Legislative BULLETIN

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Resolve Proposed to Look at Unfunded Mandates

Rep. Peter Rines (Wiscasset) presented a bill to the Appropriations Committee on Tuesday this week that quickly caught the attention – and support – of municipal government.

LD 1369 is a legislative resolve that would direct the Department of Administrative and Financial Services to review the impact of unfunded state mandates on the municipalities and the schools.

Specifically, LD 1369 would focus on the mandates that were enacted before 1992, when the voters adopted a constitutional amendment that was designed to restrict the Legislature from enacting new unfunded mandates without providing substantial, 90% funding from the state. Rep. Rines testified that LD 1369 would provide valuable information to legislators, especially incoming legislators who may not be aware of the pre-existing mandates or their ongoing fiscal impacts on local government.

MMA testified in support of LD 1369. The bill revives an effort to conduct a similarly comprehensive and collaborative review of mandates during the last legislative session. That bill was LD 419, *An Act To Repeal Outdated and Unfunded Municipal and Educational Mandates*, which received good debate and good support last year before being ultimately killed in the Senate for the stated reason that there was no money for the study.

MMA's testimony in support of LD 1369 went beyond some of the parameters of the printed bill. The printed bill focused only on state mandates, but federal mandates and the interweaving of state and federal mandates should also be included in the analysis. The question should be asked: Which of the very extensive and expensive K-12 education performance monitoring requirements are mandated by the federal No Child Left Behind Act and which are mandated by the state's "Learning Results"? How much of Maine's special education industry is mandated by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (federal) and how much is mandated by state special education law? How much of the new "Stormwater Phase II" mandate is entirely rooted in the federal Clean Water Act and how much should be attached to Maine's "delegated" enforcement of that Act? The answers to these questions could provide objective information about the true origin of various mandates and potentially lead to some very cost effective redesigns of mandate laws.

MMA's testimony also suggested that a collaborative study of unfunded mandates should include the impacts of mandates that were enacted both before and after the 1992 constitutional amendment. Some of the most recent mandates, such as "Learning Results", pack just as much punch in terms of financial impact as the pre-1992 mandates.

There is also an emerging phenomenon where mandates are enacted without any recognition that they are mandates. The last legislature mandated the implementation of new "gifted and talented" educational programs without acknowledging the new requirement as a mandate. It may strike municipalities struggling with the administrative implementation of LD 1 as somewhat curious that no part of that new law was considered a mandate by the Legislature, including the reporting requirements to the State Planning Office (see related article in this edition of the *Bulletin*) or the requirement that certain referendum elections be held at odd times of the year, out-of-cycle with any normal municipal schedule.

MMA also suggested that the man-

(continued on page 2)

Next LPC Meeting Rescheduled

The next meeting of MMA's Legisaltive Policy Committee, which was scheduled for Thursday, April 14, has been rescheduled for Thursday, April 28th.

The meeting has been rescheduled because there has been a dramatic slowdown in the number of new bills being released from the Revisor's Office and submitted to the Legislature. By rescheduling this month's meeting for April 28th, MMA's staff should be able to offer a more filled-out agenda. Presumably by the 28th, Governor Baldacci's expected proposals to repeal the personal property tax and create some version of a local option sales tax will be available for the LPC's review.

This rescheduling does not affect the next meeting of the *Service Center – Rural Community Working Group*, which is still scheduled to meet at MMA on April 14th.

Street Light Legislation

The Utilities and Energy Committee took up LD 1377, *An Act Regarding Municipally Owned Street Lighting*. Senator Woodcock filed this bill on the request of the Maine Municipal Association. The bill would significantly enhance the ability of municipalities to provide street lighting services instead of paying the local utility to provide that service.

