

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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STATE OF MAINE
127TH LEGISLATURE
FIRST REGULAR SESSION



Summaries of bills, adopted amendments and laws enacted or finally passed

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

August 2015

STAFF:

KAREN NADEAU-DRILLEN, LEGISLATIVE ANALYST
OFFICE OF POLICY AND LEGAL ANALYSIS
13 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, ME 04333
(207) 287-1670
AND
SUZANNE VOYNIK, LEGISLATIVE ANALYST
OFFICE OF FISCAL AND PROGRAM REVIEW
5 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, ME 04333
(207) 287-1635

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LEGISLATIVE DIGEST OF BILL SUMMARIES AND ENACTED LAWS

This *Legislative Digest of Bill Summaries and Enacted Laws* contains summaries of all LDs and adopted amendments and all laws enacted or finally passed during the First Regular Session of the 127th Maine Legislature.

The *Digest* is arranged alphabetically by committee and within each committee by Legislative Document (LD) number. The committee report(s), prime sponsor and lead co-sponsor(s), if designated, are listed below each LD title. All adopted amendments are summarized and listed by paper number. A subject index is included with each committee. An appendix provides a summary of relevant session statistics.

Final action on each LD is noted to the right of the LD title. The following describes the various final actions.

<i>CARRIED OVER</i>	<i>carried over to a subsequent session of the Legislature</i>
<i>CON RES XXX</i>	<i>chapter # of constitutional resolution passed by both houses</i>
<i>CONF CMTE UNABLE TO AGREE</i>	<i>Committee of Conference unable to agree; legislation died</i>
<i>DIED BETWEEN HOUSES</i>	<i>House & Senate disagreed; legislation died</i>
<i>DIED IN CONCURRENCE</i>	<i>defeated in each house, but on different motions; legislation died</i>
<i>DIED ON ADJOURNMENT</i>	<i>action incomplete when session ended; legislation died</i>
<i>EMERGENCY</i>	<i>enacted law takes effect sooner than 90 days after session adjournment</i>
<i>FAILED, EMERGENCY ENACTMENT or FINAL PASSAGE</i>	<i>emergency failed to receive required 2/3 vote</i>
<i>FAILED, ENACTMENT or FINAL PASSAGE</i>	<i>failed to receive final majority vote</i>
<i>FAILED, MANDATE ENACTMENT</i>	<i>legislation proposing local mandate failed required 2/3 vote</i>
<i>HELD BY GOVERNOR</i>	<i>Governor has not signed; final disposition to be determined at subsequent session</i>
<i>LEAVE TO WITHDRAW</i>	<i>sponsor's request to withdraw legislation granted</i>
<i>NOT PROPERLY BEFORE THE BODY</i>	<i>ruled out of order by the presiding officer; legislation died</i>
<i>INDEF PP</i>	<i>indefinitely postponed; legislation died</i>
<i>ONTP, ACCEPTED, MAJORITY, MINORITY or REPORT X</i>	<i>ought-not-to-pass report accepted; legislation died</i>
<i>P&S XXX</i>	<i>chapter # of enacted private & special law</i>
<i>PUBLIC XXX</i>	<i>chapter # of enacted public law</i>
<i>RESOLVE XXX</i>	<i>chapter # of finally passed resolve</i>
<i>VETO SUSTAINED</i>	<i>Legislature failed to override Governor's veto</i>

The effective date for non-emergency legislation enacted in the First Regular Session of the 127th Legislature is October 15, 2015. The effective date for legislation enacted as an emergency measure may be found in the enacted law summary for that legislation.

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Public Law 2015, chapter 89 clarifies that the operator of a motor vehicle approaching a railroad crossing must stop the vehicle not less than 15 feet and not more than 50 feet from the nearest rail of the railroad track and may not proceed if a clearly visible electric or mechanical signal device warns of the approach of a train; a crossing gate is lowered or a flagger gives or continues to give a signal or warning of the approach or passage of a train; a train is visible and is in hazardous proximity to the crossing; or a sign, device or law requires the vehicle to stop.

LD 543 An Act To Amend the Laws Governing the Use of Flashing Lights by School Buses ONTP

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

This bill allows a school bus driver to receive or discharge passengers without activating flashing lights during a school field trip or sports trip when the passengers are with a chaperone or a coach and the school bus driver determines it is safe to do so.

LD 544 An Act To Assist Maine Veterans and Service Members ONTP

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

This bill establishes the Veterans Count Maine Donation Fund and allows for a person to designate a donation to be paid into the fund when applying for or renewing a driver's license.

LD 545 An Act To Require That Traffic Lights Default to Flashing Mode between the Hours of Midnight and 6 a.m. ONTP

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

This bill requires that traffic lights default to a flashing mode between the hours of 12 midnight and 6 a.m.

LD 554 An Act Concerning Commercial Vehicles at Canadian Weight Limits Traveling to Certain Points in the State PUBLIC 119 EMERGENCY

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
MAKER BURNS	OTP-AM	H-85

This bill changes the weight limits that certain commercial vehicles may have when traveling from the United States-Canada border to certain points in the State.

