

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

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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 2042

**An Act Relating to the Maine School Administrative District 49
Arts and Technology Center**

**P & S 59
EMERGENCY**

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
TESSIER MILLS	OTP	

LD 2042 proposed to authorize Maine School Administrative District No. 49 to accept an additional \$1,400,000 and gifts obtained through fund raising and other sources in a combined total amount not to exceed \$5,500,000 from the Town of Fairfield's Williamson Fund to build an auditorium and supporting facilities. Private and Special Law 1995, chapter 32 authorized the district to accept up to \$3,300,000 from the Williamson Fund to build an auditorium and supporting facilities at no cost to the taxpayers. Since that time, the cost of the project has increased due to changes in the project. The voters of Maine School Administrative District No. 49 approved this additional authorization at the election held on November 4, 1997.

Enacted law summary

Private and Special Law 1997, chapter 59 authorizes Maine School Administrative District No. 49 to accept an additional \$1,400,000 and gifts obtained through fund raising and other sources in a combined total amount not to exceed \$5,500,000 from the Town of Fairfield's Williamson Fund to build an auditorium and supporting facilities. Private and Special Law 1995, chapter 32 authorized the district to accept up to \$3,300,000 from the Williamson Fund to build an auditorium and supporting facilities at no cost to the taxpayers. Since that time, the cost of the project has increased due to changes in the project. The voters of Maine School Administrative District No. 49 approved this additional authorization at the election held on November 4, 1997. Private and Special Law 1997, chapter 59 was enacted as an emergency measure effective on February 27, 1998.

LD 2044

An Act to Promote Access to Public Higher Education

PUBLIC 758

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
BRENNAN PENDLETON P	OTP-AM	H-842

LD 2044 proposed to permit eligible secondary students to take one course per semester at the University of Maine System or the Maine Technical College System. One half the cost of the tuition would be the responsibility of the postsecondary institution. One half would be paid by the school administrative unit and would be reimbursed by the Department of Education.

Committee Amendment "A" (H-842) proposed to replace the bill. The proposed amendment would permit eligible secondary school students to receive state subsidy for up to three credit hours per semester at the institutions of the University of Maine System, the Maine Technical College System and the Maine Maritime Academy. The amendment also proposed to establish the following eligibility requirements for secondary school students: the eligible institution must have space available, the student must have the equivalent of a "B" average and must have satisfactorily completed all course prerequisites, and the student's participation is subject to approval by both the school unit and the student's parent.

The amendment further proposed to provide that the Department of Education shall pay 50 percent of the in-state tuition for the first three credit hours taken each semester and up to six credit hours taken per academic year. In addition, the amendment proposed a General Fund appropriation of \$75,000 to enable 250 secondary school students per semester to take postsecondary courses under this act. Funds appropriated to the department to carry out the purposes of this act must be in addition to the customary and ongoing amounts appropriated for general purpose aid for local schools. The amendment also proposed to add a fiscal note to the bill.

House Amendment "A" to Committee Amendment "A" (H-1157) proposed to provide a General Fund appropriation to the University of Maine System for additional support for students at the University of Maine at Augusta. The amendment was not adopted.

Senate Amendment "A" to Committee Amendment "A" (S-728) also proposed to provide a General Fund appropriation to the University of Maine System for additional support for students at the University of Maine at Augusta. The amendment was not adopted.

Enacted law summary

Public Law 1997, chapter 758 permits eligible secondary school students to receive state subsidy for up to three credit hours per semester at the institutions of the University of Maine System, the Maine Technical College System and the Maine Maritime Academy. The law establishes the following eligibility requirements for secondary school students: the eligible institution must have space available, the student must have the equivalent of a "B" average and must have satisfactorily completed all course prerequisites, and the student's participation is subject to approval by both the school unit and the student's parent.

The law further provides that the Department of Education shall pay 50 percent of the in-state tuition for the first three credit hours taken each semester and up to six credit hours taken per academic year. The law also provides a General Fund appropriation of \$75,000 to enable 250 secondary school students per semester to take postsecondary courses. Funds appropriated to the department to carry out the purposes of this law must be in addition to the customary and ongoing amounts appropriated for general purpose aid for local schools.

LD 2048

An Act to Ensure Equitable School Funding

PUBLIC 724

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
BRENNAN PENDLETON P	OTP-AM	H-979 S-752 MICHAUD

LD 2048 proposed to provide a homestead exemption of \$10,000 applied to the portion of the property tax assessment attributable to education costs. The bill also proposed to accomplish the following:

1. It would remove the statutory provisions that limit both the Commissioner of Education's recommended funding level and the Legislature's appropriation for general purpose aid to local schools to 105 percent of the corresponding appropriation for the prior fiscal year;
2. It would require the Legislature to appropriate at least a 10 percent increase in general purpose aid to local schools for fiscal year 1997-98 to allow schools to move forward with implementation of three delayed areas in