The motivation of the bill is the ever-present and intensifying effort to reduce local property taxes. In a way, LD 1's spending cap creates two growth allowances. The first is the growth allowance contained in the bill equal to the net growth in income and new property. The second "growth allowance" amount that a municipality may spend, which is not contained in the bill, is any amount of any savings a municipality may generate from improving efficiency or cutting costs. While there has been a varying amount of municipal interest in the street light issue for some time, the spending cap in LD has helped intensify that interest because of the potential cost savings.

The utility companies could see their provision of this service reduced by the bill and it is not hard to imagine that they would oppose it. However, in response to the bill, representatives of Central Maine Power have been very willing to meet with MMA and discuss the issue. So far there have been three meetings which have been quite productive.

The preliminary conclusion to be drawn from these meetings is that this issue is quite complicated and the parties are willing to continue talking. Street light costs, like all utility charges, are a determined through the ratemaking process of the Public Utility Commission. The street light rates are over a decade old and it is a worthwhile exercise for all involved that the rates be reviewed and understood.

The Public Utility Commission also supports looking into the issue further. In written testimony, the PUC stated:

"Street light service is currently a monopoly service provided by T&D utilities subject to Commission-approved rates. LD 1377 would essentially unbundle this service into its component functions (fixture ownership, installation, and maintenance) and allow each to be offered by either the utility or a municipality. This would have the practical effect of making street light service a competitive industry. We are inclined to think that citizens may well benefit from opening street light and area light service to competition. "

Representatives of CMP, MMA and the PUC agreed that more time was needed and asked the sponsor to recommend to the Committee that the bill be a hold-over to allow the parties to continue working on the issue. The Committee chairs indicated their willingness to grant the request to carry over LD 1377 to the 2006 legislative session.

Legislative Bulletin

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

Food Worker UI

LD 423, An Act *to Allow Food Service Workers for Public Schools to Collect Unemployment Benefits*, is now working its way between the House and Senate. As proposed, the bill would authorize public school food service workers to collect unemployment benefits in between two academic years, even if the worker has received written assurance that the employee will be reemployed in the next year. Maine School Management Association estimates that this bill would increase unemployment insurance costs to Maine's public schools by over $2 million a year, a cost that would be borne by the property taxpayers.

The Labor Committee's 7 to 6 majority "ought not to pass" recommendation was supported by the House on Thursday of this week. The bill is now before the Senate.

MANDATES (cont'd)

dates on the counties should be included in the study, which as printed would only focus on mandates to the towns and schools. County mandates range from the simple definition of who is a county prisoner (rather than a state prisoner), to prisoner health care mandates, to the education and training standards for correctional personnel, to juvenile prisoner transportation responsibilities. Both federal and state laws and regulations all piggy-back on the simple mandate on county government to operate a system of jails, with the property taxpayers picking up the tab.

In its testimony, MMA made the observation that the schools, the utility districts and the counties do not appear to be as concerned about the imposition of unfunded mandates as the municipalities. It often seems as though the limited-function governments that do not have direct taxing authority actually support the imposition of mandates to justify the expansion of their operations. How many times do municipal officials hear from their school superintendent or county commissioners or water or sewer trustees that the reason their various assessments are increasing so much is because of "mandates" that are beyond their control?

LD 1369 would be an opportunity to get to the bottom of these claims and do something about the mandate phenomenon.

No one representing either the schools or the counties or the quasi-municipal districts provided any testimony on this mandate bill, one way or the other.

Role of Zoning Board Debated

Under existing laws the local legislative body, planning board and board of appeals all have very distinct roles to play in the establishment and enforcement of zoning ordinances.

The local legislative body, if it so chooses, adopts the ordinances regulating development, including specific standards governing such elements as lot size, setback, road frontage requirements, etc. The planning board enforces the ordinances. The board of appeals is available to review allegations of error on the part of the planning board and to grant variances to the enacted ordinances according to an established set of guidelines.

Existing law recognizes these distinct roles and explicitly prohibits the planning board, which is charged with enforcement of the ordinances, from enacting or amending the ordinances on a case-by-case basis.

