

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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**STATE OF MAINE
119TH LEGISLATURE**

SECOND REGULAR SESSION

**BILL SUMMARIES
JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE
ON
LEGAL AND VETERANS' AFFAIRS**

JULY 2000

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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

LD 2328

An Act Concerning the Rules of the Maine Veterans' Memorial Cemetery

ONTP

Sponsor(s)

Committee Report
ONTP

Amendments Adopted

LD 2328 proposed to implement one of the recommendations of the Committee to Study Standardized Periods of Military Service and Other Matters Related to the Award of State of Maine Veterans' Benefits. This recommendation designates the rules governing the operation of the Maine Veterans' Memorial Cemetery as major substantive rules subject to the rule-making process. The bill also proposed to require the Commissioner of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management to develop proposed rules through a consensus-based process in advance of rulemaking.

LD 2329

An Act to Designate as Public Assistance Emergency Assistance for Dependents of Veterans

ONTP

Sponsor(s)

Committee Report
ONTP

Amendments Adopted

LD 2329 proposed to implement one of the recommendations of the Committee to Study Standardized Periods of Military Service and Other Matters Related to the Award of State of Maine Veterans' Benefits. This recommendation proposes to designate as public assistance, the aid provided to veterans and their dependents pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 37-B. The bill also proposed to require that the Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management retain administrative responsibility for this aid.

LD 2330

An Act to Require the Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management to Report to the Legislature on Matters Related to State Veterans Laws

PUBLIC 565

Sponsor(s)

Committee Report
OTP-AM

Amendments Adopted
H-797

LD 2330 proposed to implement one of the recommendations of the Committee to Study Standardized Periods of Military Service and Other Matters Related to the Award of State of Maine Veterans' Benefits. It proposed to require the Commissioner of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management to report biennially to the Legislature on recommended changes to the laws governing veterans' affairs. The bill also would require the commissioner to study the laws governing eligibility for state veterans' benefits and to report findings and recommendations by December 31, 2000.

Committee Amendment "A" (H-797) proposed to amend the original bill by specifying that the report of the Commissioner of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management on laws governing eligibility for state veterans' benefits must be made to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over legal and veterans' affairs.

Enacted law summary

Public Law 1999, chapter 565 requires the Commissioner of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management to report biennially to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over legal and veterans affairs on recommended changes to the laws governing veterans affairs. It also requires the commissioner to study the laws governing eligibility for state veterans benefits and to report findings and recommendations by December 31, 2000.

LD 2349

An Act to Allow Video Lottery Terminals

ONTP

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>		<u>Committee Report</u> ONTP		<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
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LD 2349 is a citizen initiated bill. It proposed to authorize the operation of video-lottery terminals at commercial tracks licensed to conduct harness racing. Under this bill, a video lottery terminal is defined as any mechanical electronic or electrical device or machine that, upon insertion of a coin or credit is available to play or operate and by chance, may deliver or entitle the player to cash or merchandise. The pay off could be made automatically or in any other manner under this definition.

LD 2349 proposed that commercial tracks may be licensed to conduct video gambling without prior municipal approval and there would be no limit to the number of machines permitted at a licensed commercial track. Individual terminals would not be required to be licensed but would be required to be registered and would be prohibited from containing any device which could manipulate the probabilities of winning. Fees permitting one to manufacture, wholesale, distribute or operate video lottery machines would be \$1,000 every two years.

Under this bill, funds from video lottery machines would be distributed as follows:

1. 40% to the Treasurer of the State of Maine for the Local Government fund.
2. 26% to the distributor who owns the machine.
3. 5% to the licensee to supplement harness racing purses.
4. 1% to the Sire Stakes fund.
5. 3% to the Department of Public Safety.
6. 2% for the agricultural fairs stipend fund.

This would leave 23% for the licensee.

Since the Legislature voted not to pass LD 2349, it will be placed on the ballot in November 2000. If a majority of the voters approve the proposal it will be enacted.