MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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ONE HUNDRED AND ELEVENTH LEGISLATURE
SECOND REGULAR SESSION

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE
BILL SUMMARIES
JUNE 1984

This document is a compilation of the bill summaries prepared by this office for the Joint Standing Committees of the Maine Legislature, covering the Second Regular Session of the 111th Legislature. The summaries are arranged alphabetically, and indexed separately by committee.

STATE OF MAINE

ONE HUNDRED AND ELEVENTH LEGISLATURE
SECOND REGULAR SESSION

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON

STATE GOVERNMENT

BILL SUMMARY

MAY, 1984

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LD	TITLE	SPONSOR	(Committee Report) DISPOSITION
2381	AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE THE DE-PARTMENT OF BUSINESS, OCCU-PATIONAL AND PROFESSIONAL REGU-LATION TO HIRE LEGAL COUNSEL	Conley	LV/WD

SUMMARY: LD 2381 proposed to allow the Commissioner of Business Regulation to hire legal staff for the Department and to use this legal staff in lieu of the Office of the Attorney General. According to testimony from the Department, there is insufficient legal assistance and expertise available to the Department particularly with respect to banking, insurance, and professional/occupational regulation.

The Attorney-General argued that this proposal would shift balance of power from the Legislature to the executive. In addition, the Control of the Commission over the legal staff would give the Commissioner authority over the bureaus in the department and over the occupational and professional licensing organizations that would exceed current statutory authorization.

LD	TITLE	SPONSOR	DISPOSITION
2202	AN ACT AUTHORIZING THE PUBLIC ADVOCATE TO INTERVENE IN HEALTH INSURANCE PROCEEDINGS BEFORE THE SUPERINTENDENT OF INSURANCE AND IN THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE HEALTH CARE FINANCE	Violette	LV/WD

SUMMARY: LD 2202, the bill incorporating the provisions that were not addressed by the Committee in LD 2031, proposed:
1. to authorize the Public Advocate to intervene in all health insurance proceedings before the Superintendent of Insurance; and
2. to authorze the Public Advocate to intervene in all proceedings of the Health Care Finance Commission.

The report conducted by the Committee on State Government declared that the health insurance rate cases are very technical and complicated. As a result, there are no intervenors, for the most part, in health insurance industry rate cases, an industry with revenues in excess of $1 billion per year. In addition, the report pointed out that proceedings of the Health Care Finance Commission could also have a big impact upon health insurance rates. As a result, the role of the Public Advocate was proposed to be extended to the HCFC.

The Committee believed that group health insurance is competitive because the "covered" employers have market power. Individual health insurance, however, is not necessarily competitive, and the elderly, especially, are subject to significant health insurance rates.

While there was much sentiment to restrict the Public Advocate to individual health insurance rate proceedings, there was a strong conviction that the proposal would not be accepted by the Legislature. The Resolve Authorizing the Public Advocate to intervene in 1 workers' compensation rate case was very difficult for the Legislature to accept which has opposed the extension of the state government bureaucracy.