

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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STATE OF MAINE
123RD LEGISLATURE
FIRST REGULAR SESSION



Summaries of bills and adopted amendments and laws enacted or finally passed during the First Regular Session of the 123rd Maine Legislature coming from the

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

July 2007

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STAFF:

DANIELLE D. FOX, LEGISLATIVE ANALYST
OFFICE OF POLICY AND LEGAL ANALYSIS
13 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, ME 04333
(207) 287-1670

* Representative Stacey Fitts replaced former Representative Abigail Holman on the Legal and Veterans' Affairs Committee.

STATE OF MAINE

123RD LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION

LEGISLATIVE DIGEST OF BILL SUMMARIES AND ENACTED LAWS



This *Legislative Digest of Bill Summaries and Enacted Laws* summarizes all bills and adopted amendments and all laws enacted or finally passed during the First Regular Session of the 123rd Maine Legislature, which was in session from December 6, 2006 to June 21, 2007.

The *Digest* is arranged alphabetically by committee, and within each committee by LD number. The committee report(s), prime sponsor and lead co-sponsor(s), if designated, are listed below each bill title. All adopted amendments are summarized and listed by paper number. A subject index is included with each committee. The appendices include a summary of relevant session statistics, an index of all bills by LD number and an index of enacted laws by law type and chapter number.

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 (or Accepted ONTP report).....	Ought Not To Pass report accepted
OTP-ND.....	Committee report Ought To Pass In New Draft
P&S XXX.....	Chapter # of enacted Private & Special Law
PASSED.....	Joint Order passed in both bodies
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 that the effective date for non-emergency legislation enacted in the First Regular Session is **September 20, 2007**. The effective date for legislation enacted as an emergency measure is specified in the enacted law summary for those bills.

Joint Standing Committee on Legal and Veterans Affairs

LD 999 An Act To Improve Transportation for Veterans

P & S 30

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
ROTUNDO	OTP-AM	S-365 ROTUNDO S-55

This bill makes ongoing General Fund appropriations of \$15,000 per year to support the operating costs of the disabled American veterans transportation network, which provides round-trip transportation services to Veterans' Administration medical facilities.

Committee Amendment "A" (S-55)

This amendment incorporates a fiscal note.

Senate Amendment "A" (S-365)

This amendment reduces the annual General Fund appropriations to \$12,500 per year and limits the funding to the 2008-2009 biennium.

Enacted Law Summary

Private and Special Law 2007, chapter 30 makes a one-time General Fund appropriation of \$12,500 to support the operating costs of the disabled American veterans transportation network, which provides round-trip transportation services to Veterans' Administration medical facilities.

LD 1008 Resolve, Directing the Commission on Governmental Ethics and Election Practices To Provide Historical Data Regarding the Receipt and Resolution of Complaints Pertaining to Legislative Ethics Violations

RESOLVE 81

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
EDMONDS	OTP-AM	S-228

This bill amends the legislative ethics laws, as recommended by a 15-member study group created during the Second Regular Session of the 122nd Legislature: the Presiding Officers' Advisory Committee on Legislative Ethics. It broadens the definition of "conflict of interest" and increases protection against possible undue influence by Legislators. It also changes the workings of the Commission on Governmental Ethics and Election Practices to require that most commission proceedings on legislative ethics be conducted in public and to allow members of the public to file complaints regarding possible violations of legislative ethics laws. Finally, the bill rearranges, rewrites and edits several provisions of the law to make it easier to read and understand.

Under current law and rules of the Legislature, a Legislator is prohibited from voting on legislation on the grounds of conflict of interest only if the Legislator or certain family members or business associates would derive a unique and distinct benefit from the legislation. This bill proposes that a Legislator faces a conflict of interest in voting if the Legislator or an immediate family member or close economic associate of the Legislator would be benefited or harmed by the legislation to a degree that is significantly greater than similarly situated persons or entities or the Legislator, a member of the Legislator's immediate family or a close economic associate is a member of a small group of persons or entities that derive a significant benefit or harm from the proposed legislation.

The bill revises the limits on Legislators appearing before state agencies. Current law allows Legislators who