

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

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**Legislative Document**

**No. 1277**

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H. P. 1029

House of Representatives, March 24, 1977

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

EDWIN H. PERT, Clerk

Presented by Mr. Truman of Biddeford (by request).

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STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED  
SEVENTY-SEVEN

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**AN ACT to Require the Use of Voting Machines in  
Municipalities of More than 5,000 Population.**

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

Sec. 1. 21 MRSA § 1031, as last amended by PL 1973, c. 414, § 43, is repealed and the following enacted in its place:

§ 1031. **Obtaining and using**

A municipality with a population of 5,000 or more shall obtain and use voting machines according to the following provisions.

1. **Purchased.** The municipality shall purchase voting machines, with or without state subsidy.
2. **Use authorized.** The voting machines shall be used at each type of election.
3. **One machine.** There shall be one machine for each 450 registered voters.

Sec. 2. **Reimbursement.** Any municipality purchasing voting machines shall be reimbursed upon request by the State for the cost of such machines, such reimbursement to be made on certification of the Secretary of State to the Treasurer of State and from the funds appropriated by this Act.

Sec. 3. **Appropriation.** There is appropriated to the Treasurer of State from the General Fund the sum of \$1,400,000 to carry out the purposes of

this Act. Any unexpended balances shall not lapse, but shall remain a continuing carrying account until the purposes of this Act shall have been accomplished.

#### FISCAL NOTE

It is estimated that if all municipalities of 5,000 persons or over bought voting machines as required by this Act, the cost of purchasing those machines would be approximately \$1,400,000.

#### STATEMENT OF FACT

This Act, by requiring all municipalities of 5,000 persons or over to use voting machines for elections, would make the electoral process quicker and easier to handle. It would thus:

1. Increase the efficiency of State Government when it administers the election system;
2. Save taxpayers' money by avoiding many expensive recounts;
3. Provide for quicker election returns; and
4. Avoid many of the problems of disputed paper ballots.

In addition, if the date of the primary election is moved to September as has been suggested, widespread use of voting machines would ease the time burden imposed on the Secretary of State by the necessity of having too many thousands of differing paper ballots for each of Maine's numerous municipalities.