MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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State Of Maine
121st Legislature

First Regular Session

Bill Summaries

Joint Standing Committee
on
Education and Cultural Affairs

July 2003

Members:
Sen. Neria R. Douglass, Chair
Sen. Michael F. Brennan
Sen. Betty Lou Mitchell

Rep. Glenn Cummings, Chair
Rep. Rosita Gagne-Friel
Rep. Jacqueline Norton
Rep. Jonathan Thomas
Rep. Edward D. Finch
Rep. Jeremy Fischer
Rep. Thomas W. Murphy, Jr.
Rep. Mary Black Andrews
Rep. Mary Ellen Ledwin
Rep. Gerald M. Davis

Staff:
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Maine State Legislature

Office Of Policy And Legal Analysis
Office Of Fiscal And Program Review

121st Maine Legislature
First Regular Session

Summary Of Legislation Before The Joint Standing Committees

Enclosed please find a summary of all bills, resolves, joint study orders, joint resolutions and Constitutional resolutions that were considered by the joint standing and joint 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 committees.

The document is organized for convenient reference to information on bills considered by the committees. It is arranged alphabetically by committee name 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 PURSUANT TO HP 1212 .... Bills carried over to the 2nd 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
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
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
P&S XXX .... Chapter # of enacted Private & Special Law
PASSED .... Joint Order passed in both bodies
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 that the effective date for all non-emergency legislation enacted in the First Regular Session (unless otherwise specified in a particular law) is September 13, 2003.

David C. Elliott, Director
Offices located in Room 215 of the Cross Office Building

LD 1130   **An Act To Protect Children from Classes Contradictory to Their Religious Beliefs**   ONTP

Sponsor(s)	Committee Report	Amendments Adopted
DUPREY B	ONTP	

Current law and rules of the Department of Education include accommodation provisions for instances when course content conflicts with sincerely held religious beliefs and practices of a student or a student's parent or guardian. LD 1130 proposed to provide the procedures by which a student may be granted an excused absence from a course when course content conflicts with sincerely held religious beliefs and practices of the student or of the student's parent or guardian. The bill also proposed to provide the instructional alternatives available to such students and the procedures for receiving academic credit for these instructional alternatives. The bill also proposed to require the Commissioner of Education to establish or amend rules to accomplish this purpose.

LD 1133   **Resolve, To Establish the Study Committee to Study the Feasibility of a 4-year High School Vocational Program**   ONTP

Sponsor(s)	Committee Report	Amendments Adopted
ANNIS	ONTP	
MITCHELL		

LD 1133 proposed to establish a study commission to study the feasibility of providing a technical high school setting for middle school students to attend after they complete 8th grade.

LD 1198   **An Act Regarding the Criminal History Record Check of School Employees**   ONTP

Sponsor(s)	Committee Report	Amendments Adopted
MAYO	ONTP	
MURPHY		

LD 1198 proposed to provide that, beginning with the 2003-2004 school year, only newly hired school employees would be subject to the fingerprinting and criminal history record check requirements. The bill also proposed to provide that former school employees who left a school administrative unit in the State due to a sincerely held philosophical belief against the fingerprinting and criminal history record check requirement, and who subsequently return to school employment, would be exempted from the criminal history record check requirement for newly hired school employees. The bill also proposed to authorize the Maine State Police and the Commissioner of Education to release certain general information relating to the fingerprinting and criminal history record checks of educational personnel.