

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document

No. 96

S. P. 57

In Senate, January 7, 1971

Referred to Committee on State Government. Sent down for concurrence and ordered printed.

HARRY N. STARBRANCH, Secretary

Presented by Senator Levine of Kennebec.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED
SEVENTY-ONE

RESOLUTION, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution Providing for
Annual Legislative Sessions.

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, Article IV, Part First, Section 2, amended. The first sentence of Section 2 of Part First of Article IV of the Constitution is amended to read as follows:

The House of Representatives shall consist of one hundred and fifty-one members, to be elected by the qualified electors, and hold their office two years from the day next preceding the ~~biennial~~ next annual meeting of the Legislature.

Constitution, Article IV, Part Third, Section 1, amended. Section 1 of Part Third of Article IV of the Constitution is amended to read as follows:

Section 1. To meet annually. The Legislature shall convene on the first Wednesday of January ~~biennially~~ annually, and, with the exceptions hereinafter stated, shall have full power to make and establish all reasonable laws and regulations for the defense and benefit of the people of this State, not repugnant to this Constitution, nor to that of the United States.

Constitution, Article V, Part First, Section 13, amended. Section 13 of Part First of Article V of the Constitution is amended to read as follows:

Section 13. Convene the Legislature on extraordinary occasions, and adjourn it in case of disagreement; may change the place of meeting. He may, on extraordinary occasions, convene the Legislature; and in case of disagree-

ment between the two Houses with respect to the time of adjournment, adjourn them to such time, as he shall think proper, not beyond the day of the next ~~biennial~~ annual meeting; and if, since the last adjournment, the place where the Legislature were next to convene shall have become dangerous from an enemy or contagious sickness, may direct the session to be held at some other convenient place within the State.

Form of question and date when amendments shall be voted upon. Resolved: That the aldermen of cities, the selectmen of towns and the assessors of the several plantations of this State are empowered and directed to notify the inhabitants of their respective cities, towns and plantations to meet in the manner prescribed by law for calling and holding biennial meetings of said inhabitants for the election of Senators and Representatives at the next general election in the month of November, to give in their votes upon the amendments proposed in the foregoing resolution, and the question shall be:

“Shall the Constitution be amended as proposed by a resolution of the Legislature Providing for Annual Legislative Sessions?”

The inhabitants of said cities, towns and plantations shall vote by ballot on said question, and shall indicate by a cross or check mark placed against the words “Yes” or “No” their opinion of the same. The ballots shall be received, sorted, counted and declared in open ward, town and plantation meetings and returns made to the office of the Secretary of State in the same manner as votes for Governor and Members of the Legislature, and the Governor and Council shall review the same, and if it shall appear that a majority of the inhabitants voting on the question are in favor of the amendments, the Governor shall forthwith make known the fact by his proclamation, and the amendments shall thereupon, as of the date of said proclamation, become a part of the Constitution.

Secretary of State shall prepare ballots. Resolved: That the Secretary of State shall prepare and furnish to the several cities, towns and plantations ballots and blank returns in conformity with the foregoing resolve, accompanied by a copy thereof.

STATEMENT OF FACT

The bill proposes annual sessions of the Maine Legislature in order to keep pace with the rapid changes in present day social and economic conditions and to permit closer legislative control of the operations of State Government. Present budgetary problems indicate that a more economical administration would result from annual sessions.