

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

The following document is provided by the  
**LAW AND LEGISLATIVE DIGITAL LIBRARY**  
at the Maine State Law and Legislative Reference Library  
<http://legislature.maine.gov/lawlib>



Reproduced from electronic originals  
(may include minor formatting differences from printed original)

STATE OF MAINE  
118TH LEGISLATURE

SECOND REGULAR SESSION  
AND  
SECOND SPECIAL SESSION

BILL SUMMARIES  
JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE  
ON  
TAXATION

MAY 1998

**MEMBERS:**

*Sen. Richard P. Ruhlin, Chair*

*Sen. Beverly C. Daggett*

*Sen. S. Peter Mills*

*Rep. Verdi L. Tripp, Chair*

*Rep. John L. Tuttle, Jr.*

*Rep. Bonnie Green*

*Rep. G. Steven Rowe*

*Rep. Kenneth T. Gagnon*

*Rep. Alton E. Morgan*

*Rep. Robert W. Spear*

*Rep. Kenneth F. Lemont*

*Rep. John T. Buck*

*Rep. Peter E. Cianchette*

**Staff:**

*Julie S. Jones, Legislative Analyst*

*Office of Fiscal and Program Review*

*Room 225, 5 State House Station*

*Augusta, ME 04333*

*(207)287-1635*



**Maine State Legislature  
OFFICE OF POLICY AND LEGAL ANALYSIS**

13 State House Station, Augusta, Maine 04333-0013  
Telephone: (207) 287-1670  
Fax: (207) 287-1275

**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](http://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.

**Senate Amendment "D" to Committee Amendment "A" (S-762)** is the same as Senate Amendment "C" (S-719) except for the fiscal note.

***Enacted law summary***

Public Law 1997, chapter 762 establishes an income tax credit for eligible employers who provide dependent health care coverage for low-income employees. An employer with fewer than 5 low-income employees is eligible if the employer maintains a health benefit plan available to low-income employees who work specified hours and the employer paid at least 80% of the cost of employee benefits and at least 60% of dependent benefits. A taxpayer who received the credit in the preceding year and whose number of low-income employees is 5 or more may continue to receive the credit for 2 years after the last year in which the number of low-income employees was fewer than 5. The credit is equal to the lesser of 20% of the cost of dependent health benefits or \$125 per employee and may not exceed 50% of the income tax otherwise owed. The credit applies to tax years beginning on or after January 1, 1999.

**LD 1933**                      **Resolve, Authorizing the State Tax Assessor to Convey the Interest of the State in Certain Real Estate in the Unorganized Territory**                      **RESOLVE 91**

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
RUHLIN GREEN	OTP-AM	S-467

LD 1933 authorizes the State Tax Assessor to convey the interest of the State in several parcels of real estate in the Unorganized Territory.

**Committee Amendment "A" (S-467)** makes numerous technical changes and adds a fiscal note.

***Enacted law summary***

Resolve 1997, chapter 91 authorizes the State Tax Assessor to convey the interest of the State in several parcels of real estate in the Unorganized Territory.

**LD 1945**                      **An Act to Minimize State Revenue Loss Due to Ineffective Health Coverage**                      **ONTP**

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
MITCHELL J	ONTP	

LD 1945 proposed to create an income tax credit for an employer that pays at least 60% of the costs of coverage of an employee health insurance plan that meets the minimum requirements for small group health plans. The tax credit would be equal to \$5,000; 20% of the costs of providing the required plan; or \$100 for each covered employee, whichever is lowest.

**LD 1959**                      **An Act to Expand Eligibility for the Elderly Low Cost Drug Program**                      **ONTP**