Municipal town meetings and town and city councils are free to adopt any array of alternative land use standards and authorize some degree of choice among the alternatives, but to the extent standards are adopted in an ordinance, they must be adopted by the local legislative body, not the administrators.

That structural relationship is being challenged through LD 991, *An Act to Restore Municipal Authority to Review Development Using Flexible Standards.*

The Maine Association of Planners (MAP) is backing the bill, which proposes to change those roles by authorizing the planning board to grant a variance when the variance is deemed to promote "superior neighborhood development." Whatever it means, that would be the new standard. Under existing laws, only the board of appeals is authorized to grant variances and only if four tests are met. In order for the board of appeals to grant a zoning variance it must be determined that: 1) the land in question cannot yield a reasonable return unless a variance is provided; 2) the need for a variance is due to unique circumstances of the property; 3) the granting of a variance will not alter the essential character of the locality; and 4) the hardship is not the result of action taken by the applicant or a prior owner.

Cape Elizabeth's town planner, Maureen O'Meara, testified on behalf of MAP that the purpose of the legislation was to seek a legislative solution to court decisions that in the opinion of MAP have significantly reduced the flexibility municipalities have in the management of land use development. One court decision referenced in MAP's testimony was *Sawyer v. Cape Elizabeth (2004).*

According to O'Meara, most Maine towns have adopted ordinances that provide the planning boards and code enforcement officers with authority to change the lot size, setback and road frontage standards adopted by the local legislative body when authorizing certain developments. Apparently this reference is to an authority has been provided in some communities to consider alternative cluster-style developments, open space subdivisions, special backlot and flag-lot provisions, and the like. But even the alternative land use design provisions in local land use ordinances must be rule-based standards in order to survive judicial review.

MMA opposed the bill because municipal officials believe the separation of authority between the legislative body, planning board and board of appeals under current law is both appropriate and necessary. The Legislature enacts the motor vehicle operating laws that state, county and local law enforcement agencies enforce. In the same way, it is only appropriate for the local legislative body to enact the development laws that the planning board enforces. The planning board should not be authorized to amend the zoning rules adopted by the voters on a discretionary, case-by case basis, just as police officers cannot amend the traffic regulations as they see fit.

Surprisingly, the State Planning Office testified in support of a bill that would upend the land use regulatory structure. SPO's spokesperson John Del Vecchio admitted that the proposed change to the variance process needed to be approached with extreme caution and care. At the same time, he said that flexibility should be provided to the Planning Board to allow for cluster or open space developments. He believes that this discretionary authority for the planning board to change the adopted rules would allow for the development of land while at the same time conserve some open space that would otherwise be developed under a regular zoning ordinance.

The SPO testimony is hard to reconcile with the agency's position on the importance of state review over municipal comprehensive plans. There is currently a debate regarding the agency's regulatory role over municipal comprehensive plans. While the SPO promotes its effectiveness as an "advisory" agency, it plays a significant regulatory role when it sits in judgment of municipal comprehensive plans. SPO's justification for this regulatory role is that an "independent party" should review the work of the community and compare the proposed local growth policies with the policies of the state. In this circumstance it is important for an independent review.

When it comes to allowing a local planning board to work outside the framework of the standards established by the local legislative body, however, SPO is no longer wedded to the idea of an independent review. The role of the board of the appeals is to review allegations of error on the part of the planning board and to grant variances to the enacted ordinances according to an established set of guidelines. This is all strikingly similar to SPO's justification of state review of comprehensive plans. It's a conflicting message being sent by SPO. On one hand, towns' land use regulatory authority needs to be carefully controlled by the state. On the other hand, the local legislative authority and responsibility to establish predictability by adopting standards should be delegated over to the planning board under the completely unguided banner of "superior neighborhood development".

There seems to be some interest from the members of the State and Local Government Committee to address the issues raised by MAP while at the same time preserving the existing role between the local legislative body, planning board and board of appeals.

