

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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STATE OF MAINE
126TH LEGISLATURE
FIRST REGULAR SESSION



Summaries of bills, adopted amendments and laws enacted or finally passed

**JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, UTILITIES
AND TECHNOLOGY**

July 2013

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STATE OF MAINE

126TH LEGISLATURE

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LEGISLATIVE DIGEST OF BILL SUMMARIES AND ENACTED LAWS

This *Legislative Digest of Bill Summaries and Enacted Laws* contains summaries of all LDs and adopted amendments and all laws enacted or finally passed during the First Regular Session of the 126th Maine Legislature.

The *Digest* is arranged alphabetically by committee and within each committee by Legislative Document (LD) number. The committee report(s), prime sponsor and lead co-sponsor(s), if designated, are listed below each LD 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 LD is noted to the right of the LD title. The following describes the various final actions.

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; legislation died
DIED BETWEEN HOUSES.....House & Senate disagreed; legislation died
DIED IN CONCURRENCE.....defeated in each house, but on different motions; legislation died
DIED ON ADJOURNMENT..... action incomplete when session ended; legislation died
EMERGENCY..... enacted law takes effect sooner than 90 days after session adjournment
FAILED, EMERGENCY ENACTMENT or FINAL PASSAGE emergency failed to receive required 2/3 vote
FAILED, ENACTMENT or FINAL PASSAGE..... failed to receive final majority vote
FAILED, MANDATE ENACTMENT legislation proposing local mandate failed required 2/3 vote
HELD BY GOVERNOR..... Governor has not signed; final disposition to be determined at subsequent session
LEAVE TO WITHDRAW..... sponsor's request to withdraw legislation granted
NOT PROPERLY BEFORE THE BODY ruled out of order by the presiding officer; legislation died
INDEF PP..... indefinitely postponed; legislation died
ONTP, ACCEPTED, MAJORITY, MINORITY or REPORT X... ought-not-to-pass report accepted; legislation died
P&S XXX..... chapter # of enacted private & special law
PUBLIC XXX.....chapter # of enacted public Law
RESOLVE XXX..... chapter # of finally passed resolve
VETO SUSTAINED..... Legislature failed to override Governor's veto

The effective date for non-emergency legislation enacted in the First Regular Session of the 126th Legislature is October 9, 2013. The effective date for legislation enacted as an emergency measure may be found in the enacted law summary for that legislation.

Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology

LD 1442 An Act To Establish a Pilot Natural Gas District in Maine

**P & S 17
EMERGENCY**

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
NADEAU C LACHOWICZ	OTP-AM	H-419

This bill establishes the Kennebec Valley Gas District, which is a pilot natural gas utility district.

The bill also requires the Public Utilities Commission to study and make recommendations to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over utility matters by December 2, 2015, regarding the need for further enactment of legislation to facilitate or promote the purposes of the establishment of municipal natural gas utility districts in the State.

Committee Amendment "A" (H-419)

This amendment replaces the bill. This amendment establishes the Kennebec Regional Gas District to assist and help coordinate with the provision of natural gas from third-party suppliers or distributors of natural gas to the citizens, organizations and businesses of the district, including through grants, loans or other financial assistance; to assist in aggregating customers for the purpose of procuring natural gas supply to customers within the district who elect to participate in such aggregation; to provide grants, loans or other financial assistance to residential and commercial customers in the district to obtain natural gas or to assist such customers with natural gas conversions; to own, operate or assist in the development or operation of one or more facilities that use natural gas to cogenerate electric power and other useful energy; and to manage the district.

Enacted Law Summary

Private and Special Law 2013, chapter 17 establishes the Kennebec Regional Gas District to assist and help coordinate with the provision of natural gas from third-party suppliers or distributors of natural gas to the citizens, organizations and businesses of the district, including through grants, loans or other financial assistance; to assist in aggregating customers for the purpose of procuring natural gas supply to customers within the district who elect to participate in such aggregation; to provide grants, loans or other financial assistance to residential and commercial customers in the district to obtain natural gas or to assist such customers with natural gas conversions; to own, operate or assist in the development or operation of one or more facilities that use natural gas to cogenerate electric power and other useful energy; and to manage the district.

Private and Special Law 2013, chapter 17 was enacted an emergency measure effective June 29, 2013.

LD 1456 An Act To Promote Local or Community-based Generation Projects

ONTP

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

This bill:

1. Requires that all meters installed by an electric transmission and distribution utility be electromechanical;
2. Requires that electric transmission and distribution utilities have neutral wires with the capacity to return 150% of excess power to the grid and that the wires return existing power at a rate that is greater than 95%. The commission is required to certify that transmission and distribution utilities meet this standard for neutral wires;

Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology

3. Creates a new class of electricity generators, small renewable generators, for the purposes of requiring a standard-offer service provider to purchase the electricity generated from the small renewable generators at rates higher than market value for the first 15 to 25 years that the generator is connected to the grid; and
4. Directs the Public Utilities Commission to develop a set of recommendations including tax and regulatory incentives to encourage the development of decentralized microgrids or community-based or neighborhood-based clean energy generation facilities using solar, wind and geothermal energy as nontransmission alternatives.

LD 1457 An Act To Amend the Charter of the South Berwick Sewer District

P & S 11

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
EVES HILL	OTP	

This bill amends the charter of the South Berwick Sewer District by changing the annual meeting to the first Monday in March instead of the 2nd Monday in March and increasing the compensation for trustees from \$150 per year to \$350 per year and the compensation for the chair from \$250 per year to \$500 per year.

Enacted Law Summary

Private and Special Law 2013, chapter 11 amends the charter of the South Berwick Sewer District by changing the annual meeting to the first Monday in March instead of the 2nd Monday in March and increasing the compensation for trustees from \$150 per year to \$350 per year and the compensation for the chair from \$250 per year to \$500 per year.

LD 1468 An Act To Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue To Establish the High-efficiency Biomass, Pellet or Wood Boiler Rebate Program and the Home Heating Conversion Fund

CARRIED OVER

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
JACKSON T HOBBINS	OTP-AM ONTP	

This bill establishes the High-efficiency Biomass Pellet Boiler Rebate Program, administered by the Efficiency Maine Trust, to give rebates to owners or occupants of buildings who install high-efficiency wood pellet boilers or heating systems in the buildings. The rebates are paid from the Home Heating Conversion Fund, administered by the Efficiency Maine Trust, which also provides funds to replace outdoor wood boilers that do not meet air quality standards as determined by the Department of Environmental Protection. The Home Heating Conversion Fund is funded by \$20,000,000 in revenue bonds issued by the Efficiency Maine Trust and paid for by the sale of sustainably harvested timber from public reserved lands.

Committee Amendment "A" (S-253)

This amendment replaces the bill. This amendment:

1. Establishes three goals relating to the use of revenue from the State's public reserved lands: to support the harvest of timber from the public reserved lands up to the sustainable yield on a year-to-year basis, to support land management and public access to public reserved lands and to support certain heating system programs;
2. In fiscal year 2013-14 allocates \$200,000 and in fiscal year 2014-15 allocates \$345,000 from the Public Reserved Lands Management Fund to the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Division of Parks and