

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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September 18, 1951

To Honorable Frederick G. Payne, Governor of Maine
Re: Change of Election Date in the Third District

It is the opinion of this office that it would be most inexpedient to change the date of the proposed Primary election in the Third District, which has been fixed by Executive Proclamation as October 1st, 1951.

First, and most important is the matter of ballots.

In order to hold the election on October 1st, as proclaimed by the Governor, it was necessary to prepare as far in advance as possible all printed matter. To speed up the printing of the ballots (already accomplished), the back, containing the name of the municipality and the date of the election, was printed for the entire Third Congressional District. As soon as the nomination papers were received, the Secretary of State prepared the front of the ballots and they are in the hands of the printer who is presently printing the candidates' names on the inside of the ballot, which already contains the October 1st date on the outside.

If the election date is changed, 132,000 ballots would have to be 'junked'. Due to the shortage of paper, there is a serious question as to whether replacement paper could be immediately available.

The printed matter - instructions, notices, specimen ballot, receipts, etc.) has already been prepared and printed especially for this election, all of which contains the October 1st date.

Most important of these are the warrants, which differ for cities, towns and plantations, all containing the October 1st date, which have already been mailed to the various municipalities.

In summary, there would be a serious disruption of the mechanics of running an election, which would vitally affect the office of the Secretary of State, as in order to change the date of this Primary Election all of the ballots, instructions, notices, receipts, etc., would have to be reprinted at a cost of several thousand dollars.

Further, if the date of election is changed, it will be necessary to confer with the Superintendent of Printing to see when delivery might be had on a new supply of printed matter before any new date is set, and evidently this may also change the actual final election date.

After consultation with Hon. Samuel Slosberg, Director of Legislative Research, we propose to prepare legislation for submission to the Legislature which will permit in similar situations the legal use of the Absentee ballot.

For the reasons hereinbefore stated we recommend that the dates of October 1 and 22 be unchanged.

Alexander A. LaFleur
Attorney General

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