

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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**STATE OF MAINE**  
124<sup>TH</sup> LEGISLATURE  
FIRST REGULAR SESSION



Summaries of bills, adopted amendments and laws enacted or finally passed during the First Regular Session of the 124<sup>th</sup> Maine Legislature coming from the

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

July 2009

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# STATE OF MAINE

124<sup>TH</sup> LEGISLATURE  
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## 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 124<sup>th</sup> Maine Legislature.

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:

CARRIED OVER.....	Carried over to a subsequent session of the Legislature
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; bill died
ONTP (or Accepted ONTP report).....	Ought Not To Pass report accepted; bill died
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

The effective date for non-emergency legislation enacted in the First Regular Session of the 124<sup>th</sup> Legislature is September 12, 2009. The effective date for legislation enacted as an emergency measure is specified in the enacted law summary for those bills.

*Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs*

**LD 1283**

**An Act To Reform the School Budget Validation Process**

**ONTP**

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

This bill amends the school budget approval process by allowing a budget to be approved at a school board meeting rather than a district-wide meeting, and then go directly to referendum vote. The bill also changes slightly the wording on the required referendum if a school budget exceeds the maximum state and local spending target.

**LD 1287**

**An Act To Amend the Laws Governing Consolidation of School Administrative Units To Eliminate Penalties, Establish Incentives and Allow Alternative Voting Procedures for Budgets**

**ONTP**

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

This bill makes several technical and substantive changes to the laws governing the consolidation of school administrative units enacted in 2007 and amended in 2008. The bill converts the penalty system in the current law, which establishes a financial penalty to be applied to those school systems that fail to consolidate if required to, into a financial incentive system that provides a reduced local effort requirement for those school systems that achieve the required consolidation during the first 3 years. The bill also authorizes regional school units to establish a school budget adoption system that is an alternative to the current budget validation referendum process. The alternative system, if approved by the voters of the regional school unit at referendum, would allow the budget to be approved by the voters directly at referendum rather than go through the multi-step approval process whereby the budget needs to be adopted by several local votes in succession. The bill also makes several technical amendments, including:

1. Adding a cross-reference that was inadvertently omitted in existing law so that the towns within any community school districts or school administrative districts that may exist in the future can commit their taxes in the circumstance of a prolonged failure to adopt a school budget, just as is currently available to municipal schools and regional school units; and
2. Clarifying the procedures to be followed during a school budget referendum vote regarding the display of informational material in the polling place and the voting booth.

**LD 1295**

**An Act To Establish the Middle School of Science and Mathematics**

**ONTP**

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