

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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STATE OF MAINE
118TH LEGISLATURE

SECOND REGULAR SESSION
AND
SECOND SPECIAL SESSION

BILL SUMMARIES
JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE
ON
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

MAY 1998

MEMBERS:

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Sen. Susan W. Longley
Sen. Betty Lou Mitchell

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Staff:

Jane Orbeton, Legislative Analyst

Office of Policy and Legal Analysis
Room 101/107/135, 13 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333
(207)287-1670



Maine State Legislature
OFFICE OF POLICY AND LEGAL ANALYSIS

13 State House Station, Augusta, Maine 04333-0013
 Telephone: (207) 287-1670
 Fax: (207) 287-1275

ONE HUNDRED EIGHTEENTH LEGISLATURE
SECOND REGULAR AND SECOND SPECIAL SESSIONS

Summary Of Legislation Before The Joint Standing Committees
May 1998

We are pleased to provide this summary of bills that were considered by the Joint Standing Committees of the Maine Legislature. The document is a compilation of bill summaries which describe each bill and relevant amendments, as well as the final action taken. 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 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:

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

Please note the effective date for all non-emergency legislation enacted in the Second Regular Session (unless otherwise specified in a particular law) is June 30, 1998 and July 9, 1998 for the Second Special Session. Second Special Session laws include Public Laws beginning with Chapter 718, Private and Special Laws beginning with Chapter 82 and Resolves beginning with Chapter 117.

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

LD 1779 proposed to create the Medical Privacy Act of 1997, that would have established a right to privacy with respect to health information, including genetic information. It would have helped to ensure the confidentiality of computerized or electronically transferred health information and restricted the gathering of aggregate health information for financial gain or other purposes without an individual's knowledge or consent. The bill also would have provided individuals with access to health information of which they are the subject and the power to challenge the accuracy and completeness of, amend or correct records containing that information.

The bill would have provided that an individual's interest in the privacy of health information may not be overridden without meaningful notice and informed consent, except in limited circumstances when there is a compelling public interest. These circumstances would have included disclosure when the subject of information is in danger, or another individual is in danger; disclosure to a health oversight agency in cases concerning fraud, protection of individuals from harm, abuse, neglect, or exploitation; disclosure for public health purposes; and disclosure to health researchers within certain parameters.

This bill also would have provided for disclosure of health information for judicial, law enforcement and administrative purposes pursuant to requirements governing subpoenas, warrants, court orders, and in certain other cases involving legal claims. The bill would have established civil penalties for failure to comply with the provisions of the Medical Privacy Act of 1997, and a private right of action of individuals aggrieved by conduct in violation of the Medical Privacy Act of 1997.

The bill would have required that an advisory group be appointed by the department to review all proposed rules and assist the department in establishing the standards for compliance with the rules. The group would have been directed to review further modifications to the Medical Privacy Act of 1997 to ensure efficient and confidential electronic exchange of protected health information and to make recommendations to bring certain existing laws into compliance with this Act.

The bill would have addressed the relationship of the Medical Privacy Act of 1997 to other laws in 2 ways. First, it would have provided that the Medical Privacy Act of 1997 does not preempt, supersede or modify the operation of certain existing state laws. Second, it would have amended certain other existing laws concerning the collection, use and dissemination of health information to render them consistent with the Medical Privacy Act of 1997, and would have repealed other laws that are inconsistent.

See also LD 1737.

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
PERKINS	OTP-AM	H-781