

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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*State Of Maine
120th Legislature*

First Regular Session

Bill Summaries

*Joint Standing Committee
on
Business and Economic Development*

August 2001

Members:

Sen. Kevin Shorey, Chair

Sen. Lynn Bromley

Sen. Ed Youngblood

Rep. John Richardson, Chair

Rep. Bruce S. Bryant

Rep. Susan Dorr

Rep. Paul R. Hatch

Rep. Marc Michaud

Rep. Jonathan Thomas

Rep. Harold A. Clough

Rep. Thomas W. Murphy, Jr.

Rep. Brian M. Duprey

Rep. John R. Morrison

Staff:

Christopher J. Spruce, Legislative Analyst

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Maine State Legislature
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120th Legislature
First Regular Session

Summary Of Legislation Before The Joint Standing Committees
August 2001

Enclosed please find a summary of all bills, resolves, joint study orders, joint resolutions and Constitutional resolutions that were considered by the joint standing 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 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:

CARRIED OVER..... *Bill Carried Over to Second Regular Session*
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 First Regular Session (unless otherwise specified in a particular law) is **September 21, 2001**.

David E. Boulter, Director
 Offices Located in the State House, Rooms 101/107/135

Joint Standing Committee on Business and Economic Development

LD 893 **An Act to Authorize Master Electricians to Work with up to 3 Helpers** **ONTP**

| | | | | |
|---|--|---------------------------------|--|---------------------------|
| <u>Sponsor(s)</u> MCNEIL SAVAGE C | | <u>Committee Report</u> ONTP | | <u>Amendments Adopted</u> |
|---|--|---------------------------------|--|---------------------------|

LD 893 proposed to allow a master electrician to work with 3 helper electricians instead of one.

LD 924 **Resolve, to Grant an Exception for Inspections of Low-use Elevators** **ONTP**

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|----------------------------|--|---------------------------------|--|---------------------------|
| <u>Sponsor(s)</u> MCKEE | | <u>Committee Report</u> ONTP | | <u>Amendments Adopted</u> |
|----------------------------|--|---------------------------------|--|---------------------------|

LD 924 proposed to direct the Board of Elevator and Tramway Safety to create rules to make an exception in the yearly scheduling of inspections for low-use elevators in churches, small businesses and other organizations that have elevators but use them infrequently.

LD 932 **An Act to Authorize the Maine State Housing Authority to Administer an Electric Assistance Program** **PUBLIC 257
EMERGENCY**

| | | | | |
|-------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|
| <u>Sponsor(s)</u> SAVAGE W | | <u>Committee Report</u> OTP-AM | | <u>Amendments Adopted</u> H-361 |
|-------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|

LD 932 proposed to require the Maine State Housing Authority to administer the electric assistance program established by the Public Utilities Commission to provide electric assistance to low-income households.

Committee Amendment "A" (H-361) proposed to amend the original bill by removing a 10 percent cap on the amount of electric assistance program funds that the Maine State Housing Authority could use to pay for the administrative and operational costs of the program. Under the provisions of the proposed amendment, the authority's use of these funds would be subject to approval by the Public Utilities Commission.

The amendment also proposed to add an allocation section and a fiscal note to the bill.

Enacted law summary

Public Law 2001, chapter 257 requires the Maine State Housing Authority to administer the electric assistance program established by the Public Utilities Commission to provide electric assistance to low-income households. The law requires MSHA to report annually to the Public Utilities Commission information to determine the amount

Joint Standing Committee on Business and Economic Development

of funding necessary for the program. It also authorizes the authority to adopt routine technical rules to implement the program. The law establishes the sources of funds for the program as funds collected by an electric utility as determined by the commission pursuant to section 3214 of Title 35-A of the Maine Revised Statutes, all funds appropriated by the State for the fund, all interest and dividends from the investment of money in the fund, and any other money deposited in the fund to implement the program. The law also allows MSHA to use the fund to cover administrative and operational expenses related to the program subject to the approval of the commission.

Public Law 2001, chapter 257 was enacted as an emergency measure effective May 25, 2001.

LD 942 **An Act to Prohibit the Solicitation of Prearranged Funeral Services** **ONTP**

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|-----------------------------|--|---------------------------------|--|---------------------------|
| <u>Sponsor(s)</u> POVICH | | <u>Committee Report</u> ONTP | | <u>Amendments Adopted</u> |
|-----------------------------|--|---------------------------------|--|---------------------------|

LD 942 proposed to strengthen the law prohibiting solicitation of prearranged funerals and funeral business by strictly defining "solicitation."

LD 947 **An Act Concerning Fair Debit Card Practices** **ONTP**

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|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|--|---------------------------|
| <u>Sponsor(s)</u> USHER O'GARA | | <u>Committee Report</u> ONTP | | <u>Amendments Adopted</u> |
|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|--|---------------------------|

LD 947 proposed to authorize public post-secondary institutions located in this State to sponsor debit card programs for their students. The bill also proposed to enable students to use their school-sponsored debit cards at local businesses outside the campus.

LD 951 **An Act Relating to Rent-to-own Purchases** **ONTP**

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|---|--|---------------------------------|--|---------------------------|
| <u>Sponsor(s)</u> BRANNIGAN BROMLEY | | <u>Committee Report</u> ONTP | | <u>Amendments Adopted</u> |
|---|--|---------------------------------|--|---------------------------|

LD 951 proposed to help ensure that consumers who enter into rent-to-own contracts and who eventually purchase the item are charged a price that is based on the actual fair market value of the item.