

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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REP. STEVEN D. FOSTER

STAFF:

LUCIA NIXON, LEGISLATIVE ANALYST
OFFICE OF POLICY AND LEGAL ANALYSIS
13 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, ME 04333
(207) 287-1670
<http://legislature.maine.gov/opla/>

*Committee member for a portion of the session

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

Enacted Law Summary

Public Law 2019, chapter 576 provides that retail electricity sales pursuant to a supply contract or standard-offer service arrangement executed by a competitive electricity provider that is in effect on September 19, 2019, are exempt from the requirement for the purchase of thermal renewable energy credits until the end date of the existing term of the supply contract or standard-offer service arrangement.

LD 1913 An Act To Prohibit Certain Wheeling Charges for the Transmission of Electricity ONTP

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
JACKSON T MARTIN J	ONTP	

This bill prohibits an investor-owned transmission and distribution utility located in an area administered by the Northern Maine Independent System Administrator from charging a person generating or selling electricity for the transmission, or wheeling, of that electricity to or from Canada over the utility's transmission system.

LD 1917 An Act To Eliminate Direct Retail Competition for the Supply of Electricity to Residential Consumers Accepted Majority (ONTP) Report

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

This bill eliminates retail-level competition for residential electricity customers and amends the competitive process for selecting standard-offer service providers for residential and small commercial electricity customers. It also requires the Public Utilities Commission to designate or hire an employee to assist the commission in administering standard-offer service.

Committee Amendment "A" (S-406)

This amendment is the minority report of the committee. The amendment replaces the bill with a resolve. The amendment directs the Public Utilities Commission to submit a report to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over energy, utilities and technology matters regarding the competition in the retail market for the supply of electricity to residential customers. The amendment authorizes the committee to report out a bill to the First Regular Session of the 130th Legislature related to the report. This amendment was not adopted.

LD 2013 An Act To Extend Arrearage Management Program Requirements for Transmission and Distribution Utilities for One Year PUBLIC 608

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
RILEY T	OTP	

This bill delays by one year, from September 30, 2021, to September 30, 2022, the repeal of the requirement that an investor-owned transmission and distribution utility implement an arrearage management program to assist low-income residential customers with their electricity bills and the requirement that the Efficiency Maine Trust work with utilities that participate in an arrearage management program.

Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology

Enacted Law Summary

Public Law 2019, chapter 608 delays by one year, from September 30, 2021, to September 30, 2022, the repeal of the requirement that an investor-owned transmission and distribution utility implement an arrearage management program to assist low-income residential customers with their electricity bills and the requirement that the Efficiency Maine Trust work with utilities that participate in an arrearage management program.

LD 2017 **An Act To Promote Renewable Energy Resources by Establishing an Energy-to-Gas Pilot Project**

CARRIED OVER

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
RILEY T WOODSOME D	OTP-AM ONTP	

This bill requires the Public Utilities Commission to develop and oversee a pilot project for the conversion of excess renewable energy generated from sources such as wind, solar or tidal power into methane gas and the storage of the converted methane gas for future use. It allows up to three energy-to-gas facilities, each up to 10 megawatts in production capacity, to be established under the project. The bill exempts renewable energy transmitted to an energy-to-gas facility from all transmission and distribution charges. The commission is required to establish the pilot project no later than January 1, 2021; the pilot project expires December 31, 2026.

Committee Amendment "A" (H-757)

This amendment is the majority report of the committee. The amendment replaces the bill. The amendment authorizes the Public Utilities Commission to establish and oversee a power-to-fuel pilot program. The commission may approve up to two power-to-fuel projects between January 1, 2021, and December 31, 2026, each up to 10 megawatts in production capacity, that convert renewable energy to hydrogen gas, methane gas or other fuel. Under the pilot program, sales of renewable energy to a power-to-fuel project are exempt from distribution charges, charges associated with the procurement of energy efficiency resources and renewable portfolio standards requirements for a period of 15 years from the date of project operation. The amendment requires the commission to submit a report on the pilot program by November 1, 2022, to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over energy and utility matters.

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

LD 2021 **An Act To Provide Funding for Broadband Internet Infrastructure in Unserved and Underserved Areas**

CARRIED OVER

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
HERBIG E RILEY T	OTP-AM ONTP	

This bill appropriates \$15,000,000 from the General Fund to the ConnectME Authority for the provision of broadband Internet infrastructure in unserved and underserved areas.

Committee Amendment "A" (S-414)

This amendment is the majority report of the committee. The amendment changes the program under the ConnectME Authority that receives the General Fund appropriation in the bill from the Municipal Gigabit Broadband Network Access Fund program to the Office of Broadband Development program.