

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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STATE OF MAINE
128TH LEGISLATURE
FIRST REGULAR SESSION



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

**JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**

August 2017

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*Committee member for a portion of the session

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128TH LEGISLATURE
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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 128th 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.

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

The effective date for non-emergency legislation enacted in the First Regular Session of the 128th Legislature is Wednesday, November 1, 2017. 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 Health and Human Services

appointed by the Governor for five-year terms. The director of the office of licensing and regulatory services within the department is the chair of the panel but does not vote. The Office of the Attorney General provides legal counsel to the review panel. The department is required to abide by decisions made by the review panel.

8. It allows a child care provider to employ on a provisional basis an employee for 90 days before receiving a background check report from the Background Check Center.

9. It requires the department to develop a sliding scale plan to allow recipients of child care subsidies to keep part of the subsidy for a period of time after the recipient earns sufficient income to no longer be eligible for the subsidy. The Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services is authorized to report out a bill relating to eliminating the so-called welfare cliff with respect to child care subsidies after receiving the plan.

10. It requires the department to make a number of changes to rules governing licensed child care facilities and certified family child care providers regarding staff-child ratios, qualifications of staff, providing inspection reports to facilities at the time of inspection, removing requirements for references for owners and staff, removing requirements of spare clothing and removing specific requirements for the type of food provided.

This bill was carried over to any special or regular session of the 128th Legislature by joint order, H.P. 1138.

LD 1475

An Act To Reduce Child Poverty by Leveraging Investments in Families Today

**Died On
Adjournment**

Sponsor(s)

GIDEON S
MAKER J

Committee Report

OTP-AM
ONTP
OTP-AM

Amendments Adopted

This bill makes the following changes to the laws governing public assistance. The bill is intended to help alleviate poverty and hardship among families with children through increased employment, earnings, education and training and the provision of support and individualized services for those with particular barriers to employment. The bill does the following.

1. It requires the Department of Health and Human Services to collect data to measure the status of child and family economic security and establish benchmarks on an annual basis to monitor year-to-year improvement in the well-being of families with children in the State.
2. It directs the Department of Health and Human Services to increase access to high-quality child care services by establishing rates that are equal to the 75th percentile of local market rates for various categories of child care and higher rates for children with special needs.
3. It establishes a voucher program to improve housing stability and reduce risk of homelessness through the Maine State Housing Authority. The voucher program provides housing assistance in the form of a voucher to Temporary Assistance for Needy Families and TANF transitional families whose shelter expenses equal or exceed 50% of their monthly income.
4. It amends the alternative aid provisions to help families facing an emergency that threatens their ability to get or keep a job by extending program eligibility to two-parent families, requiring that assistance be provided more promptly and modifying the amount of aid that may be available to address an emergency.
5. It provides an increase in the monthly TANF maximum benefit. It requires that Maine's TANF benefit equal the average TANF benefit in other New England states.

Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services

6. It establishes a pilot program that provides access to reliable transportation for working low-income families with children or those engaged in a training program directly leading to employment.
7. It establishes a program to reduce energy use and improve heating affordability among low-income homeowners with children.
8. It establishes a TANF reserve fund using accrued but unobligated and unliquidated funds from the TANF federal assistance grant to maintain eligibility and services when adequate funding is not otherwise available.
9. It allows the Department of Health and Human Services to accept referrals from educational institutions and similar programs in the State for eligible parents for the Parents as Scholars Program.
10. It increases the value of the state earned income credit for working families whose incomes are below 150% of the federal poverty level.
11. It ensures that funding to provide the eligibility and services established by this bill will come from the state family assistance grant and the child care development block grant.
12. It establishes the Addiction Prevention and Family Stabilization Program.

Committee Amendment "A" (H-401)

This amendment, which is the majority report of the committee, makes the following changes to the bill.

1. It removes from the bill the program to reduce energy use and improve heating affordability.
2. It changes the enrollment period for participants in the Working Cars for Working Families Program from three years to four years. It also clarifies that participants must designate 15% of the monthly loan payment for deposit only if they have a loan.
3. It makes minor changes to the factors to be considered in making grants under the Addiction Prevention and Family Stabilization Program. It also removes the years for which the \$1,100,000 in TANF funds must be used.
4. It clarifies that taxpayers with one or more minor dependents are eligible for the enhanced earned income tax credit in the bill.

The amendment adds an appropriations and allocations section.

This amendment was not adopted.

Committee Amendment "B" (H-402)

This amendment, which is a minority report of the committee, removes everything from the bill except the pilot program that provides access to reliable transportation for working low-income families with children or those engaged in a training program directly leading to employment. It decreases the funding for the pilot program to \$6,000,000 rather than the \$10,000,000 in the bill. The amendment also requires the Department of Health and Human Services to promote the Parents as Scholars Program. The amendment adds an appropriations and allocations section.

This amendment was not adopted.

A number of statutory changes to public assistance programs are included in Public Law 2017, chapter 284, Part NNNNNNN.