Committee Amendment "A" (H-85)

This amendment changes the bill by removing language allowing three-axle truck tractors with four-axle

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semitrailers of no more than 122,380 pounds total to travel from the United States-Canada border in Calais, Madawaska and Van Buren to certain points within the State.

The amendment allows certain commercial vehicles with a seven-axle configuration to travel from the United States-Canada border in Calais to Woodland Pulp LLC mill or its successor and the former oriented strand board facility in Baileyville. The amendment provides that this allowance does not take effect unless the chief engineer of the Department of Transportation conducts an analysis and determines that commercial vehicles of the proposed configuration and weight can be safely operated on the proposed routes of travel. The amendment repeals the allowance on January 1, 2018. The amendment requires the Department of Transportation to monitor and evaluate the effects of this allowance on road conditions and to report to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over transportation matters during the Second Regular Session of the 127th Legislature and the First Regular Session of the 128th Legislature. The amendment provides that the joint standing committee has authority to submit a bill during the First Regular Session of the 128th Legislature regarding the subject matter of the report. The amendment adds an emergency preamble and emergency clause to the bill.

The amendment revises the authorized route of travel in the Town of Van Buren in the current law allowing certain commercial vehicles at Canadian weight limits to travel from the United States-Canada border to certain points in the State.

Current law authorizes the Department of Transportation to adopt rules, in consultation with the Department of Public Safety and the Department of the Secretary of State, that allow certain commercial motor vehicles that exceed gross vehicle weight limits and vehicle dimension standards established in statute to travel upon designated routes. The amendment repeals the exclusion from the commercial motor vehicle configurations that may be allowed to operate on specified routes of travel by the Commissioner of Transportation truck tractor-semitrailer-semitrailer combination vehicles in which the two trailing units are connected with a B-train assembly.

Enacted Law Summary

Public Law 2015, chapter 119 allows certain commercial vehicles with a seven-axle configuration to travel from the United States-Canada border in Calais to Woodland Pulp LLC mill or its successor and the former oriented strand board facility in Baileyville. It provides that this allowance does not take effect unless the chief engineer of the Department of Transportation conducts an analysis and determines that commercial vehicles of the proposed configuration and weight can be safely operated on the proposed routes of travel. The law repeals this allowance on January 1, 2018.

The law requires the Department of Transportation to monitor and evaluate the effects of this allowance on road conditions and to report to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over transportation matters during the Second Regular Session of the 127th Legislature and the First Regular Session of the 128th Legislature. It provides that the joint standing committee has authority to submit a bill during the First Regular Session of the 128th Legislature regarding the subject matter of the report.

The law revises the authorized route of travel in the Town of Van Buren for certain commercial vehicles at Canadian weight limits travelling from the United States-Canada border to certain points in the State.

The Department of Transportation is authorized to adopt rules, in consultation with the Department of Public Safety and the Department of the Secretary of State, that allow certain commercial motor vehicles that exceed gross vehicle weight limits and vehicle dimension standards established in statute to travel upon designated routes. The law repeals the exclusion from the commercial motor vehicle configurations that may be allowed to operate on specified routes of travel by the Commissioner of Transportation truck tractor-semitrailer-semitrailer combination vehicles in which the two trailing units are connected with a B-train assembly.

Public Law 2015, chapter 554 was enacted as an emergency measure effective May 29, 2015.

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See also LD 1172.

LD 591 An Act To Allow Municipal and Volunteer Firefighters To Operate Motor Vehicles as Authorized Emergency Vehicles ONTP

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

This bill allows a municipal or volunteer firefighter trained and experienced in emergency vehicle operations to operate a motor vehicle as an authorized emergency vehicle.

LD 615 An Act Regarding Transparency in the Transportation of Hazardous Materials ONTP

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
TIPPING-SPITZ DILL	ONTP	

This bill, which is a concept draft pursuant to Joint Rule 208, proposes to ensure that first responders, hospitals and emergency management agencies are provided information concerning hazardous materials transported by rail in the State in order to assist those entities in developing response plans.

See LD 484 under the Judiciary Committee.

LD 634 An Act To Allow Operation of Modified Utility Vehicles on a Public Way ONTP

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

This bill allows a modified utility vehicle, commonly known as a utility vehicle, recreational utility vehicle or multipurpose utility vehicle, to be registered and operated on a public way in Maine with certain limitations.

A modified utility vehicle that meets specified equipment requirements may be operated on Maine roads with a posted speed limit of 45 miles per hour or less to go from an all-terrain vehicle trail to a gasoline station or an establishment selling prepared food and return to the all-terrain vehicle trail. Like a low-speed vehicle, a modified utility vehicle is exempt from inspection requirements and is registered by application to the Secretary of State.

In order to avoid the cost of printing a new registration plate specifically for modified utility vehicles, a modified utility vehicle is issued a motorcycle registration plate.

LD 645 An Act To Create a Transportation Planning Incentive for Communities Located on Peninsulas ONTP

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