MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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STATE OF MAINE

127TH LEGISLATURE

SECOND REGULAR SESSION

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

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AND LEGAL AFFAIRS

May 2016

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STATE OF MAINE

127TH LEGISLATURE

SECOND REGULAR SESSION

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 Second 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.

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 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 127th Legislature is July 29, 2016. The effective date for legislation enacted as an emergency measure may be found in the enacted law summary for that legislation.

Enacted Law Summary

Public Law 2015, chapter 397 updates the laws governing the Maine Veterans' Homes and repeals outdated provisions, including removing reference to specific veterans' home locations. It increases the borrowing authority of the Maine Veterans' Homes from $15,000,000 to $50,000,000. It repeals a requirement that the Maine Veterans' Homes develop and implement a geriatric training program and changes the title of the position of the person who administers the homes from administrator to chief executive officer. It repeals a requirement relating to payment of costs by veterans admitted to the homes. Chapter 397 repeals a requirement that excess funds be transferred to the General Fund and provisions relating to the use of stipend funds. Finally, this law makes changes to an annual reporting requirement.

LD 1539   **An Act To Expand the Early Processing of Absentee Ballots**   **PUBLIC 406**
EMERGENCY

Sponsor(s)	Committee Report	Amendments Adopted
O'CONNOR B	OTP-AM	H-560

This bill provides that a municipality may opt to process absentee ballots as early as the fourth day before the election. It also authorizes the Secretary of State to make available high-speed tabulators for absentee ballots and to allow a municipality to bring absentee ballots to a central location for tabulating by the high-speed tabulators as long as security guidelines are properly followed.

Committee Amendment "A" (H-560)

This amendment provides that a municipality may opt to process absentee ballots on the third day prior to election day, unlike the bill, which permits absentee ballot processing on the third and fourth days. The amendment clarifies that any person may request an opportunity to inspect ballots subject to early processing if that person provides notice by 9:00 a.m. on the day the ballots will be processed. This amendment strikes the portion of the bill that allows municipalities to use a high-speed tabulator at a central location for counting absentee ballots.

Finally, this amendment adds an emergency preamble and emergency clause to the bill.

Enacted Law Summary

Public Law 2015, chapter 406 provides that a municipality may opt to process absentee ballots on the third day prior to election day. It also clarifies that any person may request an opportunity to inspect ballots subject to early processing if that person provides notice by 9:00 a.m. on the day the ballots will be processed.

Public Law 2015, chapter 406 was enacted as an emergency measure effective March 24, 2016.

LD 1557   **An Act To Establish Ranked-choice Voting**   **INDEF PP**

Sponsor(s)	Committee Report	Amendments Adopted

This bill was not referred to committee.

This initiated bill provides for the establishment of ranked-choice voting for the offices of United States Senator, United States Representative to Congress, Governor, State Senator and State Representative for elections held on or after January 1, 2018. Ranked-choice voting is a method of casting and tabulating votes in which voters rank