

# Legislative BULLETIN

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## Tax Reform

The municipalities will raise \$842 million for K-12 education this year, the state will contribute \$664 million. The municipal share by percentage is 56%, the state share is 44%. A lot of people think those percentages should be reversed. Even state law suggests they should be reversed. Almost every legislator says the state should be paying a greater share of the cost of education.

But year after year, the percentages don't change. All those legislators say the percentages should change, but in the end they don't. In fact, over the last 10 years the local share has done nothing but grow relative to the state share.

The sales tax base is remarkably narrow, one of the narrowest in the nation. Written into law in 1953, the sales tax code was adopted into the economy of black-and-white t.v.s and overgrown Victory Gardens. The tin penny was still in wide circulation. About the only changes to the sales tax code that have taken place since Eisenhower was President is that it's been eroded by exemptions enacted annually by the Legislature to please one group or another. There is nary a legislator who defends the code, and most claim that it must be rewritten for any number of good public policy reasons.

But year after year goes by with no reform. All those legislators saying the tax code should get rebuilt, but it doesn't.

Action speaks louder than words, and so the municipalities can only conclude that the level of state spending on education and the archaic structure of the sales tax are both conscious and deliberate choices that have been made



*Taxation Committee members take in testimony on LD 1375 (see article below). From left to right, Rep. Barney McGowan (Pittsfield), Rep. Rosita Gagne (Buckfield), Rep. Randy Bumps (China), Rep. David Bowles (Sanford), Rep. Steve Stanley (Medway).*

by the Legislature. Whether that is true or not may be decided by the Taxation Committee's action on three bills that were given their public hearing on Wednesday this week. Taken together in any combination, these bills could set the stage for the most significant legislative effort to address these problems that has materialized in years.

One initiative is sponsored by Representative Barney McGowan (Pittsfield) and the other two are sponsored by Senator Peter Mills (Somerset Cty.).

Rep. McGowan's LD 970, *An Act to Limit the Use of Property Taxes to Fund Education*, is a "concept draft" bill that would limit to 4 mills the property tax rates that could be assessed by a municipality for education. Based in large part on the dramatic redesign in education funding that occurred in Michigan in the mid 1990's, LD 970 would make-up the lost education revenues that such a property tax limit would create by reforming the sales tax code to include some of the

many goods and services that are currently exempt from that tax.

Senator Mill's LD 795, *An Act to Rebalance Maine's Tax Code and Reduce the Structural Gap*, is also "concept draft" legislation that would make

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## *Where's the Dam Going to Break?*

The pressure on the property tax, and its fundamental incapacity to meet the financial needs facing Maine's service center communities, came to the fore on Monday this week, when the Taxation Committee opened public hearings on one bill that would allow municipalities to adopt a local option sales tax, and another bill that would set some standards of eligibility for the property tax exemption enjoyed by the so-called "benevolent and charitable"

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## TAX REFORM (cont'd)

a number of very specific changes to the income, sales and property tax codes, and then create a special tax reform commission. The commission would be charged with making recommendations to the Legislature expand the sales tax base in order to regain the lost revenue that would result from the specific recommendations.

LD 1410, also sponsored by Senator Mills, would send a proposal out to the voters to amend the state's Constitution to modernize the constitutional provision that currently holds municipalities 100% responsible for the costs of the public schools. LD 1410 would also amend the Constitution to repeal all references to the property tax so that the Legislature would be unconstrained from completely rebuilding the property tax code.

The Tax Committee will be taking up these bills at a work session on the afternoon of Wednesday, April 4. Senator Mills, MMA and others suggested that the Committee cobble together elements from all three bills and forge a Committee bill structured on a "base closing commission" model. A bill of that kind would institute a blue-ribbon commission of legislators and charge the group with developing a comprehensive reform of the state's tax code that, among other results, modernizes the sales tax to match the economy, reduces the volatility of the state's tax revenue system, and substantially reduces the state's dependency on the property tax to pay for education. The comprehensive reform package would then be submitted to the Legislature

during its second session, beginning in January, 2002, for an up-or-down vote to send the package to the voters in November, 2002 for ratification.

It's bold, but it's possible. If there's a will. (GH)

## BREAK (cont'd)

organizations, the vast majority of which are located in our service centers.

No significant help from the Legislature is on the horizon to help those communities with their punishing tax burdens. The two-year state budget, developed and unanimously endorsed on Tuesday this week by the Appropriations Committee, has taken the Hippocratic Oath with the municipalities to "do no harm". The education subsidy increase (GPA) stands at 5.4%, which includes a \$4.65 million "cushion" distributed outside the GPA formula for the benefit of those school systems that would lose money under its terms. A modest 2.5% cost of living adjustment was tacked onto the County Jail Support appropriation. The Appropriations Committee rejected the idea put forward in Governor King's proposed budget to tap into the natural growth of municipal revenue sharing to help pay for the Business Equipment Tax Reimbursement Program (BETR).