The work session on LD 991 has been scheduled for April 13th.

SPO Attaches Fiscal Survey to Municipal Valuation Return

According to Maine Revenue Services, the 2005 Municipal Valuation Return (MVR) is headed to the printer and will be distributed to municipal assessors within the next couple of weeks. There will be two additional pages on the traditional MVR that are included at the request and for the benefit of the State Planning Office (SPO) rather than Maine Revenue Services.

The two additional pages are attached to the MVR as a result of the enactment of LD 1 and certain information reporting requirements that were part of the Legislature's "property tax reform".

The first of the two SPO pages requests categorized fiscal information regarding the municipality's expenditures for the FY 04 fiscal year (for calendar-year municipalities) and FY 05 (for fiscal-year municipalities). The organization of the SPO fiscal survey is modeled on MMA's fiscal survey, which about 50% of Maine's municipalities voluntarily respond to on an annual basis.

The fiscal year relevant to the SPO request is not the fiscal year that is relevant to the rest of the Municipal Valuation Return, which will undoubtedly cause confusion.

The assessor, who fills out the traditional MVR, is also not the right municipal official to fill out the SPO fiscal survey.

Many municipalities that do not regularly participate in MMA's fiscal survey may struggle with the SPO information request because the expenditure information is categorized in ways that will not conform to the municipality's budget format. Although the survey is firmly attached to a document that must be filled out and returned to the state (the MVR), filling out the SPO pages is not mandatory. SPO is obviously hoping to boost the response rate by piggy-backing the survey onto a legally required document.

Because the fiscal data requested in this part of the SPO report is based on a different fiscal year than the MVR, and because the organization of the fiscal information will be foreign to many municipalities, MMA objected to SPO incorporating this part of the survey within the MVR. MMA asked SPO to allow the fiscal survey to be distributed separately, in a stand-alone information request sponsored jointly by SPO and MMA. SPO refused the offer.

The other "SPO page" in the 2005 MVR calls for each municipality's mathematical calculation of its "property tax levy limit" as required by LD 1. Because roughly half of the municipalities in Maine operate under calendar-year fiscal years, and therefore will not have to adopt the spending limit system until next year, those "calendar-year" towns are instructed that they do not have to fill out this page. The "fiscal year" municipalities will be asked to fill out this calculation of their "property tax levy limit" along with a fiscal accounting of the actual tax commitment this year. In addition, the municipal officials will be asked the reasons why the town might have exceeded or increased its property tax levy limit, it if did.

The SPO will be compiling the information into a report to the Legislature documenting the extent of municipal compliance with the property tax levy limits established by LD 1.

Eminent Domain Reviewed

What should a municipality have to pay a landowner when it takes the landowner's property? That was the subject of a hearing before the Judiciary Committee on LD 1269, *An Act to Provide Just Compensation for Established Businesses During Eminent Domain Proceedings*.

Someone reading Article I, Section 21 of the Maine Constitution may be confused by the title of this bill. That provision currently reads that "Private property shall not be taken for public uses without just compensation; nor unless the public exigencies require it." Thus, according to the constitution and various statutory provisions and case law, property owners currently do receive just compensation.

However, businesses which are affected, even closed, feel that their interests are not compensated during an eminent domain proceeding. They are basically correct. The Maine Constitution (and the U.S. Constitution, for that matter) does not provide for compensation to businesses for any lost profits or reduced business value due to an eminent domain taking. The standard measure for damages is the value of the land only.

LD 1269 would increase municipal and state costs for eminent domain cases because it would require the government to pay as damages lost profits and lost business value for any entity that had been in operation for four years or longer.

The case has support from a variety of businesses but the lead business on this bill is the gas station industry. The Maine Oil Dealers Association brought the bill forward on behalf of its clients, particularly Webber Oil. It seems that Webber Oil has had two of its filling stations/convenience stores taken by eminent domain. In each case, Webber felt that it had lost more in value than its compensation.

