

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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**STATE OF MAINE**  
127<sup>TH</sup> LEGISLATURE  
FIRST REGULAR SESSION



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

**JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, UTILITIES  
AND TECHNOLOGY**

August 2015

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# STATE OF MAINE

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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 127<sup>th</sup> 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 &amp; 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&amp;S XXX</i> .....	<i>chapter # of enacted private &amp; 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 127<sup>th</sup> 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.

*Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology*

**LD 797 An Act To Ensure Reliable Power Supply to Homes and Businesses**

**ONTP**

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

This bill amends the current law to require specifically that a transmission and distribution utility, or other entity authorized to construct lines trim, cut or remove trees located within the public right-of-way, and trim or cut portions of trees encroaching upon the public right-of-way on either side of a line to a minimum of 20 feet from the line or to the edge of the right-of-way, whichever is less in order to ensure safe and reliable service. This bill directs the transmission and distribution utility or other entity authorized to construct lines to perform necessary cutting on a five-year cycle.

**LD 825 An Act To Allow Consumer-owned Transmission and Distribution Utilities To Apply for Efficiency Maine Grants**

**ONTP**

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

This bill allows a consumer-owned transmission and distribution utility to apply for funding from the Efficiency Maine Trust to support the development of a distributed generation facility or combined heat and power facility as long as the facility will reduce electricity consumption or reduce greenhouse gas emissions and lower energy costs; the facility will be owned and operated by an entity other than the consumer-owned transmission and distribution utility; the facility will meet certain electrical efficiency standards; and the owner of the facility provides performance guarantees to insulate ratepayers from any risks associated with the construction of the facility.

**LD 826 An Act To Promote Maine's Economic Development and Critical Communications for Rural Family Farms, Businesses and Residences by Strategic Public Investments in High-speed Internet**

**CARRIED OVER**

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
SAUCIER EDGEComb P		

This bill is a concept draft pursuant to Joint Rule 208.

This bill proposes to increase funding to the ConnectME Authority from \$1,000,000 to \$5,000,000 to expand universal broadband and high-speed Internet into rural areas identified as the six percent of the State unserved by high-speed Internet. This bill proposes to make expanding high-speed Internet into unserved rural areas a key emphasis in the economic development of and to multiply the return to the State by directing the ConnectME Authority to use the increased funding to increase the rate of strategic broadband investment and leverage additional federal funding to provide middle-mile and last-mile infrastructure in the unserved areas and to correct broadband deficiencies identified in the ConnectME Authority's baseline update of 2013.

This bill was carried over to any special or regular session of the 127th Legislature by joint order, H.P. 992.