But financial assistance from the state for regional capital investment, the implementation of meaningful growth management or property tax relief is nowhere in sight.

**The Charitable Exemption.** When rations become short, there is increased scrutiny on the equitability of their distribution, and there has never been such a sharp focus on the fairness of property tax exemptions. When people have to pay 2% — 3% of the value of their property every year to fund local and county government and the schools, they begin to wonder with some justification why big institutional properties, with well-paid staff, advertising campaigns, and sizable demands on local services, don't. When private, tax-paying businesses are squeezed out by tax exempt institutions which can afford to operate on narrower margins, that begins to raise some eyebrows, too.

Three bills seeking to infuse some

standards into the wide-open property tax exemption for charitable organizations were presented to the Tax Committee this week, but the one drawing the most fire from the charity lobby was MMA's LD 1375, *An Act to Establish Minimum Standards of Eligibility for the Property Tax Exemption for Charitable Institutions*. The bill was presented to the Committee by its sponsor, Rep. Walter Gooley of Farmington.

On the basis of LD 1375's opponents, you would have thought the real title of the bill was "An Act to Extinguish the Corporate Charters of the YMCA's in Maine".

The essential elements of both the statutory law and the case law on the charitable exemption were written in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, when charitable organizations were remarkably easier to discern than the complex, multi-million dollar corporations of today. Under current Maine law, a non-profit corporation qualifies for a 100% property tax exemption if it serves a "charitable purpose" and does not operate under a profit motive. Absent any definition of "charitable purpose" in Maine statutory law, Maine's Supreme Court has crafted its own definition which is wide enough to drive a truck through.

LD 1375 would add one meaningful standard to the law. A charitable organization would have to "donate or render gratuitously a substantial portion of its goods or services", which is the classic definition of "charity". Borrowing from Pennsylvania law, LD 1375 creates five alternative ways to evaluate whether that standard has been met by using a charitable institution's tax return information, the IRS 990 form, which must be provided to the public without resistance as a matter of IRS law.

Municipal assessors from Falmouth, Lewiston, Westbrook, South Portland, and Livermore Falls, owners of health fitness centers that are having trouble competing with the exempt fitness centers, and Rep. Ron Collins (Wells) on behalf of one of those tax-paying fitness clubs all joined MMA to urge the adoption of some quantifiable measures of charity.

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### Legislative Bulletin

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Editorial Staff: Geoffrey Herman, Kate Dufour, Kirsten Hebert, and Laura Veilleux of the State & Federal Relations staff.

Representatives for a statewide and a regional organization of non-profit organizations, the Maine Hospital Association, Pine Tree Camps, and seven separate YMCA's spoke in opposition to the bill. When questioned by committee members, the spokesperson for the Hospital Association said he couldn't tell if hospitals would meet the minimum standards of charity presented in LD 1375. All the YMCA's, on the other hand, said they would easily meet the minimum standards proposed by LD 1375, but they were scared those standards might get adjusted over time if the concept of measurable standards were allowed into statute. One YMCA spokeswoman said that it is impossible to quantify charity, another said that Webster's Dictionary definition should suffice. They all maintained their "missions" were integral to reducing governmental burden.

The most insistent testimony came from Bill Haggett, the former head of Bath Iron Works and now a fund raiser for the Bath YMCA. Haggett criticized both the spirit and intent of LD 1375 and condemned the municipal association for "getting on this issue", suggesting that it was inappropriate for paid municipal officials to be sent to Augusta to present testimony on tax exemption legislation. Haggett insisted that the regular citizens who pay their full-freight property taxes are not at all concerned about the charitable property tax exemption and if given a referendum opportunity to reauthorize the full exemption for these organizations, the citizens would vote overwhelmingly to do so.

Local referenda on the eligibility of exempt institutions is an opportunity the municipalities would love to explore. The Tax Committee's work session on LD 1375 is scheduled for Tuesday, April 3<sup>rd</sup> at 1:00 p.m.

**The Local Option Sales Tax.** If something is going to be done to get necessary financial resources to the state's service center communities, it is very possible that the municipalities will have to do it themselves.

