

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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STATE OF MAINE  
113TH LEGISLATURE  
SECOND REGULAR SESSION



BILL SUMMARY  
JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE  
ON  
AGRICULTURE

MAY 1988

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**ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTEENTH LEGISLATURE  
FIRST & SECOND SPECIAL SESSIONS  
SECOND REGULAR SESSION**

**JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE  
BILL SUMMARIES  
MAY 1988**

*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. The summaries are arranged by LD number under each committee.*

*All Adopted Amendments are listed, by paper number (e.g., H-584 or S-222), together with the sponsor for floor amendments. Final action is listed to the right of the title. If final House and Senate action differ, both are listed. Committee Reports and Floor Action are indicated as follows::*

<b>OTP</b>	<b>Ought to Pass</b>
<b>OTP-ND</b>	<b>Ought to Pass in New Draft</b>
<b>OTP-ND-NT</b>	<b>Ought to Pass in New Draft, New Title</b>
<b>OTP-A</b>	<b>Ought to Pass as Amended</b>
<b>ONTP</b>	<b>Ought Not to Pass</b>
<b>LVWD</b>	<b>Leave to Withdraw</b>
<b>INDEF PP</b>	<b>Indefinitely Postponed</b>

*Each individual summary was prepared by the analyst assigned, as noted for each committee. But, this document was produced by the efforts of all the office staff, including Secretaries: Charlene Brann, Janet Jean, Earl Knox, Valarie Parlin; Research Assistant Hartley Palleschi. Finally, Secretary Laurette Knox, Legal Assistant Carolyn Chick, and Research Assistant Robert Dunn had special responsibilities in the preparation of the overall document.*

*Please give us your suggestions and comments on these summaries and tell us of any inaccuracies.*

SPONSOR(S)  
ALLEN  
TARDY  
MATTHEWS Z

COMMITTEE REPORT

AMENDMENTS ADOPTED  
H-490 CARTER

SUMMARY

New Draft Of LD 2055

The original bill prohibited domestic ferrets from running at large, and required that at-large ferrets that had bitten someone be impounded by the local animal control officer for rabies determination by the local health officer.

This new draft restricts ferrets to the premises of the owner and to a cage when being transported, but allows participation in shows and exhibitions. It adds ferrets to the present requirement that municipalities control dogs running at large. It requires that professionals selling ferrets give written warning that they have a history of biting children and that a ferret who has bitten someone may be immediately put to death to complete a rabies test.

Additionally, it provides that the local health officer or an animal control officer may require the quarantine of any ferret who has bitten someone. It provides that a ferret may be immediately put to death so that it may be tested for rabies. This permission is only given until such time as an approved vaccine or an approved test for rabies may be developed. Rules regarding this issue are to be adopted by the Department of Human Services. It provides a fine of up to \$100 for violations. It reaffirms that owners are responsible for damages caused by ferrets as indicated in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 7, section 3964, and it requires that the State reimburse the offended party for damages, if necessary, and bring suit against the owner for reimbursement.

Lastly, the bill addresses problems that the courts have identified with the current dog control laws, which have been interpreted as not holding the owner responsible for the dog's behavior. The new draft corrects this problem and puts the bill on an emergency basis.

House Amendment A (H-490) allows the board and municipal clerks to recognize out-of-state immunizations for all dogs. This amendment supercedes a recent Department rule that limits to veterinarians the authority to recognize such immunization.