

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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STATE OF MAINE
117TH LEGISLATURE

SECOND REGULAR SESSION

BILL SUMMARIES
JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE
ON
BANKING AND INSURANCE

JUNE 1996

MEMBERS:

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Sen. Mary E. Small

Sen. Dale McCormick

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Staff:

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**ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEENTH LEGISLATURE
SECOND REGULAR SESSION**

***Summary Of Legislation Before The Joint Standing Committees
June 1996***

We are pleased to provide this summary of bills that were considered by the 15 Joint Standing Committees of the Maine Legislature staffed by this office. The document is a compilation of bill summaries which describe each bill, committee amendments and other relevant amendments, as well as the final action taken on the bill. Also included are statistical summaries of bill activity this Session for the Legislature and each of its joint standing committees.

The document is organized for convenient reference to information on bills handled by the joint standing committees. It is organized alphabetically by committees and within committees by bill (LD) number. The committee report(s), prime sponsor for each bill and the lead co-sponsor(s), if designated, are listed below each bill title. All adopted amendments are listed by paper number. Two indices, a subject index and a numerical index by LD number are provided for easy reference to bills. They are located at the back of the document. A separate publication, History and Final Disposition of Legislative Documents, may also be helpful in providing information on the disposition of bills.

Final action on each bill is noted to the right of the bill title. The abbreviations used for various categories of final action are as follows:

<i>CARRIED OVER</i>	<i>Bill carried over to Second Session</i>
<i>CON RES XXX</i>	<i>Chapter # of Constitutional Resolution passed by both Houses</i>
<i>CONF CMTE UNABLE TO AGREE</i>	<i>Committee of Conference unable to agree; bill died</i>
<i>DIED BETWEEN BODIES</i>	<i>House & Senate disagree; bill died</i>
<i>DIED ON ADJOURNMENT</i>	<i>Action incomplete when session ended; bill died</i>
<i>EMERGENCY</i>	<i>Enacted law takes effect sooner than 90 days</i>
<i>FAILED EMERGENCY ENACTMENT</i>	<i>Emergency bill failed to get 2/3 vote</i>
<i>FAILED ENACTMENT</i>	<i>Bill failed to get majority vote</i>
<i>FAILED MANDATE ENACTMENT</i>	<i>Bill imposing local mandate failed to get 2/3 vote</i>
<i>INDEF PP</i>	<i>Bill Indefinitely Postponed</i>
<i>ONTP</i>	<i>Ought Not To Pass report accepted</i>
<i>P&S XXX</i>	<i>Chapter # of enacted Private & Special Law</i>
<i>PUBLIC XXX</i>	<i>Chapter # of enacted Public Law</i>
<i>RESOLVE XXX</i>	<i>Chapter # of finally passed Resolve</i>
<i>UNSIGNED</i>	<i>Not signed by Governor within 10 days</i>
<i>VETO SUSTAINED</i>	<i>Legislature failed to override Governor's Veto</i>

Please note the effective date for all non-emergency legislation enacted in the Second Regular Session (unless otherwise specified in a particular law) is July 4, 1996.

Joint Standing Committee on Banking and Insurance

LD 68

An Act to Make Available Coverage for Mental Health Services Provided by Counseling Professionals Who Are Licensed to Assess and Treat Intrapersonal and Interpersonal Problems

PUBLIC 561

Sponsor(s)
BUSTIN

Committee Report
OTP-AM

Amendments Adopted
S-441

LD 68, originally titled “An Act to Increase Access to and Affordability of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Treatment Services by Providing Mandatory Reimbursement to Counseling Professionals Who Are Licensed to Assess and Treat Intrapersonal and Interpersonal Problems,” was originally considered by the Joint Standing Committee on Banking and Insurance in the First Regular Session, recommitted and carried over by the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs and rereferred to the Banking and Insurance Committee in the Second Regular Session. The bill proposed to provide mandatory reimbursement of counseling professionals who are licensed to assess and treat intrapersonal and interpersonal problems. Other counselors whose licensed scope of practice did not include assessment and treatment would not have been subject to mandatory insurance reimbursement under this bill.

Committee Amendment "A" (S-211) proposed to extend the mandatory reimbursement for mental health services provided by counseling professionals licensed in the State to assess and treat intrapersonal and interpersonal problems to individual health insurance policies. The bill’s provisions applied only to group contracts issued by insurers and all contracts of nonprofit hospital and medical service organizations.

The amendment specifies that the reimbursement is mandatory for mental health services provided until December 31, 1998, and that the bill, as amended, applies to policies executed on or after January 1, 1996.

The amendment also proposed to add a fiscal note.

Committee Amendment "B" (S-441) replaced the bill and Committee Amendment “A”. After rereferral from the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs, the committee reconsidered the bill in the Second Regular Session and proposed a mandated offer of coverage for mental health services performed by licensed counseling professionals. This amendment proposed to require that nonprofit hospital and medical service organizations and insurers make available coverage for mental health services provided by counselors in individual and group contracts at the option of the policyholder. It applies to all contracts executed or renewed on or after January 1, 1997.

Enacted law summary

Public Law 1995, chapter 561 establishes a mandated offer of insurance coverage for mental health services performed by licensed counseling professionals in individual and group contracts provided by nonprofit hospital and medical service organizations and insurers. It applies to all contracts executed or renewed on or after January 1, 1997.