Essentially, Webber feels that a business' annual profits should be capitalized into a present value and that this amount should also be paid as damages during an eminent domain proceeding. The amount of this capitalized value was called "business value" by the proponents of the bill.

The sponsors of LD 1269 recognized that the bill could be improved with revisions. Essentially, the bill was offered as a vehicle to get the idea before the Legislature. They requested that the Committee hold the bill over to the 2006 legislative session to give them an op-

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One Proposed Exemption Morphs to Another

On March 17 the Taxation Committee held a public hearing on a bill that would expand the property tax exemption for the so-called "charitable" institutions, an exemption category in Maine that is dominated by hospitals, nursing homes and other medical care institutions. The bill, LD 791, *An Act Concerning the Taxation of Buildings In Which Nonprofit Organizations are Housed*, is sponsored by Sen. John Martin (Aroostook Cty.) and would fundamentally change the "exclusivity" requirements that have always been a part of Maine's charitable exemption law.

These eligibility standards were underscored in a 1996 decision of Maine's Supreme Court (*City of Lewiston vs. Marcotte Congregate Housing*) and form the basis of at least one clear requirement of eligibility in a law that generally lacks tight eligibility standards.

Specifically, all the property that is eligible for the charitable tax exemption under current law must be owned "solely" by the charitable institution and occupied or used "solely" for the charitable purpose. As proposed, LD 791 would eliminate that standard. Under the terms of the bill, the municipal tax assessor would have to determine what portions of any building are owned, occupied and used by a charitable institution and prorate the tax exemption accordingly for the portion of each structure that might deserve the exemption.

MMA opposed LD 791 on both public policy and administrative grounds. It is important to municipalities that the charitable works that drive eligibility for the property tax exemption be easily discernable both by municipal officials and the general public. If large corporate institutions are able to blend their "charitable" services with other services that are not grounded in a charitable purpose, all meaningful distinctions of charitability become erased from the public view.

In addition there are significant administrative issues associated with LD 791 from the municipal perspective. Charitable institutions are becoming increasingly complicated corporations with many separate subsidiaries, some of which are 501 (c) (3) charitable organizations that are potentially eligible for the exemption and some of which are not. Similarly, for-profit corporations could easily become the "parent corporation" for charitable subsidiaries. To require the municipal assessor to separate within any particular institution the charitable elements from the non-charitable elements (potentially owned by same corporate parent), as well as other occupants of the institution that are clearly for-profit, is a completely unwelcome new administrative task.

Having said all that, it is unclear if LD 791 was submitted to accomplish what it does. Senator Martin was unable to introduce the bill to the Committee, and all the proponents of the bill were uniformed veterans who testified for the need of amending a completely different section of statute, which provides for the exemption of American Legion halls and similar facilities. The veterans testified that towns all across Maine are suddenly taxing the veterans' halls or asking the veterans halls to make contributions in lieu of taxes.

What the veterans are seeking is an amendment to the law governing their special exemption so that the entire veterans' hall is exempt from taxation. Long-time law, in that category, has provided for some proration of the veteran hall exemption. The part of a veterans' hall that is exempt from taxation is the part that is used "solely" for their meetings, ceremonials or instruction. Other parts of the veteran hall property that is not used entirely for those purposes is taxable. The public policy behind this distinction would appear to be that taxable for-profit businesses also rent out space for various functions, and property tax exemptions are not created to compete with the for-profit sector. In any event, the veterans are seeking a blanket exemption on the entire Legion hall property, regardless of how or to whom that property is used, rented, leased or offered.

At this point it is completely unclear what direction this bill is going to take. There does not seem to be sympathy on the Committee level for complicating and expanding the "charitable" exemption as the printed bill would do. Committee members do appear sympathetic, however, with amending the property tax exemption that pertains to American Legion halls and other fraternal organizations so their entire buildings would be exempt from taxation – the areas used for wedding receptions and other revenue-raising venues – rather than just the section of the building dedicated to pure Legion activities.

