

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST SPECIAL SESSION-2025

Legislative Document

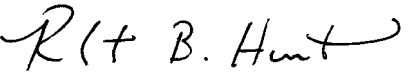
No. 1388

H.P. 910

House of Representatives, April 1, 2025

An Act to Replace the Participation Threshold in Votes to Adopt or Alter a Municipal Charter with a Lower Approval Threshold

Reference to the Committee on State and Local Government suggested and ordered printed.


ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative BRIDGEO of Augusta.
Cosponsored by Representative: ROLLINS of Augusta.

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

Sec. 1. 30-A MRSA §2105, sub-§4, as enacted by PL 1987, c. 737, Pt. A, §2 and Pt. C, §106 and amended by PL 1989, c. 6; c. 9, §2; and c. 104, Pt. C, §§8 and 10, is further amended to read:

4. Effective date. If a ~~majority more~~ of the ballots ~~votes~~ cast on any question under subsection 1 or 2 favor acceptance than oppose it, the new charter, charter revision, charter modification or charter amendment proposed in that question becomes effective as provided in this subsection, provided as long as the total number of votes cast ~~for and against~~ in favor of the question equals or exceeds ~~30%~~ 15% of the total votes cast in the municipality at the last gubernatorial election.

A. Except as provided in subparagraph (1), new charters, charter revisions or charter modifications adopted by the voters take effect on the first day of the next succeeding municipal year.

(1) New charters, charter revisions or charter modifications take effect immediately for the purpose of conducting any elections required by the new provisions.

B. Charter amendments adopted by the voters take effect on the date determined by the municipal officers, but not later than the first day of the next municipal year.

SUMMARY

This bill changes the requirements for a new municipal charter, charter revision, charter modification or charter amendment in a question before the voters to go into effect. Current law requires that the total number of votes cast for and against the question equals or exceeds 30% of the total votes cast in the municipality in the last gubernatorial election. The bill requires instead that the number of votes cast in favor of the question equals or exceeds 15% of the total votes cast in the municipality in the last gubernatorial election. Also, while this bill does not change the requirement that a majority of votes cast for and against the proposed change be in favor of it in order for that change to go into effect, it clarifies that blank votes are not counted in that calculation.