

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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**STATE OF MAINE
118TH LEGISLATURE**

**FIRST REGULAR SESSION
AND
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION**

**BILL SUMMARIES
JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE
ON
LABOR**

JULY 1997

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MEMBERS:

*Sen. Mary R. Cathcart, Chair
Sen. Sharon Anglin Treat
Sen. S. Peter Mills*

*Rep. Pamela H. Hatch, Chair
Rep. Roland B. Samson
Rep. Brian Bolduc
Rep. Joseph E. Clark
Rep. Benjamin L. Rines, Jr.
Rep. Stephen S. Stanley
Rep. Henry L. Joy
Rep. Steven M. Joyce
Rep. Robert E. Pendleton, Jr.
Rep. Russell P. Treadwell*



Maine State Legislature

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**ONE HUNDRED EIGHTEENTH LEGISLATURE
FIRST REGULAR AND FIRST SPECIAL SESSIONS**

**Summary Of Legislation Before The Joint Standing Committees
August 1997**

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. These bill summaries also are available at the Law and Legislative Reference Library and on the Internet (www.state.me.us/legis/opla).

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:

- CARRIED OVER*.....*Bill carried over to Second Regular Session*
- CON RES XXX*.....*Chapter # of Constitutional Resolution passed by both Houses*
- CONF CMTE UNABLE TO AGREE*.....*Committee of Conference unable to agree; bill died*
- DIED BETWEEN BODIES*.....*House & Senate disagree; bill died*
- DIED IN CONCURRENCE*.....*One body accepts ONTP report; the other indefinitely postpones the bill*
- DIED ON ADJOURNMENT*.....*Action incomplete when session ended; bill died*
- EMERGENCY*.....*Enacted law takes effect sooner than 90 days*
- FAILED EMERGENCY ENACTMENT/FINAL PASSAGE*.....*Emergency bill failed to get 2/3 vote*
- FAILED ENACTMENT/FINAL PASSAGE*.....*Bill failed to get majority vote*
- FAILED MANDATE ENACTMENT*.....*Bill imposing local mandate failed to get 2/3 vote*
- INDEF PP*.....*Bill Indefinitely Postponed*
- ONTP*.....*Ought Not To Pass report accepted*
- OTP ND*.....*Committee report Ought To Pass In New Draft*
- OTP ND/NT*.....*Committee report Ought To Pass In New Draft/New Title*
- P&S XXX*.....*Chapter # of enacted Private & Special Law*
- PUBLIC XXX*.....*Chapter # of enacted Public Law*
- RESOLVE XXX*.....*Chapter # of finally passed Resolve*
- UNSIGNED*.....*Bill held by Governor*
- VETO SUSTAINED*.....*Legislature failed to override Governor's Veto*

Please note the effective date for all non-emergency legislation enacted in the First Regular Session (unless otherwise specified in a particular law) is June 26, 1997 and September 19, 1997 for the First Special Session.

David E. Boulter, Director

Offices Located in the State House, Rooms 101/107/135

LD 1101

An Act to Amend the Maine Workers' Compensation Act of 1992 as It Relates to Payment of Benefits Pending Appeal

ONTP

Sponsor(s)
CLUKEY

Committee Report
ONTP

Amendments Adopted

LD 1101 proposed that if the Workers' Compensation Board, after a review of incapacity, issues an order or decision suspending or reducing compensation to an employee, compensation must be suspended or reduced from the date of the board's order or decision. Under current law, benefits may not be reduced while an appeal of the board's order is pending before the Law Court.

LD 1110

An Act to Decrease the Threshold Amount Required for Receiving Unemployment

ONTP

Sponsor(s)
RUHLIN
HATCH

Committee Report
ONTP

Amendments Adopted

LD 1110 proposed to reduce the earnings threshold used to determine eligibility to collect unemployment compensation. Under the current law, a person may not collect unemployment compensation benefits unless the person has earned a minimum amount determined through the use of a formula. Using the formula, currently a person is eligible for benefits if the person has earned at least \$873.46 in the last two quarters and a total of \$2,620.38 over the first four of the last five completed calendar quarters of the period used to calculate the person's eligibility. This bill proposed to reduce the threshold amount by 50%, so that a person would need to earn a minimum of \$1,310.19 to be eligible for unemployment compensation benefits. The issue presented by this bill will be studied by the commission created in LD 332.

LD 1127

An Act to Change the Definition of Occupational Disease for Purposes of the Occupational Disease Law

ONTP

Sponsor(s)
JONES K
MILLS

Committee Report
ONTP

Amendments Adopted

LD 1127 proposed to define the term "occupational disease" to mean any abnormal condition or disorder caused in whole or in part by exposure to environmental factors associated with employment for purposes of the Occupational Disease Law.