

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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STATE OF MAINE
127TH LEGISLATURE
FIRST REGULAR SESSION



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

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

August 2015

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127TH 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 127th 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. An appendix provides a summary of relevant session statistics.

Final action on each LD is noted to the right of the LD title. The following describes the various final actions.

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

The effective date for non-emergency legislation enacted in the First Regular Session of the 127th Legislature is October 15, 2015. 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

Public Law 2015, chapter 284 does the following:

1. Abolishes the ConnectME Advisory Council;
2. Repeals the existing State broadband policy and replaces it with amended goals and policies;
3. Amends the membership of the ConnectME authority to include two additional entities - the Commissioner of the Department of Economic and Community Development and an individual with significant knowledge of telemedicine appointed by the Governor;
4. Removes the ability of the ConnectME Authority to request staff resources from the Public Utilities Commission or other state agencies with expertise in communications services or advanced communications technology infrastructure;
5. Redefines the duties of the ConnectME Authority;
6. Amends the reporting requirement to the Legislature by requiring that a detailed description of the progress toward the goals and objectives established in the triennial strategic plan be included in the report;
7. Promotes community broadband planning, which directs the ConnectME Authority to fund broadband planning grants to municipalities, groups of municipalities or nonprofit local or regional community organizations to develop plans to expand the availability of broadband in unserved and underserved areas; and
8. Requires the ConnectME Authority to develop a triennial strategic plan by February 15, 2016 for broadband that includes quantifiable measures of performance and that allows for public input.

LD 1073 An Act To Lower Energy Costs and Increase Access to Solar Energy for Agricultural Businesses CARRIED OVER

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

This bill establishes the Solar Energy Agricultural Rebate Fund to be used by the Efficiency Maine Trust to provide rebates until December 31, 2017 for solar photovoltaic and solar thermal technologies to agricultural businesses. It provides that an agricultural business that is a customer of an investor-owned transmission and distribution utility must be compensated for accumulated unused kilowatt-hour credits every 12 months. It also authorizes customers of transmission and distribution utilities to elect to be billed using net energy billing.

Committee Amendment "A" (S-253)

The amendment adds an appropriations and allocations section. This amendment was adopted in the Senate and the House before the bill was committed to the committee again.

This bill was carried over to any special or regular session of the 127th Legislature by joint order, H.P. 992.

LD 1075 An Act To Amend the Charter of the Canton Water District CARRIED OVER

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
PATRICK PETERSON		