Mayors, councilors and town and city managers from Bangor and Freeport, Lewiston on Ogunquit, Port-

land and Old Orchard Beach spent a couple of hours on Monday documenting for the benefit of the Taxation Committee the need for some access to additional sources of revenue to meet their capital needs. The proposal would allow Maine to join 33 other states that entrust to their municipalities a form of local option sales tax.

The bill before the Committee, LD 82 – *An Act to Allow Municipalities to Establish a Local Option Sales and Use Tax* – was presented by its sponsor, Rep. Tom Bull (Freeport), who stressed the two elements of the syllogism for which LD 82 is the conclusion.

First, the regional service center communities have undeniable and significant needs to develop the infrastructure to support the regional services they are compelled to provide. Auditoriums, civic centers, conference centers, parking garages, industrial parks, affordable housing...and yet the already punitive property tax rate in those communities makes it impossible to support the construction of that infrastructure through additional assessments to the property tax payers.

The other leg upon which LD 82 stands is that the instrument to secure revenue to support these projects would be a *local option* sales tax approved by the citizens at referendum most directly affected by its imposition. By itself, the legislation would not be raising taxes one iota. It would only give permission to the citizens to make some tax decisions for themselves.

Funding this type of infrastructure by the state is not a priority if you look at the legislative record. School construction funds have historically followed the populations leaving the service centers. The Municipal Infrastructure Trust Fund, created 10 years ago as a resource for municipalities on paper, has never been provided a dime by the Legislature. Revenue Sharing II was a policy initiative adopted last year and predicated on increased funding to the high mill rate municipalities, but as is often the case with policy initiatives adopted by the Legislature, the increased funding to make Revenue Sharing II an effective source of help to Maine's hub communities is failing to materialize. Given that lack of lack of

legislative priority, the municipalities wonder why the Legislature would also block the rights of the citizens themselves to structure taxation alternatives that best meet their financing needs.

In its historical resistance to local option taxation, one has to wonder who the Legislature is trying to protect, and from whom?

After documenting the need, all of the proponents of LD 82 said that the printed bill needed some work to make it the product they would like to present to the full Legislature. As printed, the bill provides a wide-open option which the municipalities recognize needs to be more limited, accountable, and integrated with land use and economic development strategies on the state level. The proponents indicated, for example, that the local option sales tax should:

- Be limited to a maximum of 1%;
- Contain transaction limits so that it would not apply to the full value of "big-ticket" transactions to avoid the concern about retail migration;
- Be project-specific so that the voters at referendum would be deciding on a specific sales tax amount (up to a penny) to retire the debt on a specific project or projects, to last for a defined duration; and
- Be linked in some way to economic development and growth management strategies that are developed and maintained by the Department of Economic and Community Development and the State Planning Office.

Lobbyists for the Maine Merchants' Association, the Maine State Chamber of Commerce, the Maine Automobile Dealers Association, the Maine Restaurant Association, the Maine Distilled Spirits Council and the Maine Innkeepers' Association as well as two businessmen from Old Orchard Beach, spoke in opposition to LD 82. Although all the opponents expressed an understanding of the need facing the service center communities, their proposed solution was anything but a local option sales tax. Instead they proposed all the other solutions that the Legislature, by its actions of the last decade, has already rejected.

The work session for LD 82 is Tuesday, April 3 at 1:00 p.m. (GH)

# LD Post-Mortem

The following bills have been reported out of their respective committees with unanimous "Ought Not to Pass" reports, which all but guarantees a final rejection by the full Legislature, or have been finally rejected by the full Legislature (final ONTP).

## **State and Local Government**

LD 184 – An Act to Expand Contract Zoning Authority for Municipalities. (Sponsored by Rep. O'Neil of Saco) (final ONTP)

LD 319 – An Act to Allow Municipalities to Advertise Legal Notices in Weekly Newspapers. (Sponsored by Sen. McAlevey of York Cty.) (unanimous ONTP)

LD 568 – An Act to Improve Local Governmental Unit Access to Bulk Purchasing. (Sponsored by Rep. Mitchell of Vassalboro) (unanimous ONTP)

LD 639 – An Act to Require Notification to All Property Owners in a Municipality of a Zoning Change Made in That Municipality. (Sponsored by Rep. Foster of Gray) (By Request) (unanimous ONTP)

LD 1131 – An Act to Allow Municipalities to Advertise Legal Notices in Weekly Newspapers. (Sponsored by Rep. Nass of Acton) (unanimous ONTP)

## **Taxation**

LD 64 – An Act to Improve the Veterans' Property Tax Exemption. (Sponsored by Rep. Schneider of Durham) (unanimous ONTP)

LD 86 – An Act to Exclude Antique Autos from Excise Tax. (Sponsored by Rep. Brooks of Winterport) (final ONTP)

