

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
LABOR AND HOUSING**

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 Labor and Housing

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

This bill proposes to amend the laws governing the Maine Public Employees Retirement System to provide the same retirement benefits as are provided to law enforcement officers to state employees working in law enforcement, including these job classifications:

1. Emergency dispatchers;
2. Staff in the Maine State Police computer crimes unit;
3. Staff in the Maine State Police Crime Laboratory;
4. Law enforcement staff at the Attorney General's office; and
5. Forest rangers.

Committee Amendment "A" (H-496)

This amendment is the majority report of the committee and replaces the bill. The amendment allows emergency communications specialists in the employment of the Department of Public Safety to elect to participate in the 1998 Special Plan of the Maine Public Employees Retirement System. Under that plan, a person may retire at 55 years of age with 10 years of creditable service or may retire before 55 years of age with 25 years of creditable service. The amendment also adds an appropriations and allocations section.

Enacted Law Summary

Public Law 2019, chapter 537 allows emergency communications specialists in the employment of the Department of Public Safety to elect to participate in the 1998 Special Plan of the Maine Public Employees Retirement System. Under that plan, a person may retire at 55 years of age with 10 years of creditable service or may retire before 55 years of age with 25 years of creditable service.

LD 857 An Act To Increase Accountability for Wage Violations

CARRIED OVER

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
COLLINGS B BELLOWS S	OTP-AM ONTP	H-78

This bill was carried over from the First Regular Session of the 129th Legislature on the Special Appropriations Table by joint order, H.P. 1322.

This bill amends the law regarding employment practices by increasing the fine for a violation of certain state wage and benefits laws to \$500 for the first violation and \$2,500 for each subsequent violation and by providing a private right of action for a person aggrieved of such a violation. It amends the law regarding employees' remedies to provide that in a judgment for an employee an additional amount of three times the unpaid wages must be awarded the employee. It also provides ongoing funds for 10 labor and safety inspector positions within the Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Standards, Wage and Hour Division beginning October 1, 2019.

Committee Amendment "A" (H-78)

This amendment, which is the majority report of the committee, changes the fine structure proposed in the bill from a \$2,500 fine for each subsequent violation of the various wage and hour laws to a fine of at least \$500 but not

Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing

more than \$2,500 for each subsequent violation. It also strikes new language added by the bill regarding a civil action remedy for violations of various wage and hour laws. It reduces the liquidated damages available in a civil action to collect unpaid minimum wages from three times the amount of unpaid wages, as proposed by the bill, to twice the amount of unpaid wages, and it reduces the Labor and Safety Inspector positions added to the bill from 10 to four.

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

LD 900 An Act To Expand the Rights of Public Employees under the Maine Labor Laws CARRIED OVER

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
SYLVESTER M MIRAMANT D	OTP-AM 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 allows public employees, including municipal and county employees, state and legislative employees, university, academy and community college employees and judicial employees, but not including employees whose duties include protecting public safety, to strike pursuant to the official procedures of the employees' employee organization or under a process in which an affirmative vote to strike is held. The bill requires that notice be given to the public employer stating the dates upon which the strike will begin and end. The bill also provides that the employee organization or public employer may call for emergency bargaining within three days prior to the intended start of the strike.

Committee Amendment "A" (H-725)

This amendment, which is the majority report of the committee, clarifies which employees' duties include protecting public safety and are therefore prohibited from striking. It prohibits a public employer from permanently replacing an employee because that employee engaged in a strike. It clarifies that under certain circumstances an employer may require an employee to report to work during a strike, but allows the employee to file a grievance if the employee is required to work during a strike. It also specifies that judicial employees whose duties ensure an individual's procedural due process rights are not denied are prohibited from striking.

This bill was carried over in the House to any special session of the 129th Legislature by joint order, S.P. 788.

LD 1104 An Act To Clarify the State's Commitments Concerning Certain Public Service Retirement Benefits PUBLIC 540

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
DUNPHY M BELLOWS S	OTP-AM	H-205

This bill was passed to be enacted by the Legislature and then held by the Governor at the end of the First Regular Session of the 129th Legislature. It became law without signature at the beginning of the Second Regular Session.

This bill changes the contractual commitment to maintain state-protected benefits regarding cost-of-living adjustments for retired state employees and teachers by specifying that it constitutes a solemn contractual commitment of the State that is protected under the Constitution of Maine and the United States Constitution.