For now, the bill is tabled as that amendment is being prepared.

EMINENT (cont'd)

portunity to meet with interested parties in an effort to refine the bill.

The Committee was willing to do so and cut-off testimony by proponents at that point. Senate Chair Barry Hobbins (York Cty.) asked MMA and the only other opponent, the Maine Department of Transportation, if they were willing to meet with the proponents. Each opponent is willing. With the caveat that the Committee was inclined to grant the holdover request, Sen. Hobbins allowed MMA and DOT to testify as to the nature and scope of the many technical problems with the bill since it gave proponents ample time to make their case.

After providing some background on the components of eminent domain appraisals, MMA explained that this complex issue may not easily be resolved no matter what level of effort is applied to the issue this summer. Further, MMA could not pledge to ultimately remove its opposition to the bill. Nevertheless, MMA and MDOT are willing to sit down in good faith and define the issues and attempt to get a better understanding of the exact nature of the proposed solution. Any municipal officials who have eminent domain experience and are willing to participate in the summer working group are encouraged to contact Jeff Austin at MMA.

Water COGs Proposed

Representative Chris Barstow (Gorham) hopes the Regional Water Council idea he has put forth in LD 1162, *An Act to Permit the Establishment of Regional Water Councils* can do for water utilities what the regional councils of government have done for municipalities. That was the thrust of his comments before the Utilities and Energy Committee as it took public testimony on the bill.

Rep. Barstow indicated that he believes regionalism is good, but only if it springs from the ground-up. He very clearly stated his opposition to top-down, Augusta-imposed regionalism. That is why he believes the regional COG model should be replicated. The joint purchasing type functions that some COGs provide for municipalities is the kind of activity Rep. Barstow would like to see Regional Water Councils provide for water utilities. In fact, the language in LD 1162 is directly modeled on the existing legislation for COGs in Title 30-A.

One immediate cause for bringing this bill forward is the work of several water utilities in the Biddeford area. These utilities have been meeting informally to discuss issues of common concern for some time and they believe it would be much more advantageous if they formalized their relationship. While the water utilities could arguably accomplish many of their goals by utilizing the existing Interlocal Agreement law in Title 30-A, it appears to many that having an actual entity provides more advantages, such as the ability to receive federal grants.

There was no opposition to the bill, but some important questions were raised by the Maine Rural Water Association. MRWA supported the concept of promoting regionalism among its members but there were some undefined and vague portions of the bill for which it sought clarification.

For example, the proposed Regional Water Councils were to be given all powers of the member water utilities except "essential legislative functions" and eminent domain. However, this term, which also appears in the COG statute, is undefined. The question was raised, may a Regional Water Council issue bonds which it member water utilities may do? Or, is that an essential legislative function?

Furthermore, the bill states that Regional Water Councils are not "water utilities" even though they will have many of the powers of the water utilities. This is significant because if the Regional Water Councils are not "water utilities" they may not be subject to Public Utility Commission oversight.

Lastly, MRWA wanted to establish in the bill the sponsor's stated intent to allow regionalism to form from the ground-up. That is, MWRA fears that the state will begin to condition financial grants on participation in one of these Regional Water Councils. It would appear from the sponsor's remarks that he is opposed to this type of top-down approach. Whether any language can be inserted into the bill to memorialize this intent is unclear.

Municipalities favor regionalism and especially locally-developed regional efforts. Thus, the bill was appealing to MMA's policy committee. Clarification and resolution of the questions raised by MWRA would appear to make a good bill even better.

Automobile Hobbyists

The Natural Resources Committee heard spirited testimony on LD 1268, An Act To Amend the Law on Junkyards, Automobile Graveyards and Automobile Recycling Businesses, which was sponsored by Senator Scott Cowger (Kennebec).

