

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document

No. 722

H. P. 596

House of Representatives, March 3, 1977

On motion of Mr. Curran of South Portland, referred to the Committee on State Government. Sent up for concurrence and ordered printed.

EDWIN H. PERT, Clerk

Presented by Mr. Talbot of Portland.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED
SEVENTY-SEVEN

**RESOLUTION, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution to Reduce
the Number of Signatures Necessary on Petitions to Initiate Legislation.**

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, Art. IV, Pt. 3, § 18, 3rd sentence is amended to read:

Any measure thus proposed by electors, the number of which shall not be less than ~~ten~~ **five** percent of the total vote for Governor cast in the last gubernatorial election preceding the filing of such petition, unless enacted without change by the Legislature at the session at which it is presented, shall be submitted to the electors together with any amended form, substitute, or recommendation of the Legislature, and in such manner that the people can choose between the competing measures or reject both.

Constitutional referendum procedure; form of question; effective date. Resolved: That the city aldermen, town selectmen and plantation assessors of this State shall notify the inhabitants of their respective cities, towns and plantations to meet, in the manner prescribed by law for holding a statewide election, at the next general election in the month of November or special statewide election on the Tuesday following the first Monday of November following the passage of this resolution, to vote upon the ratification of the amendment proposed in this resolution by voting upon the following question:

“Shall the Constitution be amended as proposed by a Resolution of the Legislature to reduce the number of signatures of electors necessary on a petition to directly initiate legislation from ten percent to five percent of the vote for Governor cast in the last gubernatorial election?”

The legal voters of each city, town and plantation shall vote by ballot on this question, and shall designate their choice by a cross or check mark placed within the corresponding square below the words "Yes" or "No." The ballots shall be received, sorted, counted and declared in open ward, town and plantation meetings and returns made to the Secretary of State in the same manner as votes for members of the Legislature. The Governor shall review the returns, and, if it appears that a majority of the legal votes are in favor of the amendment, the Governor shall proclaim that fact without delay and the amendment shall become part of the Constitution on the date of the proclamation.

Secretary of State shall prepare ballots. Resolved: That the Secretary of State shall prepare and furnish to each city, town and plantation all ballots, returns and copies of this resolution necessary to carry out the purpose of this referendum.

STATEMENT OF FACT

In accordance with the Governor's program, this resolution proposes an amendment to the Constitution to reduce from 10% to 5% of the vote for Governor cast in the last gubernatorial election the number of signatures of electors necessary on a petition to directly initiate legislation. This proposed change is intended to make it easier for citizens to petition their government.