LD 124 – An Act to Allow for a Prorated Application of Property Tax Exemptions for Charitable and Benevolent Institutions. (Sponsored by Rep. Mayo of Bath) (final ONTP)

LD 144 – An Act to Reduce the Tax on Gasoline. (Sponsored by Rep. Snowe-Mello of Poland) (unanimous ONTP)

LD 145 – An Act to Protect Senior Homeowners. (Sponsored by Rep. Mendros of Lewiston) (final ONTP)

LD 171 – An Act to Require the State to Reimburse Communities and Unorganized Territories for Loss of Tax Revenue when the State Purchased 100 Acres or More of Land. (Sponsored by Rep. Carr of Lincoln) (final ONTP)

LD 174 – An Act to Amend the Determination of Penalty for the Tree Growth Tax Law. (Sponsored by Rep. Gooley of Farimington) (final ONTP)

LD 180 – An Act to Increase the Home-

stead Property Tax Exemption. (Sponsored by Rep. Bunker of Kossuth Township) (final ONTP)

LD 261 – An Act to Establish the Maine Resident Homestead Property Tax Rebate Program. (Sponsored by Rep. Goodwin of Pembroke) (final ONTP)

LD 398 – An Act to Allow Municipalities to Determine the Level of Auto Excise Tax. (Sponsored by Sen. Kilkelly of Lincoln) (final ONTP)

LD 496 – An Act to Amend the Maine Revenue-sharing Formula. (Sponsored by Sen. Lemont of York) (final ONTP)

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## **Retroactive Citizen Initiatives**

On Wednesday, March 28<sup>th</sup> the State and Local Government Committee voted (6-5) that LD 796, *An Act to Amend the Laws Governing Municipal Citizen Initiatives and Referenda* "ought not to pass".

The intent of the bill is to determine when an ordinance change proposed by citizen initiative petition becomes effective. As proposed, LD 796 would establish that ordinances enacted by the citizen-petition method could not invalidate or have the effect of invalidating any building or zoning permit or land use approval (e.g., subdivision, site plan review, variance, or other type of local land use approval) that was issued or approved prior to the enactment of the citizen-initiated ordinance.

This restriction on the retroactive nature of citizen-initiated ordinances is important to municipal officials because it brings a better level of predictability to the land use regulatory system. It is difficult to attract new development into a community if existing land use or zoning ordinances can be changed in such a way to impact development proposals that have already been approved and financed according to the existing body of local regulation. New businesses and important new development may be reluctant to invest in a community if it is possible for the citizens to overturn the rules upon which a development plan was based and approved.

Although all Committee members agreed that the bill addressed a fairness issue, the members disagreed as to who should be impacted by the bill, the developers or the citizen groups. Proponents of the bill agree that if a person was provided a building permit and underwent a municipality's process for obtaining permission to develop, then he or she should be able to rely on that permission. Opponents of the bill believe that the state should not limit an individual's right, through the referendum process, to impact the course of development in their communities.

MMA is of the opinion that the minority "ought to pass" report should be adopted. A possible compromise could be to amend the bill so that its impact would be less sweeping. The amended bill would simply clarify that the effective date of an ordinance change proposed by petition could not be earlier than the date the petition was certified by the municipal clerk as having a sufficient number of valid signatures, and that any amendments to the local regulatory standards could not reach back and affect a development project that was already "vested" as defined in current law (Title 1, section 302). (KD)

*(The bill summaries are written by MMA staff and are not necessarily the bill's summary statement or an excerpt from that summary statement. There are many more bills of municipal interest being printed than there is space in the Legislative Bulletin for their description. Our attempt is to provide a description of what would appear to be the bills of most significance to local government, but we would advise municipal officials to also review the comprehensive list of LDs of municipal interest that can be found on MMA's website, [www.memun.org](http://www.memun.org).)*

### **Criminal Justice**

LD 1662 – An Act Resolve, to Study the Emergency Medical Services System. (Sponsored by Rep. Bull of Freeport; additional cosponsors)

This emergency resolve would establish a 13-member Task Force to study the Emergency Medical Services System.

### **Education and Cultural Affairs**

LD 1684 – An Act to Ensure Adequate Funding for School Construction Costs. (Sponsored by Rep. McGlocklin of Embden; additional cosponsors)

This bill would add a 10% surcharge to the tuition rate paid by the Department of Education for students from the Unorganized Territories who go to SAD 58 to cover increased debt services costs associated with a school expansion necessary, at least in part, to accommodate the tuitioned students.

