

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
EDUCATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS**

JULY 1997

MEMBERS:

Sen. Peggy A. Pendleton, Chair

Sen. Mary R. Cathcart

Sen. Mary E. Small

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Rep. Michael F. Brennan

Rep. Mabel J. Desmond

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Rep. Irvin G. Belanger

Staff:

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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 1158

An Act to Amend the Laws Concerning Special Education of Exceptional Students

ONTP

Sponsor(s)
CHARTRAND

Committee Report
ONTP

Amendments Adopted

LD 1158 proposed to amend the definition of an exceptional student under the special education laws by substituting impairment of emotional functions for impairment of behavior and by providing a definition of "serious emotional disturbance." The bill also proposed to clarify that a significant change of program for, or placement of, an exceptional student is one that is in excess of 10 consecutive days.

LD 1164

An Act to Amend the Laws Regarding Child Development Services

ONTP

Sponsor(s)
FARNSWORTH
LIBBY

Committee Report
ONTP

Amendments Adopted

LD 1164 proposed to clarify the role of the regional sites in the operation of the Child Development Services System. This bill also proposed to establish a pilot project to be operated by the Department of Education to test the possibility of providing preschool services through local school units to children with special needs.

LD 1165

An Act to Allow School Choice

ONTP

Sponsor(s)
SNOWE-MELLO
AMERO

Committee Report
ONTP

Amendments Adopted

LD 1165 proposed to establish the Comprehensive School Choice Program by phasing in over five years a system of vouchers for students who will attend private alternative education programs. It is the intent of the bill to improve the quality and efficiency of education in the State by encouraging nonpublic alternative education programs to compete with public school programs. It is further the intent of this bill to provide relief to the State's economy by partially subsidizing families who choose nonpublic education and relieving property taxpayers of the burden of supporting children in the public schools who would prefer to choose nonpublic alternatives.

The bill proposed to create the Comprehensive School Choice Office within the Department of Education to administer the program. This office would also be assisted by the School Choice Advisory Council. The office would administer the program, provide technical assistance and referral, and report on the program to the Governor and the Legislature.