

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

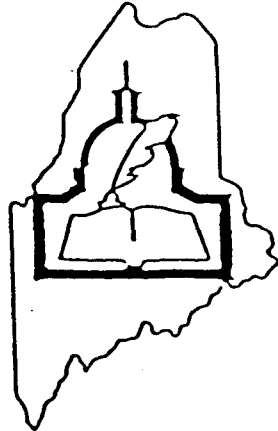
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STATE OF MAINE
ONE HUNDRED AND TWELFTH LEGISLATURE
SECOND REGULAR SESSION

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON
UTILITIES
BILL SUMMARY



MAY 1986

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ONE HUNDRED AND TWELFTH LEGISLATURE
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JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE
BILL SUMMARIES
MAY 1986

This document is a compilation of the bill summaries prepared by this office for the Joint Standing Committees and Joint Select Committees of the Maine Legislature, covering the Second Regular Session of the 112th Legislature. The summaries are arranged by LD number under each committee.

All Amendments are listed, by paper number (e.g., H-584 or S-222), together with the sponsor if it is a floor amendment or the designation "CA" if it is a committee amendment. If the amendment was adopted in the House, the letter H appears after the sponsor. If it was adopted in the Senate, the letter S appears.

Final action for each bill is listed to the right of the title. If final House action and Senate action differ, both are listed.

Key to Committee Reports and Floor Action:

OTP	Ought to Pass
OTP-ND	Ought to Pass in New Draft
OTP-ND-NT	Ought to Pass in New Draft, New Title
OTP-AM	Ought to Pass as Amended
ONTP	Ought Not to Pass
LVWD	Leave to Withdraw
INDEF PP	Indefinitely Postponed

SUMMARY: Last year, P&SL Ch 57 (LD 707) revised and updated the York Sewer District Charter, subject to local referendum. This bill clarifies that the referendum shall be held at the time of the next (i.e., 1986) annual town meeting of the Town of York.

The Committee amendment (H-490) makes it clear that the referendum is to occur at the town meeting itself.

LD AN ACT INCREASING THE INDEBTEDNESS OF THE
1672 DOVER AND FOXCROFT WATER DISTRICT

ND LD 2365

Sponsor: LAW
Committee Report: OTP-ND NT

SUMMARY: The bill removes the \$250,000 bond limit and the \$50,000 limit on other borrowing from the charter. It replaces these with authority to borrow up to \$150,000 without district vote, and larger sums if required to meet a Federal or State mandate. Otherwise, larger sums require voter approval if a referendum is requested by 5% of the voters or 50 voters, whichever is greater. The bill also updates the language on debt and authorizes serial bonds. Finally, it increases from 3% to 5% of the outstanding indebtedness the annual contribution from rates to the sinking fund.

LD AN ACT TO MAKE CHANGES IN THE RESERVE FUND FOR
1674 MUNICIPAL WATER DEPARTMENTS AND QUASI
MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICTS

PL 1985
c. 632

Sponsor: CLARK, N., Vose, Weymouth, Webster, C.
Committee Report: OTP-AM

H-584 VOSE
H-394 CA H S

SUMMARY: Present law (35 §3311) allows municipal and quasi-municipal water utilities to collect an extra 5% in rates to fund a contingency fund, excess revenues above that limit must be placed in a sinking fund or used to pay off debt. The bill repeals that law, but leaves §73 which also allows collection of the 5%. The bill amends §73 to permit but not require use of any excessive surplus to reduce future rates. (See LD 1723, Sections 5, 13, and 15 which are identical).

The Committee Amendment (S-394) requires the Public Utilities Commission to adopt rules relating to the treatment of any excessive surplus. Amendment H-584 was not offered. It would have struck a retroactive provision.

LD AN ACT RELATING TO PUBLIC UTILITY SERVICE
1711 CHARGE LIENS

PL 1985
c. 563

Sponsor: DAVIS, L., Richard, Paradis, E., Baldacci
Committee Report: OTP-AM

H-525 CA H S

SUMMARY: Present law (35 MRSA §316.3) provides that utility liens be enforced in the same manner as mechanics liens. This bill shortens the period for the utility to file the lien from 90 to 60 days and shortens the time for filing an enforcement action from 120 to 90 days. Under this bill purchasers and mortgagees take the premises free of the lien unless it has been already recorded in the registry of deeds.

The Committee Amendment (H-525) restores the time limits to 90 and 120 days. It also makes it clear that the lien is dissolved if appropriate action is not taken within those time limits.

LD AN ACT REGARDING UTILITY ASSESSMENTS
1712

INDEF PP

Sponsor: BALDACCI, Webster, C., Vose
Committee Report: OTP-AM

H-529 CA H S

SUMMARY: Present law (35 MRSA §17.1) requires utilities to pay an annual assessment to support the Public Utilities Commission Regulatory Fund. Each utility must pay its pro rata share for the entire fiscal year prior to July 1st. This bill allows, but does not require the PUC to establish an alternate payment schedule for any utility assessed more than \$100,000. That schedule would allow for quarterly payments spread out through the year and thus reduce the utility's revenue requirement somewhat.