LD 1734 – An Act to Promote Safe Schools. (Sponsored by Rep. Dudley of Portland; additional cosponsors)

This bill would amend the Maine Tort Claims Act to make a school administrative unit liable for acts of physical threat, physical force, harassment or terrorizing against a student on school grounds for reasons of race, color, religion, sex, ancestry, natural origin, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation of the student, and the school knew or had reason to know of the potential for violence and did not act to prevent it.

LD 1747 – An Act Regarding School Funding Based on Essential Programs and Services. (Sponsored by Rep. Richard of

Madison; additional cosponsors)

This bill would set the stage for transitioning the current education subsidy system to a modified distribution system based on the Essential Programs and Services (EPS) model. This bill would establish the phase-in period to occur between FY 04 and FY 07, establish that the funding of K-12 education under the EPS model will be a state-local “ joint partnership” , and provide the basic framework of the EPS system, which would differentiate per-student subsidizable costs (for school personnel, supplies and equipment, specialized services, and “ district services” ), modified per-pupil guarantees for special education, limited-English, economically disadvantaged and early-school students, and subsidizable costs not based on per-pupil guarantees (debt service, transportation, vocational education, bus purchases, etc.)

### **Labor**

LD 1754 – An Act to Amend the Laws of the Maine State Retirement System. (Sponsored by Sen. Edmonds of Cumberland City.; additional cosponsor)

This bill would amend the laws governing the Maine State Retirement System. Of municipal interest, the bill establishes the conditions under which a participating local district that has withdrawn from the system may satisfy its liabilities for benefits and receive its net assets after liabilities from the system.

### **State and Local Government**

LD 1673 – An Act to Restructure the Kennebec County Advisory Budget Committee. (Sponsored by Rep. Mitchell of Vassalboro)

This bill would amend the law governing the make-up of the Kennebec County Budget Committee to allow some non-elected municipal officials to serve on the board.

### **Utilities and Energy**

LD 1661 – An Act to Amend the Charter of the Portland Water District to Permit the Extension of Water and Wastewater Service to the Town of Raymond. (Sponsored by Rep. Bruno of Raymond; additional cosponsors)

This bill would amend the charter of the Portland Water District to allow the Town of Raymond to be a member.

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### **POST-MORTEM (cont'd)**

LD 576 – Resolution, to Amend the Constitution of Maine to Dedicate Funds for the Protection of Maine's Fish and Wildlife Resources. (Sponsored by Rep. Savage of Buxton) (final ONTP)

LD 617 – An Act to Require Property Tax Payments on Conservation Easements and Development Rights Purchased After October 1, 2001. (Sponsored by Rep. Glynn of South Portland) (final ONTP)

LD 631 – An Act to Require that All Owners Sign a Notice of Intent to Harvest for Land Subject to the Maine Tree Growth Tax Law. (Sponsored by Rep. Brooks of Winterport) (final ONTP)

LD 635 – Resolution, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine to Value All Land Based on Its Current Use. (Sponsored by Rep. Foster of Gray) (final ONTP)

LD 657 – An Act to Exempt Individuals Who are 65 Years of Age or Older and Meet Income Requirements from Increases in Property Taxes. (Sponsored by Rep. Andrews of York) (final ONTP)

LD 693 – An Act to Reduce Property Taxes. (Sponsored by Rep. Michael of Auburn) (final ONTP)

LD 710 – An Act to Authorize Towns to Give Tax Breaks to Volunteer Firefighters. (Sponsored by Rep. Murphy of Berwick) (final ONTP)

LD 765 – An Act to Establish a Municipal Reimbursement Formula for Current Use Taxation Programs. (Sponsored by Rep. Etnier of Harpswell) (final ONTP)

LD 839 – An Act to Allow a Property Tax Exemption to Landowners Whose Property Abuts a Solid Waste Facility. (Sponsored by Rep. Tracy of Rome) (unanimous ONTP)

LD 980 – An Act to Provide Property Tax Relief to Senior and Disabled Citizens of the State. (Sponsored by Rep. Glynn of South Portland) (unanimous ONTP)

# LEGISLATIVE HEARINGS

*NOTE: You should check your newspapers for Legal Notices as there may be changes in the hearing schedule. Weekly schedules and supplements are available at the Senate Office at the State House and at the Legislature's web site at <http://janus.state.me.us/legis>. If you would like to be notified by e-mail of updates to the schedule and web page, send your name, e-mail address, and a message that includes " ANPH UPDATE" to the Senate Webmaster at [webmaster\\_senate@state.me.us](mailto:webmaster_senate@state.me.us).*

