

CARRY OVER BILLS

A Summary

Prepared by the Office of Policy & Legal Analysis, Maine State Legislature
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Background

Under Joint Rule 310 *as adopted by the 125th Legislature*, all bills must be reported out of committee in accordance with deadlines established by the presiding officers. Generally all bills must be reported out during the session in which they are introduced. However, under certain circumstances, committees may be authorized to hold specific, identified bills in committee beyond the end of a legislative session. Such bills are said to be “carried over” to the subsequent session. A bill may be carried over only if there is another scheduled session of the same legislature (i.e., bills may be carried over from the First Regular Session to the Second Regular Session).

There are various reasons why a committee may wish to carry a bill over to the subsequent session. For instance, the subject matter may be exceptionally complex, important additional information may be needed or the committee may be awaiting the outcome of certain events.

Procedure

If a committee wishes to carry over one or more bills, it must submit a written request to the presiding officers for permission to carry them over. The request must identify the bills by LD number and title and briefly explain for each bill the reason why the committee is requesting it be carried over. The committee’s analyst prepares the committee’s written request for signature of the chairs. The presiding officers jointly review the requests. LDs approved for carry over are then included in a single Joint Order authorizing the LDs to be carried over to a subsequent session. This order is introduced near the end of the session. Following passage of the order by the full Legislature, the named bills are carried over to the subsequent session of that Legislature.

The fact that a bill is carried over does not in itself authorize a committee to meet to consider the bill during the interim between legislative sessions. A committee must receive express authorization from the presiding officers to meet to discuss carryover bills during the interim. Additional authorization is required if a committee wishes to hold a public hearing on a carryover bill during the interim.

Carryover bills are subject to committee reporting deadlines for the subsequent session, as established by the presiding officers under Joint Rule 310.