

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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STATE OF MAINE  
ONE HUNDRED AND TWELFTH LEGISLATURE  
FIRST REGULAR SESSION

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION  
BILL SUMMARIES



JULY 1985

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ONE HUNDRED AND TWELFTH LEGISLATURE  
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This document is a compilation of the bill summaries prepared by this office for the Joint Standing Committees of the Maine Legislature, covering the First Regular Session of the 112th Legislature. The summaries are arranged by LD number and indexed separately by committee.

LU-WD HOUSE Accepted Committee Report  
SENATE Accepted Committee Report  
GOV

## SUMMARY:

This bill was submitted for the purpose of implementing recommendations made by the Governor's Committee on Rail Policy. The committee developed several recommendations which had been suggestions submitted to the Governor and to the Legislature designed to provide assistance to the rail industry.

Part A of this proposal provides the enabling legislation for a bond issue to provide the capital funds to the Department of Transportation for the acquisition, lease or rehabilitation of rail lines which are shown to be part of the essential rail system. Three major railroad branch lines in this State may well be abandoned in 1985. These lines total some 206 miles and include Brewer to Calais (Calais Branch), 127 miles serving Hancock and Washington counties; Hardings (Brunswick) to Rockland (Rockland Branch), 52 miles serving Know, Lincoln and part of Sagadahoc Counties; and Steep Falls (Standish) to Maine-New Hampshire Line (Fryeburg), 27 miles of the Mountain Division. These lines are now part of the Maine Central Railroad System.

After extensive study by the Rail Policy Committee, the Department of Transportation recommended that these lines be retained for at least a 3-year trial period to determine whether operations can be continued by some other railroad. The owning railroad had offered to sell these lines to the State for 50% of the net liquidation value or a cost to the State of \$850,000.

Sections 1 and 2 of Part B was to implement the committee's recommendation that the State assume half of the cost of maintaining highway-at-grade and highway-over-bridges, for which the railroads now assume 100% of the cost. This cost was to be borne by the Highway Fund in the amount of \$2.8 million for the biennium.

The recommendation contained in section 1 of Part C was to exempt track material, which includes ties, ballast and joints, from the application of the sales tax. It was estimated that this exemption would result in the reduction of the sales tax payments to the State by the railroads of \$180,000 annually.

Section 2 of Part C was intended to make permanent the present provisions of the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 36 which allow the inclusion of freight car operating leases of 10 years or more in the definition "operating investment" for railroad exercise tax purposes. These provisions already exist but were to expire in 1985.

Section 3 of Part C sought a General Fund appropriation of \$100,000 in both fiscal year 1986 and fiscal year 1987 to the Department of Transportation for the administration of the rail assistance program.

LD: 1637 AN ACT TO ADJUST BRIDGE CAPITAL AND MAINTENANCE RESPONSIBILITIES THERIAULT MCPHERSON  
SHUTE  
ERWIN E

OTP-AM HOUSE Enacted  
SENATE Enacted  
GOV

H-413 CA H S  
SUMMARY:

This Act completely restructures the State bridge construction and maintenance program by redefining concepts of ownership, realigning the responsibility for maintenance and specifying the terms for capital improvements. Essentially, the original bridge law and the statutes authorized the town way bridge problem are repealed and replaced to align ownership of bridges with ownership of the adjacent highway. Additional plans for funding capital improvements will follow in the special session.

LD: 1644 AN ACT TO PROVIDE FOR COST SHARING FOR MAINTENANCE OF RAILROAD GRADE AND HIGHWAY BRIDGE CROSSINGS AND THE ALLOCATION AND APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS FOR TRANSPORTATION THERIAULT STROUT MELENDY UOSE

OTP-AM HOUSE Enacted  
SENATE Enacted  
GOV SIGNED

CH # 442

H-418 CA H S

SUMMARY:

This is one of 4 bills which was submitted for the purpose of implementing recommendations made by the Governor's Committee on Rail Policy.

This Act implements the committee's recommendation that the State assume up to 50% of the cost of maintaining highway-at-grade and highway-over-bridge crossings.

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