The bill is essentially a "clean-up" bill that follows more extensive revisions to the junkyard statutes that occurred last session. The focus of the Committee and the public testimony centered on only the first section of the bill. That section deleted a so-called "hobbyist exemption" from the definition of "automobile graveyard."

An automobile graveyard is defined as "a yard, field or other outdoor area used to store 3 or more unregistered or uninspected motor vehicles … or parts of the vehicles." Automobile graveyards are commercial enterprises which must be obtain a permit to operate. Those permits contain operating standards that are designed to accomplish many goals including the protection of groundwater from hazardous materials.

Automobile hobbyists or enthusiasts engage in rebuilding cars for personal pleasure rather than profit. Several of these individuals testified against section 1 of the bill. If section 1 were removed, then the hobbyists would either have to cease their activities since they often store three or more unregistered and uninspected motor vehicles on their property, or obtain a commercial automobile graveyard permit.

The purpose behind section 1 is that some code enforcement officers have related instances where the hobbyist exemption was being claimed by individuals who did not appear to be involved in any restoration or reconstruction work at all – they were just letting the cars rot on their lots and hiding behind the exemption. Since there is no definition of "hobbyist" challenging such a seemingly bogus claim is difficult.

The Committee appears open to a middle approach of actually trying to define the term. MMA offered language that would have allowed each town to formulate its own definition by ordinance. That offer was met with mixed reaction. It seems apparent that the activities of genuine hobbyists need to be protected while at the same time, the Legislature needs to do a better job of defining the exemption it has granted.

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 the Legislature's web site at http://www.state.me.us/legis/senate/Documents/hearing/ANPHFrame.htm. *If you wish to have updates to the Hearing Schedules e-mailed directly to you, sign up on the ANPH homepage listed above. Work Session schedules and hearing updates are available at the Legislative Information page at* http://janus.state.me.us/legis/session/.

Monday, April 11

Agriculture, Conservation & Forestry
Room 206, Cross State Office Building, 1:00 p.m.
Tel: 287-1312
LD 1256 – An Act To Ensure Public Awareness of Pesticide Applications.

Appropriations & Financial Affairs
Room 228, State House, 1:00 p.m.
Tel: 287-1635
LD 775 – An Act To Provide a Stable Source of Funding for the Safe Drinking Water Revolving Loan Fund.

Criminal Justice & Public Safety
Room 436, State House, 10:00 a.m.
Tel: 287-1122
LD 390 – An Act To Improve Maine's Sex Offender Notification Laws.

LD 919 – An Act Amending Public Notification Laws for Sex Offenders Living Near Schools and Day-care Centers.

LD 1195 – An Act To Protect Women and Children from Sexual Predators by Requiring the State Bureau of Identification to Distribute Registrant Information to Town Clerks.

Education & Cultural Affairs
Room 202, Cross State Office Building, 1:00 p.m.
Tel: 287-3125
LD 951 – An Act To Amend Adjustments to Transportation Costs under the School Funding Formula.

LD 1031 – Resolution, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine Regarding the Funding of Local Schools.

LD 1193 – Resolution, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine To Ensure Equal Access to Education for Children in All Parts of the State.

Legal & Veterans Affairs
Room 437, State House, 1:15 p.m.
Tel: 287-1310
LD 1169 – An Act To Permit Video Gaming for Money Conducted by Nonprofit Organizations.

State & Local Government
Room 216, Cross State Office Building, 1:00 p.m.
Tel: 287-1330
LD 1380 – An Act To Protect Use of Municipal Seals.

Taxation
Room 127, State House, 10:00 a.m.
Tel: 287-1552
LD 12 – An Act To Implement the School Finance and Tax Reform Act of 2003.

LD 1011 – An Act To Establish the Maine Taxpayers' Bill of Rights.

LD 1068 – An Act To Strengthen Maine's Small Business Economy.