## **Monday, April 2**

### **Appropriations & Financial Affairs**

**Room 228, State House, 1:00 p.m.**

**Tel. 287-1635**

LD 303 – An Act to Appropriate Funds to Assist in Removing a Hazardous Dam. (Sponsor: Ferguson)

### **Banking & Insurance**

**Room 427, State House, 10:00 a.m.**

**Tel. 287-1314**

LD 1420 – An Act to Require Employers to Offer Benefits to Cohabitants of Employees. (Sponsor: Mendros)

### **Education & Cultural Affairs**

**Room 209, Cross State Office Building, 9:00 a.m.**

**Tel. 287-3125**

LD 1 – An Act to Phase Out Community Income Considerations from the School Funding Formula. (Sponsor: Nutting)

LD 1089 – An Act to Improve Taxpayer Equity in School Funding. (Sponsor: Abromson)

LD 1390 – An Act to Reinstate the Cost-of-living Factor in the School Funding Formula. (Sponsor: Andrews)

LD 1383 – An Act to Fully Fund the Geographic Isolation Adjustment. (Emergency) (Sponsor: Woodcock)

LD 1548 – An Act to Amend the School Funding Formula by Adding a Hold-harmless Provision. (Sponsor: Glynn)

LD 1656 – An Act to Simplify and Reform the School Funding Formula. (Sponsor: Mills)

LD 860 – Resolve, Requiring the Department of Audit to Review Procedures, Goals and Actual Expenditures of General Purpose Aid Disbursements through the School Funding Formula. (Sponsor: Dunlap)

LD 1580 – An Act to Fund the Implementation of Student Achievement Standards by Fulfilling the State Commitment to Fund 55% of Public Education Costs for Kindergarten to Grade 12. (Sponsor: Kilkelly)

LD 1553 – An Act to Provide Funding for Education. (Emergency) (Sponsor: Goodwin)

### **Inland Fisheries & Wildlife**

**Room 206, Cross State Office Building, 9:30 a.m.**

**Tel. 287-1338**

LD 427 – An Act to Delegate the Authority to Regulate Personal Watercraft in Unorganized Territories to County Commissioners. (Sponsor: Goodwin)

LD 1225 – An Act to Establish a Nonresident Taxpayer Fishing License. (Sponsor: Tobin, D.)

### **Legal & Veterans Affairs**

**Room 436, State House, 9:30 a.m.**

**Tel 287-1310**

LD 1714 – An Act Relating to the Election of Candidates by the Instant Runoff Voting Method. (Sponsor: Twomey)

### **Natural Resources**

**Room 437, State House, 9:00 a.m.**

**Tel. 287-4149**

LD 1559 – An Act to Amend the Zoning Laws Regarding Dimensional Variances. (Sponsor: Muse, C.)

LD 1601 – An Act to Authorize the Construction of Public Trails in Shoreland Areas. (Sponsor: Watson)

LD 1398 – An Act to Create a Sprawl Offset Tax. (Sponsor: Lemoine)

LD 1643 – An Act to Provide Criteria for the Municipal Use of Rate of Growth Ordinances. (Sponsor: Daigle) (Department Bill) (Submitted by the State Planning Office)

**1:00 p.m.**

LD 1278 – An Act to Implement the Recommendations of the Task Force to Study Growth Management. (Submitted by the Task Force to Study Growth Management)

LD 1693 – An Act to Amend the Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Laws. (Sponsor: Treat) (Department Bill) (Submitted by the State Planning Office)

LD 1478 – An Act to Amend Maine's Growth Management Law and Related Laws. (Sponsor: Lemoine)

LD 1331 – An Act to Establish the Maine Building Rehabilitation Code. (Sponsor: Koffman)

### **State & Local Government**

**Room 216, Cross State Office Building, 9:00 a.m.**

**Tel. 287-1330**

LD 1523 – An Act to Preserve the Right to Air-dry Laundry. (Sponsor: Perry)

LD 1549 – An Act to Amend the Organization of Washington County Government. (Sponsor: Goodwin)

LD 1586 – An Act to Separate Territory from the Town of Falmouth and Annex it to the City of Portland. (Sponsor: Abromson)

LD 1673 – An Act to Restructure the Kennebec County Advisory Budget Committee. (Sponsor: Mitchell, C.)

