

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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July 10, 1970

Elden H. Shute, Jr., Deputy

State

George C. West, Deputy

Attorney General

I have your memo of July 9 in which you ask four questions relative to third party petitions which are in the process of being prepared and filed. I am not making this in the form of a formal opinion as I believe the matter can best be answered in a memo.

1. Your first question asks whether names which include only the first two initials may be accepted as properly authenticated by the municipal clerk or registrar. The answer is yes. 21 M.R.S.A. § 492, subsection 3 states:

"It must be signed personally by the voter in such manner to satisfy the registrar of each municipality concerned that the person signing the petition is, in fact, listed on the voting list of that municipality."

Therefore, if the registrar has certified the name as being a voter in that municipality, you should accept.

2 and 3. You ask about a municipality and a street address. This is answered by section 492, subsection 4 which states:

"After his name the voter must personally add his place of residence and his street address, if any. Ditto marks are permitted."

This means that if there is a street address in the particular municipality, it must appear. The name of the municipality of residence must appear - both in the handwriting of the individual signing. The next signator may use ditto marks under so much of the address as is applicable to him.

4. You ask if the name of the municipality may be abbreviated. As we have indicated in 2 and 3, the name of the place of residence must appear. The statute does not say whether abbreviations may or may not be used. Normally abbreviations

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are acceptable if they clearly indicate the place of residence. Inasmuch as the name of the voter must be certified by the registrar, it would appear that from this certification of the number of signatures, you can ascertain the municipality in which the individual resides. Therefore, if the registrar has certified that a given number of people live in and are voters in his municipality, you can accept this even though the name of a municipality is abbreviated.

GCW/ec