

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

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ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

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Legislative Document

No. 2210

H. P. 2336

Approved for introduction by a majority of the Legislative Council pursuant to Joint Rule 24. The Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs suggested and 3,000 ordered printed.

EDWIN H. PERT, Clerk

Presented by Mr. Wyman of Pittsfield

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STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED  
SEVENTY-EIGHT

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**RESOLUTION, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution to Establish  
Property Tax Exemptions for Maine Homesteads.**

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**Constitutional amendment. RESOLVED:** Two-thirds of each branch of the Legislature concurring, that the following amendment to the Constitution of this State be proposed:

Constitution, Art. IX, § 8, is amended by adding at the end a new paragraph to read:

The Legislature shall establish an exemption from real estate taxes for all owner occupied principal residences and shall also establish a rebate in lieu of a tax exemption for all tenants who lease principal residences. The exemption shall not be less than \$20,000 of just value and the rebate shall not be less than \$100. The Legislature shall review the general law relating to this exemption and rebate at least once within 3 years following each federal decennial census. The Legislature shall provide reimbursement to municipalities for revenue that would be collected from taxes on real estate but for this provision.

Constitutional referendum procedure; form of question; effective

**date. Resolved:** That the city aldermen, town selectmen and plantation assessors of this State shall notify the inhabitants of their respective cities, towns and plantations to meet, in the manner prescribed by law for holding a statewide election, at the next general election in the month of November or special statewide election on the Tuesday following the first Monday of November following the passage of this resolution, to vote upon the ratification of the amendment proposed in this resolution by voting upon the following question:

“Shall the Constitution be amended, as proposed by the first special session of the 108th Legislature, to establish property tax exemptions for Maine Homesteads?”

The legal voters of each city, town and plantation shall vote by ballot on this question, and shall designate their choice by a cross or check mark placed within the corresponding square below the words “Yes” or “No.” The ballots shall be received, sorted, counted and declared in open ward, town and plantation meetings and returns made to the Secretary of State in the same manner as votes for members of the Legislature. The Governor shall review the returns, and, if it appears that a majority of the legal votes are in favor of the amendment, the Governor shall proclaim that fact without delay and the amendment shall become part of the Constitution on the date of the proclamation.

**Secretary of State shall prepare ballots. Resolved:** That the Secretary of State shall prepare and furnish to each city, town and plantation all ballots, returns and copies of this resolution necessary to carry out the purpose of this referendum.

#### STATEMENT OF FACT

This brief proposed amendment to the Constitution would establish a statewide property tax exemption on the first \$20,000 of just value on every principal residence in Maine. The general effect of this amendment would be to shift our total state-local tax burden away from an over reliance on the regressive property tax to a more equitable reliance on the progressive, corporate and personal income taxes. Included in this proposal is a tenant’s rebate in lieu of the property tax exemption of \$100. Under this proposal, the State would be obligated to reimburse municipalities for their loss of revenue from the homestead exemption.