LD 1400 – An Act To Reduce Payments under the Business Equipment Tax Reimbursement Program and To Eliminate Double Dipping and Increase Conformity with the Internal Revenue Code.

Tuesday, April 12

Labor
Room 220, Cross State Office Building, 1:00 p.m.
Tel: 287-1333
LD 1353 – An Act To Allow Certain School Employees To Collect Unemployment.

LD 1419 – An Act To Amend the Laws Regarding Certain Employment-related Matters.

LD 1170 – An Act To Exempt Fire Departments from Biweekly Pay Requirements for Volunteer Firefighters.

LD 1346 – An Act To Require Employers and Employees To Provide a 2-Week Notice before Terminating Employment.

Transportation
Room 126, State House, 1:00 p.m.
Tel: 287-4148
LD 729 – An Act To Clarify the City of Portland's Interest in the Maine State Pier.

LD 1280 – Resolve, To Name the New Augusta Bridge.

LD 1429 – An Act To Amend the Laws Governing the Size, Placement and Use of Certain On-premises Signs.

Wednesday, April 13

Education & Cultural Affairs
Room 202, Cross State Office Building, 1:00 p.m.
Tel: 287-3125
LD 1061 – An Act To Improve the Recruitment of Teachers.

LD 1381 – An Act To Update Teachers' Minimum Salaries.

Legal & Veterans Affairs
Room 437, State House, 1:15 p.m.
Tel: 287-1310
LD 1174 – An Act To Strengthen Enforcement of the Political Signs Law.

LD 1087 – An Act To Protect the Citizen Initiative Signature Collection Process at Polling Places.

LD 1292 – Resolve, To Study the Citizen Initiative Process.

LD 929 – An Act To Create Freedom of Citizen Information Regarding Ballot Questions and Political Action Committees.

Utilities & Energy
Room 211, Cross State Office Building, 1:00 p.m.
Tel: 287-4143
LD 327 – An Act To Implement Energy Conservation Standards for Affordable Housing.

LD 1375 – An Act To Improve Cooperative Energy Purchasing for Schools, Towns and Nonprofits.

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HEARINGS (cont'd)

LD 1413 – An Act To Conform the Remedies under the Maine Family Medical Leave Requirements with Those Available under Federal Law.

Transportation
Room 126, State House, 1:00 p.m.
Tel: 287-4148
LD 1463 – An Act To Amend the Motor Vehicle Laws.

LD 1337 – An Act To Enhance the Safety of Fire and Emergency Medical Service Personnel.

Friday, April 15

Natural Resources
Room 214, Cross State Office Building, 9:30 a.m.
Tel: 287-4149
LD 315 – An Act To Prohibit the Privatization of Drinking Water Supply Sources.

State & Local Government
Room 216, Cross State Office Building, 9:00 a.m.
Tel: 287-1330
LD 968 – Resolution, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine To Prohibit the Imposition of Any New or Increased Tax or Fee through the Citizen Initiative Process.

LD 1127 – Resolve, To Establish a Pilot Project To Assist Towns Interested in Multitown Cooperation and Governance.

LD 1230 – An Act To Facilitate and Promote Regional Cooperation.

LD 1246 – An Act To Amend the Laws Governing the State Planning Office.

LD 1414 – An Act To Authorize Municipalities To Create Municipal Fire Districts.

1:00 p.m.

LD 1204 – An Act To Amend the Charter of the Farmington Village Corporation.

LD 1459 – An Act Concerning Payment for Repairs on Private Ways.

LD 1478 – An Act To Clarify Rights of Retainage in Public Improvement Construction Contracts.

LD 1481 – An Act To Amend the Laws Governing the Enactment Procedures for Ordinances.

Transportation
Room 126, State House, 9:00 a.m.
Tel: 287-4148
LD 1453 – Resolve, To Improve Public Safety, Enhance Local Communities and Reduce Transportation Expenses.