

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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STATE OF MAINE
128TH LEGISLATURE
FIRST REGULAR SESSION



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

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

August 2017

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STATE OF MAINE

128TH 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 128th 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 128th Legislature is Wednesday, November 1, 2017. 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

areas.

Part B of the bill limits the use of the funds under Part A to implementation grants awarded from the Municipal Gigabit Broadband Network Access Fund and requires the grants to be expended on open-access nondiscriminatory broadband infrastructure in unserved or underserved areas.

Part C of the bill amends the laws establishing the Municipal Gigabit Broadband Network Access Fund to require planning grant applicants to plan for postconstruction operation and maintenance. Part C clarifies that a municipality may be eligible for ConnectME Authority implementation grant funds without relying on planning grant funds from the authority if the municipality meets certain statutory planning requirements. Part C also clarifies that municipally financed planning expenditures may be deducted from the 25% cash match requirement of the implementation grant. The changes made in Part C are contingent on the ratification of the bond issue in Part A by the voters of the State.

This bill was carried over to any special or regular session of the 128th Legislature by joint order, H.P. 1138.

LD 229

An Act To Prohibit an Electric Utility from Charging a Customer for Using an Electromechanical Meter

Died Between Houses

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
MIRAMANT D SIROCKI H	ONTP OTP-AM	

This bill prohibits a transmission and distribution utility from charging a customer a fee, monthly charge or higher rate for declining the installation of a wireless smart meter or for the removal of a wireless smart meter. A transmission and distribution utility is prohibited from including any costs associated with a customer's choosing an electromechanical meter in rates charged to that customer.

With approval by the Public Utilities Commission, an investor-owned transmission and distribution utility may decrease the number of times an electromechanical meter is read for a customer that declines the installation of a wireless smart meter but may not read the meter less frequently than once every 12 months and may establish a rate collection method that is based upon the average electricity consumption of the customer. If a transmission and distribution utility prefers a more frequent electromechanical meter reading, the utility may establish a method for a customer to provide the utility with a more frequent electromechanical meter reading, as long as the method does not impose a cost on the customer.

This bill requires the utility to establish a process by which the utility provides a refund to a customer if a billing based on average usage results in an overpayment by a customer and an appropriate rebilling of a customer if such a billing results in an underpayment by the customer.

Committee Amendment "A" (S-176)

This amendment is the minority report of the committee and replaces the bill. It requires the Public Utilities Commission to quantify the costs and benefits of advanced metering infrastructure from the initial purchase and deployment to the effective date of the resolve. It requires the commission to identify barriers to achieving benefits of advanced metering infrastructure and to propose solutions to realize benefits such as reducing costs and advancing state policy. It also requires the commission to consider providing a discount to customers that use advanced metering infrastructure instead of an electromechanical meter, rather than charging a fee to those customers that decline the installation of advanced metering infrastructure. The commission is directed to submit a report, including recommendations, to the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology by January 30, 2018.

Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology

This amendment was not adopted.

LD 240 An Act To Increase Transparency in Maine's Electricity Market ONTP

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
HAMPER J WADSWORTH N	ONTP	

This bill prohibits a competitive electricity provider from continuing generation service to a consumer beyond 12 months without annual express consent from the consumer.

LD 255 An Act To Implement Electric Grid Reliability Recommendations ONTP

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

This bill is a concept draft pursuant to Joint Rule 208.

This bill proposes directing the Public Utilities Commission to pursue the four recommendations made by Emprimus LLC of Minneapolis, MN in Emprimus LLC's report to the Public Utilities Commission filed January 6, 2015, Docket Number 2013-00145, regarding the effect of geomagnetic disturbances and electromagnetic pulses on the State's electric grid. These recommendations include:

1. Pursuing neutral blocking in the 18 transformers of the State's electric grid with the highest geo-electric-induced currents;
2. Installing electromagnetic pulse and intentional electromagnetic interference detectors at key substations on the State's electric grid;
3. Installing electromagnetic pulse and intentional electromagnetic interference protective cabinets at key substations on the State's electric grid; and
4. Monitoring the costs and benefits derived from protection of the State's electric system from harmful effects of geomagnetic disturbances and support the cost recovery of supplemental reliability improvements to Central Maine Power's Maine Power Reliability Program.

LD 256 An Act To Ensure Continued Availability of High-speed Broadband PUBLIC 244
Internet at Maine's Schools and Libraries

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
GROHMAN M MAKER J	OTP-AM OTP-AM	H-189

This bill changes the limit on the amount of the fee on prepaid wireless telecommunications service collected by the Public Utilities Commission from a percentage to a flat amount. This bill also requires the Public Utilities Commission to convene a stakeholder group to evaluate and provide recommendations regarding the method of collection of funds to support telecommunications access at libraries and public schools. The commission is required to report to the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology by January 30, 2018, and