

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
LABOR

MAY 1998

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

Staff:

Heather H. Henderson, Legislative Analyst

David C. Elliott, Principal Analyst

Office of Policy and Legal Analysis

Room 101/107/135, 13 State House Station

Augusta, ME 04333

(207)287-1670



**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).

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.

The amendment also proposed to require the Division of Deafness to consult with the Commission to Study the Funding and Distribution of Teletypewriters and Other Telecommunications Equipment for People with Disabilities and with other advisory councils representing the interests of persons with disabilities when developing its comprehensive plan for providing direct access to specialized customer telecommunications equipment. The amendment proposed to specify that Division of Deafness must report to the First Regular Session of the 119th Legislature by January 15, 1999. The amendment also proposed to add a fiscal note to the bill.

Senate Amendment "A" to Committee Amendment "A" (S-744) proposed to require the Public Utilities Commission to levy an assessment on telephone companies to provide funding for the Telecommunications Equipment Fund. This amendment also proposed to delete the General Fund appropriation for the Department of Labor, provide an Other Special Revenue allocation for the Department of Labor, and reduce the General Fund appropriation to the Legislature. The amendment also proposed to reduce to one the number of authorized meetings for the Commission to Study the Funding and Distribution of Teletypewriters and Other Telecommunications Equipment for People with Disabilities.

Enacted law summary

Public Law 1997, chapter 751 implements the recommendations of the Commission to Study the Funding and Distribution of Teletypewriters and Other Telecommunications Equipment for People with Disabilities.

Part A amends the statutory provisions in Maine Revised Statutes, Title 26, section 1419-A, governing the telecommunications equipment plan and the Telecommunications Equipment Fund, to include other specialized customer telecommunications equipment besides teletypewriters and to expand eligibility for assistance to persons with disabilities. Part A requires the telecommunications equipment plan to ensure that eligible persons have access to telecommunications equipment appropriate to their individual needs. Part A creates an Other Special Revenue allocation of \$85,000 for the Telecommunications Equipment Fund and requires the Public Utilities Commission to levy an assessment on telephone companies to provide further funding for the Telecommunications Equipment Fund.

Part B amends the enabling legislation of the Commission to Study the Funding and Distribution of Teletypewriters and Other Telecommunications Equipment for People with Disabilities to allow the commission to conduct one additional meeting after the Second Regular Session of the 118th Legislature adjourns. Part B also requires the commission to submit a final report to the First Regular Session of the 119th Legislature by January 15, 1999.

Part C requires the Division of Deafness within the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services in the Department of Labor and the Telecommunications Relay Services Advisory Council, in consultation with a telephone association in this state, the Commission to Study the Funding and Distribution of Teletypewriters and Other Telecommunications Equipment for People with Disabilities and other advisory councils representing the interests of persons with disabilities, to develop recommendations and a comprehensive plan for a request-for-proposal process to provide direct access to telephone networks for deaf, hard-of-hearing, speech-impaired and disabled persons. The Division of Deafness must present the plan to the First Regular Session of the 119th Legislature by January 15, 1999. Public Law 1997, chapter 751 was enacted as an emergency measure effective April 15, 1998.

LD 2274

An Act to Permit Employees to Resume Receiving Unemployment Benefits in Certain Cases

ONTP

Sponsor(s)
TUTTLE
CATHCART

Committee Report
ONTP

Amendments Adopted

LD 2274 proposed to prohibit a person from being disqualified from receiving unemployment benefits if the person left employment within five weeks after beginning that employment.