

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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129th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2019

Legislative Document

No. 499

S.P. 164

In Senate, January 31, 2019

**An Act To Prohibit Payment per Signature on Petitions for Direct
Initiatives and People's Veto Referendums**

Reference to the Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D M Grant'.

DAREK M. GRANT
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator GUERIN of Penobscot.
Cosponsored by Representative SCHNECK of Bangor and
Senators: CYRWAY of Kennebec, LUCHINI of Hancock, Representatives: ACKLEY of
Monmouth, COOPER of Yarmouth, HANINGTON of Lincoln, HUBBELL of Bar Harbor,
McCREIGHT of Harpswell, STROM of Pittsfield.

1 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

2 **Sec. 1. 21-A MRSA §904-C** is enacted to read:

3 **§904-C. Payment per signature; prohibition**

4 **1. Findings.** The Legislature finds that the practice of paying persons who collect
5 signatures for initiative or referendum petitions based on the number of signatures the
6 persons collect has corrupted the signature collecting process and is eroding public
7 confidence in the petition process. The Legislature finds that the large numbers of
8 invalidated signatures that have been collected during petition efforts by persons who
9 were paid for the number of signatures collected provides strong evidence that the
10 practice of paying for signatures collected has corrupted the signature gathering process.
11 The Legislature further finds that the State has a vital interest in ensuring that the
12 signature gathering process is not corrupted by practices that erode public confidence in
13 the petition process.

14 **2. Payment per signature.** A circulator of an initiative or referendum petition, a
15 direct initiative or people's veto organization registered in accordance with section 903-C
16 or a person who causes the circulation of an initiative or referendum petition may not
17 receive payment for the collection of signatures if that payment is based on the number of
18 signatures collected. This section does not prohibit a circulator of an initiative or
19 referendum petition, a direct initiative or people's veto organization registered in
20 accordance with section 903-C or a person who causes the circulation of an initiative or
21 referendum petition from being paid a salary or fee that is not based on the number of
22 signatures collected.

23 **SUMMARY**

24 This bill prohibits the circulator or person who causes the circulation of an initiative
25 or referendum petition or a petition organization from receiving payment for the
26 collection of signatures based on the number of signatures collected. The bill clarifies
27 that a salary or fee for the collection of signatures is not prohibited if it is not based on the
28 number of signatures collected.