

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document

No. 591

H. P. 442

House of Representatives, February 1, 1973

Referred to Committee on Election Laws. Sent up for concurrence and ordered printed.

E. LOUISE LINCOLN, Clerk

Presented by Mr. Whitzell of Gardiner.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED
SEVENTY-THREE

AN ACT Relating to Content of Ballots.

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

Sec. 1. R. S., T. 21, § 701, sub-§ 2, ¶ A, amended. Paragraph A of subsection 2 of section 701 of Title 21 of the Revised Statutes, as amended, is further amended to read as follows:

A. Instructions printed. The following instructions must be printed in bold type at the top of the ballot: "MAKE A CROSS (X) OR A CHECK MARK (✓) IN THE SQUARE AT THE ~~RIGHT~~ LEFT OF THE NAME OF THE CANDIDATE FOR WHOM YOU WISH TO VOTE. FOLLOW DIRECTIONS AS TO THE NUMBER OF CANDIDATES TO BE NOMINATED FOR EACH OFFICE. YOU MAY VOTE FOR A PERSON WHOSE NAME DOES NOT APPEAR ON THE BALLOT BY WRITING IT OR PASTING A STICKER WITH HIS NAME ON IT IN THE PROPER BLANK SPACE, AND MARKING A CROSS (X) OR A CHECK MARK (✓) IN THE PROPER SQUARE AT THE ~~RIGHT~~ LEFT. DO NOT ERASE NAMES." NAMES WRITTEN IN OR ON STICKERS MUST SHOW THE MUNICIPALITY OF RESIDENCE OF EACH WRITE-IN CANDIDATE.

Sec. 2. R. S., T. 21, § 701, sub-§ 2, ¶ F, amended. Paragraph F of subsection 2 of section 701 of Title 21 of the Revised Statutes is amended to read as follows:

F. Squares printed. A square must be printed at the ~~right of left~~ and close to the name of each candidate or write-in space, so that a voter may designate his choice clearly by a cross (X) or a check mark (✓).

Sec. 3. R. S., T. 21, § 702, sub-§ 2, ¶ B, amended. The first sentence of paragraph B of subsection 2 of section 702 of Title 21 of the Revised Statutes, as repealed and replaced by the Initiated Bill, is amended to read as follows:

To the right of the name of each nominee upon the ballot and properly separated from said name ~~and immediately to the left of the square~~ in line with the name of the nominee, shall be printed the designation of the party which the nominee represents.

Sec. 4. R. S., T. 21, § 702, sub-§ 2, ¶ C, amended. Paragraph C of subsection 2 of section 702 of Title 21 of the Revised Statutes, as amended, is further amended to read as follows:

C. Further instructions. The following instructions must be printed in bold type at the top of the ballot: "MAKE A CROSS (X) OR A CHECK MARK (✓) IN THE SQUARE AT THE ~~RIGHT~~ LEFT OF THE NOMINEE FOR WHOM YOU WISH TO VOTE. FOLLOW DIRECTIONS AS TO THE NUMBER OF NOMINEES TO BE ELECTED TO EACH OFFICE. YOU MAY VOTE FOR A PERSON WHOSE NAME DOES NOT APPEAR ON THE BALLOT BY WRITING IT IN THE PROPER BLANK SPACE AND MARKING A CROSS (X) OR A CHECK MARK (✓) IN THE PROPER SQUARE AT THE ~~RIGHT~~ LEFT. DO NOT ERASE NAMES." NAMES WRITTEN IN MUST SHOW THE MUNICIPALITY OF RESIDENCE OF EACH WRITE-IN CANDIDATE.

Sec. 5. R. S., T. 21, § 702, sub-§ 2, ¶ H, amended. Paragraph H of subsection 2 of section 702 of Title 21 of the Revised Statutes is amended to read as follows:

H. Squares printed. A square must be printed at the ~~right~~ of left and close to the name of each nominee or write-in space, so that a voter may designate his choice clearly by a cross or a check mark in it.

STATEMENT OF FACT

The purpose of this bill would equalize the choice of the candidate by the voter, by placing the choice blank nearer to the name of the candidate. Because of the increasing difficulty in choosing candidates due to recent changes in the ballot, people with poor vision have to follow very finely printed directions from the name of the candidate to the check-off box. This fine print makes the incidence of error greater for these people who are aging or who have poor vision.