



Library Briefs

March 2010

From the Maine State Law and Legislative Reference Library, an office of the Maine Legislature

How may we help you?

Legislative Requests

The Law and Legislative Reference Library has responded to numerous legislative requests this session and continues to receive new ones. Questions have been answered covering the history of past legislation, finding information on topics in pending LDs, locating a recent (or not-so-recent) newspaper article, or providing a constituent with biographical data on past legislators. Please remember that in addition to visiting us in person, you can phone your requests to 287-1600 or contact our reference desk by email at lawlib.reference@legislature.maine.gov.

Interested in the history of major legislative issues?

Legislative Histories Updated

In addition to legislative histories that the staff compile on demand, the Law and Legislative Reference Library maintains compiled legislative histories on more than 50 topics of significant legislative interest or impact. Each year these binders are updated with proposed and enacted legislation from the prior session. Topics already updated with 2009 legislation include: Tina's Law; the Maine Bottle Bill; Dirigo Health; Maine's Right to Know Law; the Maine Indian Land Claims Settlement Act; and Statutory Provisions for the Citizen Initiative and People's Veto. A complete list of histories is maintained on our website at <http://legislature.maine.gov/lawlib/legishy.htm>.

Need quick delivery of committee file contents?

Past Session Committee Files Available Digitally

At the end of each legislative session, the Law and Legislative Reference Library receives the committee master files for each legislative document. Legislators, legislative staff, and other patrons frequently ask for copies of particular files in order to review testimony and other documents associated with the consideration of a particular L.D. Since many of our patrons are now accustomed to receiving information from us via computer, we are scanning committee files for efficient retrieval of information when requests are made. All of the files from the 1st Regular Session of the 124th Legislature have been scanned and library staff can deliver them immediately (electronically or printed out) when a request is received. We will continue this practice for future sessions. Another example of technology enabling us to serve you better!



*Wish you could find
that certain article?*

Newspaper "Clippings" Digitization Project

Each week the staff of the Law and Legislative Reference Library review over 30 Maine and national newspaper titles for articles relating to Maine legislation, legislators, the political process, and topics coming before the Legislature. Formerly, these newspapers were clipped, although we now capture relevant articles from the newspaper's website, whenever possible. Our collection of articles, which goes back to the 1920s in certain areas, is gradually being transferred to electronic format. The digital portion of the collection goes back to 2004 and is available to users at the public computers in the Library.

Tired of the radio?

New Audiobook Selections for Loan!

Thanks to the Maine State Library, we now have a completely new selection of audiobooks for you to choose from. Titles range from history and financial policy to popular fiction written by Maine authors. These handy CDs make excellent companions for those long drives to the far corners of the State.

*Ledger from
1822 found*

Treasures Unearthed

Each Maine legislator receives a printed copy of the laws and resolves passed during his or her term in office. This practice dates back almost to the beginning of the state. A recent reorganization of our offsite storage uncovered the original ledger in which legislators and other state, county, and municipal officers signed for the copies of the laws that they received. The first pages contain the "Names of Persons and corporations entitled to the Laws and Resolves of the State of Maine January Session A D 1822, in pursuance of a Resolve of the 28th January 1822," beginning with the Governor and Council and including all the names of the Senators and Representatives. These entries, which were continued in multiple volumes down to the early 1900s, constitute a veritable "who's who" of Maine's early politics and government.