### **Taxation**

**Room 127, State House, 1:00 p.m.**

**Tel. 287-1552**

LD 1654 – An Act to Enhance and Protect Disclosure of Confidential Property Tax Information. (Sponsor: Pro Tem Bennett)

LD 1628 – An Act to Establish Municipal Cost Components for Unorganized Territory Services to be Rendered in Fiscal Year 2001-2001. (Emergency) (Agency Bill) (Submitted by the Department of Audit)

### **Transportation**

**Room 126, State House, 9:00 a.m.**

**Tel. 287-4148**

LD 521 – An Act to Adopt the Canadian Highway Weight Standards. (Sponsor: Morrison)

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**Tuesday, April 3**

**Agriculture, Conservation & Forestry**

**Room 206, Cross State Office Building, 1:00 p.m.**

**Tel. 287-1312**

LD 1695 – An Act to Clarify, Enhance and Strengthen the Animal Welfare Laws of Maine. (Sponsor: Watson)

LD 1435 – An Act to Require Licensing of Domestic Cats. (Sponsor: Laverriere-Boucher)

LD 1547 – An Act to Amend the Animal Welfare Laws. (Sponsor: Lafountain)

LD 1679 – An Act to Increase the Penalties for Animal Cruelty.

**Appropriations & Financial Affairs**

**Room 228, State House, 1:00 p.m.**

**Tel. 287-1635**

LD 1316 – An Act Requiring Reimbursement to Counties for Courthouse Facilities. (Emergency) (Sponsor: Ferguson)

**Labor**

**Room 220, Cross State Office Building, 1:30 p.m.**

**Tel. 287-1333**

LD 513 – An Act to Permit Grievance Mediation by the Panel of Mediators. (Sponsor: Duplessie) (Department Bill) (Submitted by the Department of Labor)

LD 1224 – An Act to Provide Public Employees Equal Access to Personnel Files. (Sponsor: Hutton)

**Marine Resources**

**Room 437, State House, 1:00 p.m.**

**Tel. 287-1337**

LD 1489 – Resolve, to Create a Task Force to Make Recommendations Regarding Loss of Commercial Fishing Waterfront Access and Other Economic Development Issues Affecting Commercial Fishing. (Emergency) (Sponsor: Etnier)

LD 1327 – Resolve, to Allow Coastal Municipalities to Regulate the Use of Personal Watercraft. (Sponsor: Bull)

**Wednesday, April 4**

**Business & Economic Development**

**Room 208, Cross State Office Building, 1:00 p.m.**

**Tel. 287-1331**

LD 1672 – An Act to Create the Washington County Development Authority. (Sponsor: Shorey)

**Criminal Justice**

**Room 211, Cross State Office Building, 1:00 p.m.**

**Tel. 287-1122**

LD 1662 – Resolve, to Study the Emergency Medical Services System. (Emergency) (Sponsor: Bull)

LD 1623 – An Act Concerning the Formation of the Central Maine Regional Public Safety Communication Center. (Sponsor: O' Brien, J.)

**Education & Cultural Affairs**

**Room 214, Cross State Office Building, 1:00 p.m.**

**Tel. 287-3125**

LD 994 – An Act to Establish Equity in the School Funding Formula. (Sponsor: Martin)

LD 1647 – An Act to Allow Averaging of Unallocated Balances Over 3% for School Budgets. (Sponsor: Mitchell, B.)

LD 660 – An Act to Amend the Laws Governing a Conflict of Interest for a School Board Member. (Sponsor: Nutting, J.)

**Judiciary**

**Room 438, State House, 1:00 p.m.**

**Tel. 287-1327**

LD 698 – An Act to Prohibit Discrimination. (Sponsor: Perkins)

LD 974 – An Act to Create the Civil Rights in Public Employment, Education and Contracting Act. (Sponsor: Waterhouse)

LD 1599 – An Act to Clarify the Maine Human Rights Act Concerning Responsibility for Employment Discrimination. (Sponsor: Schneider)

**Labor**

**Room 220, Cross State Office Building, 1:30 p.m.**

**Tel. 287-1333**

LD 1465 – An Act to Provide a Death Benefit to the Survivors of a Law Enforcement Officer or Firefighter Killed in the Line of Duty. (Sponsor: Andrews)

**Natural Resources**

**Room 437, State House, 1:00 p.m.**

**Tel. 287-4149**

LD 1348 – An Act to Ensure the Financial Stability and Effectiveness of Certain Pollution Abatement Programs Administered by the Department of Environmental Protection. (Sponsor: Twomey) (Department Bill) (Submitted by the Department of Environmental Protection)

LD 1477 – An Act to Amend Certain Laws Regarding Land and Water Quality Protection. (Sponsor: Cowger) (Department Bill) (Submitted by the Department of Environmental Protection)

LD 1454 – Resolve, to Study the Establishment of the Department of Environmental Protection as the Lead Response Agency in All Emergency Releases and Spills of Toxic or Hazardous Materials. (Sponsor: Duplessie)

