

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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STATE OF MAINE
123RD LEGISLATURE
FIRST REGULAR SESSION



Summaries of bills and adopted amendments and laws enacted or finally passed during the First Regular Session of the 123rd Maine Legislature coming from the

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

July 2007

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MARGARET J. REINSCH, SENIOR ANALYST
OFFICE OF POLICY AND LEGAL ANALYSIS
13 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, ME 04333
(207) 287-1670

*Representative Bonnie S. Gould replaced former Representative Abigail Holman on the Judiciary Committee.

STATE OF MAINE

123RD LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION

LEGISLATIVE DIGEST OF BILL SUMMARIES AND ENACTED LAWS



This *Legislative Digest of Bill Summaries and Enacted Laws* summarizes all bills and adopted amendments and all laws enacted or finally passed during the First Regular Session of the 123rd Maine Legislature, which was in session from December 6, 2006 to June 21, 2007.

The *Digest* is arranged alphabetically by committee, and within each committee by LD number. The committee report(s), prime sponsor and lead co-sponsor(s), if designated, are listed below each bill title. All adopted amendments are summarized and listed by paper number. A subject index is included with each committee. The appendices include a summary of relevant session statistics, an index of all bills by LD number and an index of enacted laws by law type and chapter number.

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
NOT PROPERLY BEFORE THE BODY.....	Ruled out of order by the presiding officers; bill died
INDEF PP.....	Bill Indefinitely Postponed
ONTP (or Accepted ONTP report).....	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 non-emergency legislation enacted in the First Regular Session is **September 20, 2007**. The effective date for legislation enacted as an emergency measure is specified in the enacted law summary for those bills.

Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary

LD 709 An Act To Amend the Accord and Satisfaction Laws To Add Juveniles BY REQUEST

PUBLIC 277

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
DOW	OTP-AM	S-163

LD 709 extends the application of the accord and satisfaction provisions in the criminal laws to certain juvenile offenses.

Committee Amendment "A" (S-163)

The bill extends the opportunity for an accord and satisfaction to juvenile cases. This amendment limits the judge's ability to stay further proceedings and discharge a juvenile defendant under the accord and satisfaction law to only those juveniles who have not previously been adjudicated of a juvenile crime or have not previously been the subject of a juvenile petition that was disposed of by accord and satisfaction under that law.

Enacted Law Summary

Public Law 2007, chapter 277 extends the opportunity for an accord and satisfaction to juvenile cases, but only to those juveniles who have not previously been adjudicated of a juvenile crime or have not previously been the subject of a juvenile petition that was disposed of by accord and satisfaction under that law.

LD 714 An Act To Promote Efficiency in the District Court

ONTP

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

LD 714 is a concept draft pursuant to Joint Rule 208. It proposes to promote efficiency in the District Court by requiring the court to limit the extent and means of discovery in protection from harassment cases to ensure that such cases remain summary proceedings.

LD 756 An Act To Enhance and Clarify the Small Claims System BY REQUEST

ONTP

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

LD 756 makes changes in the small claims procedures. First, it requires the court to record all small claims hearings. Second, it prohibits the court from requiring that a transcript or record be submitted in any related proceeding or appeal if the party was given leave to proceed in forma pauperis unless the court has waived the fees related to the preparation of the transcript or record.

LD 779 An Act To Remove Clergy as Signatories on Marriage Licenses

ONTP

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

Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary

LD 779 removes the authorization of clergy members to solemnize marriages.

LD 809 An Act To Amend the Adverse Possession Law ONTP

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

LD 809 amends the adverse possession law and makes it consistent with the original intent of the Legislature and with the holding of *Dombkowski v. Ferland*, 2006 ME 24.

LD 843 An Act To Provide Immunity from Tort Claims against the State of New Hampshire Department of Transportation when Performing Maintenance Operations within the State of Maine ONTP

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

LD 843 limits claims brought in Maine courts against the State of New Hampshire for damages resulting from the maintenance, construction, cleaning, clearing and repair of public highways, state-owned railroads and other public transportation facilities. LD 843 limits damage awards to the cap on liability that would apply to the State of New Hampshire if the claim had been brought in New Hampshire. The limitation on a recovery may not be less than the tort liability limit expressed in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 14, section 8105. A similar bill did not pass in New Hampshire.

LD 857 An Act To Create A Medical Malpractice Study Group CARRIED OVER

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

LD 857 is a concept draft pursuant to Joint Rule 208. It proposes to form a medical malpractice study group to determine ways to limit liability for physicians.

LD 857 is carried over pursuant to Joint Order, HP 1369.

LD 866 An Act To Amend the Wrongful Death Laws PUBLIC 280

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
FAIRCLOTH	OTP-AM	H-344

LD 866 increases the cap on wrongful death noneconomic damages from \$400,000 to \$600,000 and requires adjustments in the future, tied to the Consumer Price Index. LD 866 also requires the court to inform the jury about the statutory caps on both noneconomic and punitive damages if either or both are sought in a wrongful death action.