

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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STATE OF MAINE
118TH LEGISLATURE

SECOND REGULAR SESSION
AND
SECOND SPECIAL SESSION

BILL SUMMARIES
JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE
ON
EDUCATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS

MAY 1998

MEMBERS:

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Sen. Mary R. Cathcart
Sen. Mary E. Small

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

**Summary Of Legislation Before The Joint Standing Committees
May 1998**

We are pleased to provide this summary of bills that were considered by the Joint Standing Committees of the Maine Legislature. The document is a compilation of bill summaries which describe each bill and relevant amendments, as well as the final action taken. 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 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:

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 Second Regular Session (unless otherwise specified in a particular law) is June 30, 1998 and July 9, 1998 for the Second Special Session. Second Special Session laws include Public Laws beginning with Chapter 718, Private and Special Laws beginning with Chapter 82 and Resolves beginning with Chapter 117.

LD 1718

An Act to Create a Prepaid Tuition Plan

ONTP

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
KONTOS AMERO	ONTP	

LD 1718 was carried over from the First Regular and First Special Sessions and proposed to establish a prepaid tuition program that would encourage long-term family savings for higher education tuition costs. Under this bill, the Finance Authority of Maine would have been authorized to establish and administer the Maine Prepaid Tuition Savings Plan and, on behalf of the State, to contract for the advance payment of tuition by a parent or other purchaser for a qualified beneficiary to enroll at a campus of the University of Maine System to which the qualified beneficiary is admitted, without further tuition cost to the qualified beneficiary. A qualified beneficiary would also have the option of applying prepaid tuition benefits to attend an accredited institution of higher education other than a campus of the University of Maine System, including an accredited technical, community or junior college, provided that tuition paid by the program to the other institution of higher education is limited to the total amount of tuition charged at the campus of the University of Maine System that charges the highest rate of tuition.

LD 1721

An Act Regarding Appointment to the Maine Public Broadcasting Board of Trustees

PUBLIC 599

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
CATHCART	OTP-AM	S-481

LD 1721 was carried over from the First Regular and First Special Sessions and proposed to alter the composition of the Board of Trustees of the Maine Public Broadcasting Corporation. Under this bill, the Governor would be required to appoint eight public trustees and the President of the Maine Public Broadcasting Corporation would be prohibited from serving on the board.

Committee Amendment "A" (S-481) proposed to replace the bill and to alter the composition of the Board of Trustees of the Maine Public Broadcasting Corporation in the following manner:

1. It would require that, by January 1, 1999 and thereafter, the Governor appoint two additional public trustees, subject to review by the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over education matters and to confirmation by the Senate; and
2. It would also require the board to amend the Maine Public Broadcasting Corporation bylaws January 1, 1999 to reflect the different methods of appointing public trustees to the board.

The amendment also proposed to add a fiscal note to the bill.

Enacted law summary

Public Law 1997, chapter 599 alters the composition of the Board of Trustees of the Maine Public Broadcasting Corporation in the following manner:

1. It requires that, by January 1, 1999 and thereafter, the Governor appoint two additional public trustees, subject to review by the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over education matters and to confirmation by the Senate; and
2. It also requires the board to amend the Maine Public Broadcasting Corporation bylaws by January 1, 1999 to reflect the different methods of appointing public trustees to the board.

LD 1725

**An Act to Authorize School Administrative Units to Enter into
Multi-year Agreements for Telecommunications Services**

PUBLIC 664

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
PARADIS O'NEAL	OTP-AM	S-628

LD 1725 was carried over from the First Regular and First Special Sessions and proposed to provide school administrative units with the fiscal powers required to construct and finance fiber-optic systems. The bill further proposed to authorize school administrative units, including municipalities, school administrative districts, community school districts and applied technology regions, to enter into interlocal agreements and to form nonprofit corporations in order to construct and operate fiber-optic cable systems for educational purposes to provide interactive audio-visual communication among school administrative units. Such fiber-optic systems have the potential to improve public education and to reduce school transportation and construction costs by providing a practical and inexpensive means of consolidating school programs, particularly in the more rural areas of the State.

Committee Amendment "A" (S-628) proposed to replace the original bill and amend the bill title. The amendment further proposed to accomplish the following:

1. It would authorize governing bodies of school administrative units and applied technology regions to:
 - A. Enter into service agreements for not more than 10 years with private entities, such as telecommunications service providers, to purchase telecommunications services for educational purposes;
 - B. Enter into interlocal agreements in accordance with the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 30-A, chapter 115; and
 - C. Organize or cause to be organized joint boards and legal entities including public nonprofit corporations under Title 13, chapter 81 and Title 13-B to purchase telecommunications services and to acquire customer premise telecommunications and related technology equipment.