

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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**STATE OF MAINE
117TH LEGISLATURE**

SECOND REGULAR SESSION

**BILL SUMMARIES
JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE
ON
UTILITIES AND ENERGY**

JUNE 1996

MEMBERS:

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Sen. Philip E. Harriman
Sen. John J. Cleveland*

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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.

schools for the establishment and use of a program providing access to information networks.

2. It may require a telecommunications carrier offering intrastate telecommunications services to provide funds for qualified libraries and schools to obtain telecommunications services, including instruction and equipment related to such services, from other vendors.
3. It may establish a telecommunications access fund to which all telecommunications carriers offering telecommunications services in the State are required to contribute.

The law imposes limitations on the authority granted to the Public Utilities Commission by the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 35-A, section 7104-A, subsection 1. The Public Utilities Commission shall limit the annual cost to each telecommunications carrier of all programs to not more than 1.5% of its intrastate revenues; the Public Utilities Commission shall ensure that funds are collected in a competitively neutral manner; the Public Utilities Commission shall attribute any amount collected from a telecommunications carrier as an offset to any required intrastate support mechanism to preserve and advance universal service; and the Public Utilities Commission may not exercise its authority with respect to any telecommunications carrier other than a local exchange carrier serving more than 100,000 lines until September 30, 1997, except to the extent required by federal law.

The law defines "qualified library," "qualified school," "telecommunications carrier" and "telecommunications service." It also requires the Public Utilities Commission to report annually to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over utilities matters on the progress made in meeting the goal of information access established in Title 35-A, section 7101, subsection 4 and factors promoting or impeding the achievement of that goal.

The law provides for the repeal of the provision granting the Public Utilities Commission additional authority and the provision imposing limitations on that authority on February 1, 2001. It clarifies that the Public Utilities Commission's approval of NYNEX's plan to provide access to information networks and services to public schools and public libraries is authorized by the Act. Finally, the law is retroactive to May 1, 1995.

LD 871

An Act Concerning the Calculation of Private Fire Protection Charges

ONTP

Sponsor(s)
ADAMS

Committee Report
ONTP

Amendments Adopted

LD 871, which was carried over from the 1st Regular Session, proposed to allow water utilities to establish rates for private fire protection that include recovery for a portion of the costs of the utilities' backup facilities, including mains, storage facilities and pumps.