

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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*State Of Maine
122nd Legislature*

*First Regular Session and
First Special Session*

Bill Summaries

*Joint Standing Committee
on
Taxation*

August 2005

Members:

*Sen. Joseph C. Perry, Chair
Sen. Ethan Strimling
Sen. Jonathan T. E. Courtney*

*Rep. Richard G. Woodbury
Rep. Herbert E. Clark
Rep. Deborah J. Hutton
Rep. Raymond G. Pineau
Rep. Thomas R. Watson
Rep. Harold A. Clough
Rep. H. Stedman Seavey, Jr.
Rep. Earle L. McCormick
Rep. Leonard Earl Bierman
Rep. Bruce Q. Hanley*

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Maine State Legislature

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122nd Legislature
First Regular Session and First Special Session

Summary of Legislation Considered by the Joint Standing Committees
August 2005

Enclosed please find a summary of all bills, resolves, joint study orders, joint resolutions and Constitutional resolutions that were considered by the joint standing 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 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. A subject index for each committee is included immediately before the bill summaries for that committee, and a numerical index by LD number is included 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
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
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 June 29, 2005; and for non-emergency legislation enacted in the First Special Session is September 17, 2005.

Joint Standing Committee on Taxation

LD 358

An Act To Limit Property Tax Abatement for Reasons of Poverty or Infirmary to Applicants' Residential Property

PUBLIC 169

<u>Sponsor(s)</u> FLETCHER		<u>Committee Report</u> OTP		<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
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LD 358 proposed to restrict a property tax abatement based on poverty or infirmity to a person's primary residence. The bill was presented in response to Hustus v. Town of Medway, 2004 ME 41, in which Maine's Supreme Judicial Court held that there was no limitation in state law governing eligibility for a property tax abatement for poverty or infirmity that prevents the issuance of a poverty-based property tax abatement to the owner of commercial property.

Enacted law summary

Public Law 2005, chapter 169 provides that property tax abatement based on poverty or infirmity may only be granted with regard to a person's primary residence.

LD 362

An Act To Allow Citizens To Voluntarily Pay Extra Income Taxes or Donate Money to the State

ONTP

<u>Sponsor(s)</u> DUPREY SNOWE-MELLO		<u>Committee Report</u> ONTP		<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
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LD 362 proposed to establish the Maine State Government Fund to be funded by voluntary contributions through an income tax checkoff and through the State's web page. The fund would be used to provide funding to state programs operated by the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Education, the Department of Administrative and Financial Services and the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife.

LD 365

An Act To Provide the Veterans' Property Tax Exemption to All Veterans

ONTP

<u>Sponsor(s)</u> SAVAGE COLLINS		<u>Committee Report</u> ONTP		<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
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LD 365 proposed to expand the \$5,000 property tax exemption for veterans to include veterans who did not serve during a federally recognized war period. The bill would also have restricted the exemption to veterans who had served for a period of at least 2 years or who receive a veteran's disability benefit for total disability.