

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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**STATE OF MAINE
119TH LEGISLATURE**

FIRST REGULAR SESSION

**BILL SUMMARIES
JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE
ON
UTILITIES AND ENERGY**

JULY 1999

MEMBERS:

Sen. Richard J. Carey, Chair

Sen. Carol A. Kontos

Sen. Betty Lou Mitchell

Rep. Thomas M. Davidson, Chair

Rep. Patrick Colwell

Rep. Charles C. LaVerdiere

Rep. Bruce S. Bryant

Rep. Monica McGlocklin

Rep. William R. Savage

Rep. Donald P. Berry, Sr.

Rep. Harry G. True

Rep. Richard H. Duncan

Rep. Richard W. Rosen

Staff:

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ONE HUNDRED NINETEENTH LEGISLATURE
FIRST REGULAR SESSION

Summary Of Legislation Before The Joint Standing and Select Committees
August 1999

We are pleased to provide this summary of all bills that were considered by the Joint Standing and Select Committees of the Maine Legislature this past session. 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 and select committees.

The document is organized for convenient reference to information on bills considered by the 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:

CARRIED OVER.....Bill carried over to Second Regular Session
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
ENACTMENT FAILED..... Bill failed to get vote required for enactment or final passage
NOT PROPERLY BEFORE THE BODY..... Ruled out of order by the presiding officers; bill died
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 First Regular Session (unless otherwise specified in a particular law) is September 18, 1999.

1. Removes the authority for the Maine Health and Higher Educational Facilities Authority to provide certain commodities purchasing and transfer services, including aggregation services, to employees of health care and higher education entities; and
2. Permits, with certain limitations, the Maine Municipal Bond Bank to offer aggregation services to governmental units and nonprofit corporations.

Chapter 231 was enacted as an emergency measure effective May 18, 1999.

LD 710 **An Act Regarding Criteria for Approval of a Public Utility Reorganization by the Public Utilities Commission** **ONTP**

<u>Sponsor(s)</u> MCNEIL	<u>Committee Report</u> ONTP	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
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LD 710 proposed to provide that no reorganization by a public utility may be approved by the Public Utilities Commission unless it is established by the applicant for approval that the reorganization is consistent with the interests of the utility's ratepayers and investors and that any benefits derived from the reorganization, financial or otherwise, will be shared equally between the company's ratepayers and investors.

LD 735 **An Act Authorizing the Public Utilities Commission to Award Damages to Customers Damaged by Substandard Utility Service** **ONTP**

<u>Sponsor(s)</u> COLWELL	<u>Committee Report</u> ONTP	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
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LD 735 proposed to allow the Public Utilities Commission to compensate consumers for damages caused by a utility without requiring such customers to file individual actions in a court of law. This bill was submitted on behalf of the Office of the Public Advocate.

LD 756 **Resolve, to Create a Task Force to Study Ways to Improve and Streamline the Regulation of Water Utilities** **INDEF PP**

<u>Sponsor(s)</u> GOLDTHWAIT	<u>Committee Report</u> OTP-AM	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
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LD 756 proposed to create a task force to study the State's regulation of water utilities. The task force would be charged with investigating ways in which state regulation may be improved.

Committee Amendment "A" (S-45) proposed to change the membership of the Task Force; to require the task force to elect its chair from its members; to provide for compensation for legislative and public members of the task force; to authorize the task force to seek assistance from the Office of Policy and Legal Analysis in drafting any recommended legislation; to move the reporting date to January 1, 2000. This amendment was adopted in both bodies although the bill was subsequently indefinitely postponed.