

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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**STATE OF MAINE
119TH LEGISLATURE**

SECOND REGULAR SESSION

**BILL SUMMARIES
JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE
ON
EDUCATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS**

JULY 2000

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Office of Policy and Legal Analysis

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 NINETEENTH LEGISLATURE
SECOND REGULAR SESSION

Summary Of Legislation Before The Joint Standing Committees
July 2000

We are pleased to provide this summary of bills that were considered by the Joint Standing and Select Committees of the Maine Legislature this past session. 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 and select committees.

The document is organized for convenient reference to information on bills considered by the 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
NOT PROPERLY BEFORE THE BODY..... Ruled out of order by the presiding officers; bill died
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 August 11, 2000.

David E. Boulter, Director
Offices Located in the State House, Rooms 101 & 107

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

LD 1964 was carried over from the First Regular Session. The bill proposed to establish the Charter School Authority to oversee the establishment, location and funding of charter schools throughout the State; to adopt a comprehensive charter school plan; to provide technical assistance for groups wishing to start a charter school; and to allocate funds for the creation of charter schools consistent with the plan. See LD 2027.

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
POWERS AMERO	OTP-AM	H-1020

LD 2027 was carried over from the First Regular Session. The bill proposed that local school boards, the Department of Education and Maine post secondary institutions be authorized to approve the establishment of charter schools to be a part of the State's system of public education and to oversee operation of those charter schools. Charter schools may consist of existing public schools or school units, new schools or existing nonprofit, nonsectarian schools that convert to charter status

As proposed in the bill, charter schools must be open to all students equally, though they may specialize in serving a particular age group, a specific geographic area or a student population with specific needs. A charter school may require a demonstration of interest from students if it offers a specific curriculum or teaching methodology. Charter schools may not be affiliated with religious institutions and must be nonsectarian in their programs, practices and policies. Charter school staff include teachers holding teaching certificates. Teachers in charter schools may be employees of the charter school and have the right to organize and bargain collectively in a separate unit; or teachers may choose to operate the charter school themselves, as partners or members of a cooperative.

Under the bill, funding for charter schools is paid directly by the State in an amount equal to the average amount per pupil spent statewide. Approved special education costs incurred beyond that amount must be paid by the student's resident school administrative unit.

Committee Amendment "A" (H-1020) replaced the bill and proposed several changes in current law to encourage public school alternative education programs. The Commissioner of Education must require public school alliances to set consistent standards for regional public school choice programs. The amendment proposed that shared service agreements between schools may include alternative education programs and establishes alternative education as a component of secondary technical education programs. The amendment also proposed that the commissioner take steps to encourage school-based management decision making. Finally, the amendment proposed the establishment of a stakeholders group chosen by the commissioner to study the possibility of the State applying for grant funds under the federal charter schools legislation. The amendment also proposed adding a fiscal note to the bill.