

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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



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

**JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION**

August 2015

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# STATE OF MAINE

127<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* contains summaries of all LDs and adopted amendments and all laws enacted or finally passed during the First Regular Session of the 127<sup>th</sup> 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.

*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 127<sup>th</sup> 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 Transportation***

3. Requires that all factory-installed brake lights on a motor vehicle, trailer or semitrailer must be present and operating properly and meet certain standards;
4. Provides that a person may not operate a motor vehicle in which there is a television viewer, screen or other video device, other than an allowable device, that is receiving or showing video content visible to the operator. For the purposes of the provision, "visual content" includes, but is not limited to, television broadcasts, recorded video and video streamed through electronic or other means. "Visual content" does not include content displayed on a device that was installed for the effective or safe operation of a motor vehicle or on a device used for global positioning or navigation. The law also clarifies that video equipment relating to operation of the vehicle and video equipment used by law enforcement and emergency personnel may be visible to the vehicle operator; and
5. Allows a person to ride in a vehicle being towed by a wrecker or by a motor vehicle using a tow bar; and
6. Prohibits persons from attaching or displaying on a vehicle registration plate a registration validation device issued for another vehicle.

**LD 1273      *Resolve, To Create a License Plate To Recognize the Bicentennial of the State*      RESOLVE 23**

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
MASON	OTP-AM	S-99

This resolve creates a commemorative simulated motor vehicle registration plate in celebration of Maine's bicentennial. The Secretary of State is directed to design and issue the plate, which may be displayed beginning January 1, 2018 to December 31, 2020 covering the front registration plate. Revenue generated by the sale of the plate in excess of the cost of production and issuance will be given to the Maine Historic Preservation Commission.

**Committee Amendment "A" (S-99)**

This amendment provides that \$16 of the \$25 fee for the State of Maine Bicentennial commemorative plate goes to the Maine State Cultural Affairs Council rather than the Maine Historic Preservation Commission.

**Enacted Law Summary**

Resolve 2015, chapter 23 creates a commemorative simulated motor vehicle registration plate in celebration of Maine's bicentennial. The Secretary of State is directed to design and issue the plate, which may be displayed beginning January 1, 2018 to December 31, 2020 covering the front registration plate. The resolve provides that \$16 of the \$25 fee for the State of Maine Bicentennial commemorative plate goes to the Maine State Cultural Affairs Council.

**LD 1301      *An Act To Improve the Safety of Vulnerable Users in Traffic and To Clarify the Responsibilities of Bicyclists and Pedestrians*      PUBLIC 164**

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
VOLK RYKERSON	OTP-AM	S-177

This bill amends the motor vehicle laws as follows.

1. It creates a vulnerable user law to protect people on public ways who are not in motor vehicles. A "vulnerable user" is defined as a pedestrian, a person performing emergency work or a person riding or using a nonmotorized

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device or certain motorized devices such as a motorcycle, scooter, Segway or electric personal assistive mobility device. A motorist who assaults, attempts to assault, taunts or distracts a vulnerable user, because that person is a vulnerable user, commits a traffic infraction and is subject to the same penalties as a person who texts while operating a motor vehicle.

2. It requires a driver education course to contain at least 30 minutes of instruction to impart the understanding and skills necessary to operate a motor vehicle safely in a situation in which a vulnerable user is sharing the road with that motor vehicle.
3. It amends the law regarding pedestrians in crosswalks to require a motor vehicle to stop and remain stopped when a pedestrian or an extension of a pedestrian is in the lane, including a bicycle lane, in which the motor vehicle is traveling or a lane adjacent to that lane. Nonmotorized traffic is required to yield to such a pedestrian.
4. It specifies that a person riding a bicycle is required to obey traffic control devices such as lights, stop signs and yield signs.
5. It clarifies the law regarding travel down one-way streets to allow travel against the direction indicated when directed by a law enforcement officer or traffic control device.
6. It specifies that a person riding a bicycle or scooter or operating on roller skis has the same rights and duties as a person operating a motor vehicle pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 29-A, chapter 19, which deals with the operation of a vehicle, except for laws that expressly apply to bicycles, scooters and roller skis or the law expressly only applies to motor vehicles.
7. It expands the provisions of law for which a violation by a person over 17 years of age riding a bicycle or scooter or operating on roller skis is a traffic infraction.
8. It specifies that the operator of a motor vehicle passing a bicyclist or roller skier proceeding in the same direction must exercise due care by taking into consideration the speed of the motor vehicle and other conditions and leaving a reasonable and proper distance between the motor vehicle and the bicycle or roller skier, but not less than 3 feet, while the motor vehicle is passing the bicycle or roller skier.

### **Committee Amendment "A" (S-177)**

This amendment is the majority report of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation. The amendment does the following.

1. It changes the definition of "vulnerable user" in the bill to remove motorcycles and to clarify that "vulnerable user" includes persons who are more vulnerable to injury than those in an automobile, truck or similar motor vehicle.
2. Like the bill, it requires that driver education courses include instruction regarding sharing the road with a vulnerable user, but the amendment eliminates the requirement in the bill that instruction include at least 30 minutes.
3. It strikes from the bill the provisions regarding pedestrians in crosswalks and instead adds new language to existing statute to specify that operators must yield the right-of-way to pedestrians who have shown visible intent to enter the marked crosswalk.
4. It retains provisions in the bill regarding responsibilities of bicyclists that are like responsibilities of motor vehicle operators but consolidates most of these provisions in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 29-A, section 2063, which addresses the rights and duties of bicyclists.

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5. It strikes all proposed new prohibitions and penalties regarding vulnerable users, as the conduct and penalties are covered by current law in Titles 17-A and 29-A.

**Enacted Law Summary**

Public Law 2015, chapter 164:

1. Creates a vulnerable user law to protect people on public ways who are not in motor vehicles. A "vulnerable user" included a person who is more vulnerable to injury than a person in an automobile, truck or similar motor vehicle. A motorist who assaults, attempts to assault, taunts or distracts a vulnerable user, because that person is a vulnerable user, commits a traffic infraction and is subject to the same penalties as a person who texts while operating a motor vehicle;
2. Requires that driver education courses include instruction regarding sharing the road with vulnerable users;
3. Specifies that operators must yield the right-of-way to pedestrians who have shown visible intent to enter the marked crosswalk; and
4. Specifies that the responsibilities of bicyclists are like responsibilities of motor vehicle operators, but consolidates most of these provisions in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 29-A, section 2063, which addresses the rights and duties of bicyclists.

**LD 1308     An Act To Eliminate the Requirement That Truck Campers Be Registered**

**Died Between Houses**

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>
DAVIS
SKOLFIELD

<u>Committee Report</u>
ONTP
OTP

Amendments Adopted

This bill repeals the requirement that truck campers be registered.

**LD 1320     An Act To Amend the Laws Relating to Motor Vehicles**

**PUBLIC 206**

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>
MCLEAN
ROSEN

<u>Committee Report</u>
OTP-AM

<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
H-224

This bill amends the motor vehicle laws to:

1. Increase the gross weight requirements for pickup trucks from 6,000 pounds to 10,000 pounds so pickup trucks under 10,001 pounds can be registered with passenger-type plates;
2. Increase the registration fee for antique autos from \$15 to \$30;
3. Discontinue the muffler bypass permit as this permit is obsolete;
4. Clarify that the cancellation fee for all commercial examinations, including a Class C commercial examination, is \$30;