**State & Local Government**

**Room 216, Cross State Office Building, 1:00 p.m.**

**Tel. 287-1330**

LD 1633 – An Act to Clarify Rights of Retainage in Public Construction Contracts. (Sponsor: Mills)

**Taxation**

**Room 127, State House, 1:00 p.m.**

**Tel. 287-1552**

LD 1441 – An Act to Provide Landowners Incentives for Conservation and Public Access. (Sponsor: Kilkelly)

LD 1575 – An Act to Improve the Effectiveness of the Maine Residents Property Tax Program. (Sponsor: Kilkelly)

LD 1570 – An Act to Update the Property Tax Exemption for Pollution Control Facilities to Promote Clean Production through Pollution Prevention and Toxics Use Reduction. (Sponsor: Cowger)

LD 1590 – Resolution, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine to Allow Landowners to Withdraw without Penalty from Current Use Programs under Certain Conditions. (Sponsor: Martin)

**Transportation**

**Room 126, State House, 1:00 p.m.**

**Tel. 287-4148**

LD 1275 – An Act to Exempt 100% Disabled Veterans from Paying the Excise Tax and Registration Fee on Motor Vehicles. (Sponsor: Murphy, E.)

LD 1614 – An Act to Implement the Recommendations of the Secretary of State and the Maine State Police Regarding Low-speed Vehicles. (Submitted by the Secretary of State and the Maine State Police)

LD 1664 – An Act to Amend Certain Motor Vehicle Laws. (Sponsor: Fisher) (Department Bill) (Submitted by the Department of Public Safety)

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***Thursday, April 5***

**Legal & Veterans Affairs**

**Room 436, State House, 1:00 p.m.**

**Tel. 287-1310**

LD 1608 – An Act to End Discrimination Against Veterans.  
(Sponsor: Mendros)

LD 268 – An Act Regarding Veterans. (Sponsor: Tuttle)

**Marine Resources**

**Room 437, State House, 1:00 p.m.**

**Tel. 287-1337**

LD 1334 – An Act to Modify Municipal Shellfish Ordinances.  
(Sponsor: Etnier)

**Utilities & Energy**

**Room 209, Cross State Office Building, 1:30 p.m.**

**Tel. 287-4143**

LD 1661 – An Act to Amend the Charter of the Portland Water District to Permit the Extension of Water and Wastewater Service to the Town of Raymond. (Emergency) (Sponsor: Bruno)

LD 483 – An Act to Revise the Sewer Lien Laws. (Sponsor: Winsor)

LD 1333 – An Act to Permit Consumer-owned Water Utilities to Exercise Local Control Regarding Matters within the Jurisdiction of the Public Utilities Commission. (Sponsor: Savage, W.)

***Friday, April 6***

**Criminal Justice**

**Room 211, Cross State Office Building, 9:30 a.m.**

**Tel. 287-1122**

LD 908 - Resolve, to Establish Clear Guidelines for Protecting the Safety of Victims of Domestic Violence. (Sponsor: Douglass)

LD 885 – An Act to Prohibit Issuance of a concealed Firearms

Permit to the Subject of a Permanent Protection from Abuse Order. (Sponsor: Douglass)

LD 1119 – An Act to Limit Access to Firearms by Those Subject to Protection from Abuse Orders. (Sponsor: Mitchell, C.)

***Monday, April 9***

**Appropriations & Financial Affairs**

**Room 228, State House, 9:00 a.m.**

**Tel. 287-1635**

LD 937 – An Act to Improve Washington County's Economy by Promoting Natural, Historical and Cultural Tourism. (Sponsor: Shorey)

**Education & Cultural Affairs**

**Room 208, Cross State Office Building, 10:00 a.m.**

**Tel. 287-3125**

LD 1684 – An Act to Ensure Adequate Funding for School Construction Costs. (Sponsor: McGlocklin)

LD 1734 – An Act to Promote Safe Schools. (Sponsor: Dudley)

**Inland Fisheries & Wildlife**

**Room 206, Cross State Office Building, 9:30 a.m.**

**Tel. 287-1338**

LD 940 – An Act to Improve Funding for Snowmobile Trail Maintenance. (Sponsor: Mills)

LD 1294 – An Act to Change the Snowmobile Registration Rates. (Sponsor: Clark)

**Transportation**

**Room 126, State House, 9:00 a.m.**

**Tel. 287-4148**

LD 1626 – An Act to Make the Laws Affecting Certain Bridges Consistent with Federal Law. (Emergency) (Sponsor: Fisher) (Department Bill) (Submitted by the Department of Transportation)