They are located at the back of the document. A separate publication, History and Final Disposition of Legislative Documents, may also be helpful in providing information on the disposition of bills. These bill summaries also are available at the Law and Legislative Reference Library and on the Internet (www.state.me.us/legis/opla).

Final action on each bill is noted to the right of the bill title. The abbreviations used for various categories of final action are as follows:

<i>CARRIED OVER</i>	<i>Bill carried over to Second Regular Session</i>
<i>CON RES XXX</i>	<i>Chapter # of Constitutional Resolution passed by both Houses</i>
<i>CONF CMTE UNABLE TO AGREE</i>	<i>Committee of Conference unable to agree; bill died</i>
<i>DIED BETWEEN BODIES</i>	<i>House & Senate disagree; bill died</i>
<i>DIED IN CONCURRENCE</i>	<i>One body accepts ONTP report; the other indefinitely postpones the bill</i>
<i>DIED ON ADJOURNMENT</i>	<i>Action incomplete when session ended; bill died</i>
<i>EMERGENCY</i>	<i>Enacted law takes effect sooner than 90 days</i>
<i>FAILED EMERGENCY ENACTMENT/FINAL PASSAGE</i>	<i>Emergency bill failed to get 2/3 vote</i>
<i>FAILED ENACTMENT/FINAL PASSAGE</i>	<i>Bill failed to get majority vote</i>
<i>FAILED MANDATE ENACTMENT</i>	<i>Bill imposing local mandate failed to get 2/3 vote</i>
<i>INDEF PP</i>	<i>Bill Indefinitely Postponed</i>
<i>ONTP</i>	<i>Ought Not To Pass report accepted</i>
<i>OTP ND</i>	<i>Committee report Ought To Pass In New Draft</i>
<i>OTP ND/NT</i>	<i>Committee report Ought To Pass In New Draft/New Title</i>
<i>P&S XXX</i>	<i>Chapter # of enacted Private & Special Law</i>
<i>PUBLIC XXX</i>	<i>Chapter # of enacted Public Law</i>
<i>RESOLVE XXX</i>	<i>Chapter # of finally passed Resolve</i>
<i>UNSIGNED</i>	<i>Bill held by Governor</i>
<i>VETO SUSTAINED</i>	<i>Legislature failed to override Governor's Veto</i>

Please note the effective date for all non-emergency legislation enacted in the First Regular Session (unless otherwise specified in a particular law) is June 26, 1997 and September 19, 1997 for the First Special Session.

David E. Boulter, Director
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Committee Amendment "A" (S-235) proposed to strike from the original bill the provision that includes parent-teacher conferences among the authorized reasons for family medical leave. It also adds an appropriation section to reflect the costs of updating and distributing a printed notice of the law to employers in the State.

Senate Amendment "A" to Committee Amendment "A" (S-371) This amendment proposed to allow the Department of Labor to wait until there is an insufficient supply of notices to provide the updated version rather than having to reprint and distribute a full supply immediately. The amendment removed the appropriation section from the bill.

Enacted law summary

Public Law 1997, chapter 515 expands the coverage of the family medical leave laws by reducing the threshold for covered employers from 25 employees to 15 employees at the worksite. The Department of Labor may wait until there is an insufficient supply of notices of employment law to provide the updated version rather than having to reprint and distribute a full supply immediately.

LD 625

An Act to Clarify the Laws Governing the Calculation of Interest on Decrees under the Workers' Compensation Laws

ONTP

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
MILLS	ONTP	

LD 625 proposed to simplify the payment of simple interest on overdue workers' compensation benefits by replacing two different rates of interest required under current law. The bill proposed a rate of 1% per month for each full calendar month that the benefit payment has been due and gives a period of grace for the month in which each benefit first accrues. Benefits payable within each calendar month are treated as a single award with interest to accrue only from the end of the month forward. The bill proposed changes to clarify that the same rate applies to both medical bills and wage benefits included within the award. The method of calculation proposed in the bill would apply to all workers' compensation obligations arising after the effective date of the bill regardless of the date of injury.

LD 630

An Act to Create a Toll-free Number for Regional Unemployment Offices

ONTP

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
TUTTLE CATHCART	ONTP	

LD 630 proposed to require the Commissioner of Labor to set up a toll-free telephone number so that individuals and employers may transact business with the appropriate unemployment office without having to make a long-distance telephone call.