

State Of Maine 120th Legislature

First Regular Session

Bill Summaries

Joint Standing Committee on Legal and Veterans' Affairs

August 2001

<u>Members:</u> Sen. Neria R. Douglass, Chair Sen. Chandler E. Woodcock Sen. Lynn Bromley

Rep. John L. Tuttle, Jr., Chair Rep. Nancy L. Chizmar Rep. Lillian LaFontaine O'Brien Rep. Stephen C. Estes Rep. William R. Cote Rep. John L. Patrick Rep. Janice E. Labrecque Rep. Arthur F. Mayo, III Rep. Theodore H. Heidrich Rep. Richard H. Duncan

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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, <u>History and Final Disposition of Legislative Documents</u>, 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 Ch	Bill Carried Over to Second Regular Session hapter # of Constitutional Resolution passed by both Houses
CONF CMTE UNABLE TO AGREE	Committee of Conference unable to agree; bill died
DIED BETWEEN BODIES	
DIED IN CONCURRENCEOne body a	ccepts ONTP report; the other indefinitely postpones the bill
	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 REFORE THE BODY	Ruled out of order by the presiding officers: hill died
INDEF PP	Bill Indefinitely Postponed
ONTP	Bill Indefinitely Postponed Ought Not To Pass report accepted
<i>OTP ND</i>	Committee report Ought To Pass In New Draft
<i>OTP ND/NT</i>	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*.

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LD 1608 proposed to remove the requirement that members of the Maine State Retirement System joining after January 1, 1976 should have served in a federally recognized period of conflict to be eligible to purchase military service credits. It proposed to expand eligibility for the veterans' property tax exemption and remove from statute eligibility requirements related to federally recognized periods of war. It also proposed to make all honorably discharged veterans who are 62 years of age or older eligible for the veterans' property tax exemption that would have been authorized by this bill. The bill also would have required the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, Bureau of Revenue Services to notify each municipality of this expanded eligibility at least 60 days prior to the beginning of the first property tax year to which this expanded eligibility would have applied.

LD 1615 An Act to Provide Pricing Options to Agency Liquor Stores ONTP

Sponsor(s)	Committee Report	Amendments Adopted
STANLEY	ONTP	

LD 1615 proposed to remove the requirement that agency liquor stores must sell liquor based on a price established by the Bureau of Alcoholic Beverages and Lottery Operations within the Department of Administrative and Financial Services.

LD 1619 Resolve, to Establish a Commission to Study Maine's Election ONTP Procedures and Voting Laws

Sponsor(s)	Committee Report	Amendments Adopted
SHIELDS	ONTP	
TURNER		

LD 1619, a resolve, proposed to establish the Commission to Study Maine's Election Procedures and Voting Laws. The commission would have been charged with reviewing the laws governing election procedures and voting in this State, developing recommendations to improve those laws and reporting to the Second Regular Session of the 120th Legislature.

LD 1686	An Act to Amend the Laws Governing Elections	ONTP
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Sponsor(s)	Committee Report	Amendments Adopted
COLWELL	ONTP	
ABROMSON		

LD 1686 proposed to require the Secretary of State to maintain a central voting list for the State and to update the list at least once a year by requesting the voting list from the registrar of every municipality in the State. This bill would have required a registrar to furnish the voting list for the registrar's municipality to the Secretary of State upon request from the Secretary of State. The bill proposed to require each municipal clerk or the clerk's designee to attend a training session that would be approved by the Secretary of State at least once every 2 years in regard

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to the conduct of elections. The bill also proposed to require polls to be opened no later than 7 a.m. on election days, except that in a municipality with a population of less than 100, the polls should be opened no later than 10 a.m.

Committee Amendment "A" (H-386), which was not adopted, proposed to strike all of the original bill except for the requirement that all polling places open no later than 7 a.m. As proposed by this amendment municipalities with a population of less than 100 could open their polls at 10 a.m. The amendment also would have added a mandate preamble and a fiscal note to the bill.

LD 1704 An Act to Clarify the Activities of Membership Organizations in ONTP Maine

Sponsor(s)	Committee Report		Amendments Adopted
MCKEE	ONTP	MAJ	
DOUGLASS	OTP	MIN	

LD 1704 proposed to amend the laws governing campaign finance reports and finances to specify that compensation paid by a "membership organization" to an employee for certain campaign related activities would not be considered either a contribution or a political expenditure.

LD 1711 An Act to Amend the Maine Clean Election Laws

PUBLIC 465

Sponsor(s)	Committee Report		Amendments Adopted
EDMONDS	OTP-AM	MAJ	S-308
TUTTLE	ONTP	MIN	

LD 1711 proposed to expand the scope of reporting for independent electioneering expenditures and clarify which expenditures trigger matching funds under the Maine Clean Election Act. It proposed to extend the qualifying period from March 16th to April 15th for those intending to be participating candidates under the Maine Clean Election Act. It also proposed to strike language that states that the primary purpose of seed money is to enable a candidate to collect qualifying contributions. The bill proposed to permit participating candidates to pay the fees for money orders donated by contributors as long as those fees are reported. It also proposed that money from the Maine Clean Election Fund may be distributed to participating candidates in uncontested general elections in an amount equal to 1/3 of the amount distributed for contested races.

Committee Amendment "A" (S-308) removed the provisions in the original bill that created the definition of independent electioneering and established reporting requirements for independent electioneering expenditures. It changed the distribution amount that the original bill provided for Maine Clean Election Act candidates in uncontested general elections from 1/3 to 40% of the amount distributed to Maine Clean Election Act candidates in contested general elections. The amendment specified that rules of the commission governing qualifying contributions, certification of Maine Clean Election Act candidates, distribution of fund revenues to certified candidates and the disposition of equipment purchased with clean election funds are major substantive rules.