

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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STATE OF MAINE
129TH LEGISLATURE
FIRST SPECIAL AND SECOND REGULAR SESSIONS



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

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

November 2020

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STATE OF MAINE

129TH LEGISLATURE
FIRST 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 First Regular Session of the 129th 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 129th Legislature is Thursday, September 19, 2019. 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

**LD 173 An Act To Provide Critical Communications for Family Farms,
Businesses and Residences by Strategic Public Investment in High-speed
Internet and Broadband Infrastructure**

CARRIED OVER

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
MCCREAD CARSON B	OTP-AM	H-698

This bill was carried over in committee from the First Regular Session of the 129th Legislature by joint order, H.P. 1322.

This bill is a concept draft pursuant to Joint Rule 208. This bill proposes to increase funding to the ConnectME Authority from \$1,000,000 to \$5,000,000 to expand universal broadband and high-speed Internet into rural areas identified as the 6% of the State unserved by high-speed Internet. This bill proposes to make expanding high-speed Internet into unserved rural areas a key emphasis in the economic development of the State by directing the ConnectME Authority to use the increased funding to increase the rate of strategic broadband investment and leverage additional federal funding to provide middle-mile and last-mile infrastructure in the unserved areas and to correct broadband deficiencies identified in the ConnectME Authority's baseline update of 2013.

Committee Amendment "A" (H-698)

This amendment replaces the bill, which is a concept draft. The amendment requires that 33% of sales and use tax revenue collected by the State Tax Assessor from marketplace facilitators, with respect to marketplace-facilitated sales, after required transfers to other funds be transferred to the ConnectME Authority to further deployment of high-speed Internet and broadband infrastructure to unserved and underserved areas of the State. This amendment also adds an emergency preamble and emergency clause to the bill.

This bill was carried over on the Special Appropriations Table to any special session of the 129th Legislature by joint order, S.P. 788.

LD 432 An Act To Amend the Greater Augusta Utility District Charter

P & S 18

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
WARREN C POULIOTM	OTP-AM	H-684

This bill was carried over in committee from the First Regular Session of the 129th Legislature by joint order, H.P. 1322.

This bill is a concept draft pursuant to Joint Rule 208. This bill proposes to make technical changes to the charter of the Greater Augusta Utility District to accommodate the district's growth and change in services and to change its voting membership.

Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology

Committee Amendment "A" (H-684)

This amendment replaces the concept draft. The amendment adds a provision to the Greater Augusta Utility District charter that authorizes the district to disconnect water service for the nonpayment of wastewater charges. The amendment also adds a provision to the charter to allow the nonvoting representative of the City of Hallowell on the district's board of trustees to vote in the absence of the voting representative of the City of Hallowell on the board.

Enacted Law Summary

Private and Special Law 2019, chapter 18 adds a provision to the Greater Augusta Utility District charter that authorizes the district to disconnect water service for the nonpayment of wastewater charges. The law also adds a provision to the charter to allow the nonvoting representative of the City of Hallowell on the district's board of trustees to vote in the absence of the voting representative of the City of Hallowell on the board.

LD 790 An Act To Eliminate the Cap on the Number of Accounts or Meters Designated for Net Energy Billing ONTP

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
MIRAMANT D EVANGELOS J	ONTP	

This bill was carried over in committee from the First Regular Session of the 129th Legislature by joint order, H.P. 1322.

This bill prohibits the Public Utilities Commission from adopting or amending net energy billing rules pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 35-A, section 3209-A to impose any limit on the number of accounts or meters that customers may designate for net energy billing or any limit on the number of customers that may share an interest in a generation facility for which the energy output is credited as part of any net energy billing.

LD 912 An Act To Establish the Wood Energy Investment Program CARRIED OVER

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
JACKSON T FECTEAUR	OTP-AM	S-193

This bill was carried over in the Senate from the First Regular Session of the 129th Legislature by joint order, H.P. 1322 after having been passed to be enacted by the Legislature and then recalled from the Governor's desk.

This bill establishes the wood energy investment fund and creates the Wood Energy Investment Program within the Efficiency Maine Trust. The bill specifies that, if the Public Utilities Commission finds that an entity awarded a contract for biomass resources pursuant to Public Law 2015, chapter 483 is not meeting contract requirements and therefore is not qualified to receive the full contract payment or any contract payment, those funds that would have been paid had contract requirements been met must be transferred to the wood energy investment fund. It also specifies that any funds remaining in the cost recovery fund established in Public Law 2015, chapter 483, section 1, subsection 5 that are not needed to pay above-market costs for biomass resources must also be transferred by the Public Utilities Commission to the wood energy investment fund. It requires the trust to use funds from the wood energy investment fund, if there are any, to provide incentives and low-interest or no-interest loans for new wood-derived thermal energy or cogeneration projects. It requires that the trust consult with the Finance Authority of Maine, when appropriate, in the development of any Wood Energy Investment Program incentives and the distribution of money from the wood energy investment fund. It prohibits the use of funds for incentives or loans