

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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STATE OF MAINE
126TH LEGISLATURE
SECOND REGULAR SESSION



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

**JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON MAINE'S WORKFORCE
AND ECONOMIC FUTURE**

May 2014

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STATE OF MAINE
126TH LEGISLATURE
SECOND REGULAR SESSION
LEGISLATIVE DIGEST OF BILL SUMMARIES AND
ENACTED LAWS

The *Digest* is arranged 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.

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 HOUSESHouse & 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
EMERGENCYenacted 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 Second Regular Session of the 126th Legislature is August 1, 2014. The effective date for legislation enacted as an emergency measure may be found in the enacted law summary for that legislation.

Joint Select Committee on Maine's Workforce and Economic Future

- 3. To identify Maine's strengths as the location of education and research institutions with worldwide reputations and significant natural resources and as the home of a working population with significant potential and a reputation for problem solving and hard work;
- 4. To identify areas where education and government resources can be reallocated to support the development of an entrepreneurial environment that will attract investment from outside as well as from inside the State by focusing on business sectors that have the best opportunity to grow by taking advantage of the State's strengths; and
- 5. To develop both a short-term and a long-term strategy for enhancing and increasing awareness of the State's advantages and opportunities for the creation of new businesses and the expansion of existing businesses. A short-term strategy will identify the areas of greatest need for infrastructure and services to support the development of the immediate resources needed for entrepreneurial development and the social and cultural resources that enhance the attractiveness of the State and develop a plan for meeting those needs. A long-term strategy will develop long-term goals and develop a plan and action steps for continuing growth and implementation of a methodology for maintaining the State's activities on the forefront of global opportunities.

LD 1489

An Act To Address Maine's Immediate Workforce Needs

PUBLIC 443

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
LANGLEY GRANT	OTP-AM	S-194 S-364 HILL

This bill was enacted by the Legislature during the First Regular Session of the 126th and was held by the Governor; final disposition occurred at the beginning of the Second Regular Session.

This bill creates the Maine Skills Gap Program to address the immediate hiring needs of Maine employers. Its goal is to encourage students and qualified experienced workers to take positions with Maine companies representing industries with significant unmet demand for skilled labor by reimbursing a portion of an employee's student debt or, in the absence of student debt, reimbursing a portion of an employee's housing expense during the employee's employment. The reimbursement is not subject to Maine income tax. A qualified employer will be considered eligible for reimbursement by the State under the Maine Employment Tax Increment Financing Program and will be reimbursed 50% of the qualified employer's employment, payroll and state income tax withholding taxes paid by the qualified employer for each qualified employee. The Maine Skills Gap Program is repealed March 31, 2021.

Committee Amendment "A" (S-194)

This amendment replaces the bill and does the following.

- 1. It changes the name of the program created under the bill to the Maine Workforce Opportunities Program;
- 2. It requires the Department of Economic and Community Development, in coordination with the Department of Labor, to create and maintain qualified employee and employer registries;
- 3. It charges the Department of Economic and Community Development with leading the marketing efforts to employers and employees of the Job Creation Through Educational Opportunity Program, as well as all other existing incentive programs that are aimed at attracting new employees to Maine businesses;
- 4. It requires the Commissioner of Economic and Community Development to report to the Joint Select Committee on Maine's Workforce and Economic Future and the Joint Standing Committee on Labor, Commerce, Research and Economic Development on the results of the marketing effort no later than January 15, 2014. It also requires the commissioner to study what the effect would be of including reimbursement of a qualified employee's housing costs as an incentive; and

Joint Select Committee on Maine's Workforce and Economic Future

5. It adds an appropriations and allocations section.

Senate Amendment "A" To Committee Amendment "A" (S-364)

This amendment delays the implementation of the Maine Workforce Opportunities Program until July 1, 2014 and delays the reporting date of the Commissioner of Economic and Community Development until December 1, 2014. The amendment also removes the funding in fiscal year 2013-14 due to the delay of the implementation of the program.

Enacted Law Summary

Public Law 2013, chapter 443 creates the Maine Workforce Opportunities Program to address the immediate hiring needs of Maine employers. Its goal is to encourage students and qualified experienced workers to take positions with Maine companies representing industries with significant unmet demand for skilled labor by promoting incentives, including a tax credit for an employee's education costs, through the Job Creation Through Educational Opportunity Program and other programs or initiatives operated by the State that seek to attract new employees to businesses in the State. It requires the Department of Economic and Community Development, in coordination with the Department of Labor, to create and maintain qualified employee and employer registries. It charges the Department of Economic and Community Development with leading the marketing efforts to employers and employees of the Job Creation Through Educational Opportunity Program, as well as all other existing incentive programs that are aimed at attracting new employees to Maine businesses. It requires the Commissioner of Economic and Community Development to report to the Joint Select Committee on Maine's Workforce and Economic Future and the Joint Standing Committee on Labor, Commerce, Research and Economic Development on the results of the marketing effort no later than December 1, 2014. It also requires the commissioner to study what the effect would be of including reimbursement of a qualified employee's housing costs as an incentive.

LD 1746 An Act To Facilitate Informed Planning for Higher Education and Careers

PUBLIC 593

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
BERRY	OTP-AM	H-743 S-537 HILL

This bill establishes the State Education and Employment Outcomes Commission to develop procedures to maintain and disseminate information and data on education results, program completion, graduation, credentials earned, loans and loan defaults and costs as well as employment and earnings for graduates of postsecondary educational institutions in the State. The bill also establishes the Education and Employment Outcomes Technical and Data Working Group to make recommendations to the commission regarding the operation and use of the Department of Labor's educational outcome database and the information the database contains, the duties of the commission regarding a website jointly hosted by the Department of Labor and the Department of Education and integration of the information on the website into the State's secondary schools, funding methods for the database, additional data for inclusion in the database and any question or issue on which the commission has charged the group with making recommendations.

Committee Amendment "A" (H-743)

This amendment strikes and replaces the bill. It changes the name of the State Education and Employment Outcomes Commission to the State Education and Employment Outcomes Task Force. It also makes changes to the membership of the group, including reducing the membership to 15. It restricts the number of meetings the task force may have to four per year. It changes the responsibility for staffing the task force from the Department of Labor and Department of Education to the Legislative Council; under the amendment, the departments must provide information and assistance to the task force consistent with federal grant requirements and department resources. It eliminates the annual work plan duty of the task force and replaces it with a duty to explore the feasibility of