

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document

No. 1649

H. P. 1350

House of Representatives, April 13, 1977

On motion of Mrs. Boudreau of Portland, referred to the Committee on Election Laws. Sent up for concurrence and ordered printed.

EDWIN H. PERT, Clerk

Presented by Mr. Boudreau of Waterville.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED
SEVENTY-SEVEN

AN ACT to Make Certain Changes in the Election Laws.

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

Sec. 1. 21 MRSA § 175, as last amended by PL 1973, c. 414, § 6, is repealed and the following enacted in its place:

§ 175. Copies of list available

The registrar shall furnish a certified copy of the voting list to any person within 10 business days after such a person makes a request for such a copy. The registrar shall charge a reasonable fee which shall be determined by the municipal officers, but which shall not exceed \$2 for each 1,000 voters on the list. The registrar may require a deposit when the request is made. The fee shall accrue to the registrar unless the municipal officers determine otherwise. The registrar shall furnish a certified copy of the voting list to the clerk, at no fee or charge, within 10 days after it is completed.

Sec. 2. 21 MRSA § 176, last paragraph, as enacted by PL 1975, c. 348, is amended to read:

~~A municipal~~ The registrar shall furnish to a candidate entitled to them under this section lists of the additions, deletions and changes to a purchased voting list at no cost to the candidate and periodically as lists of the additions, deletions and updates become available.

Sec. 3. 21 MRSA § 1395, sub-§ 1, 1st sentence, as enacted by PL 1975, c. 759, § 1, is amended to read:

No individual, other than a candidate or a member of a candidate's immediate family, shall make contributions to a candidate, in support of the candidacy of one person, in an aggregate amount greater than ~~\$1,000~~ \$5,000 in any election.

Sec. 4. 21 MRSA § 1396, sub-§ 2, ¶ B, as enacted by PL 1975, c. 759, § 1, is amended to read:

B. The identification of every person making a contribution in excess of \$10, and the date and amount thereof and, if a person's contributions in any election aggregate more than \$50, ~~the account shall include occupation and the principal place of business, if any~~ and, if such person is a member of a candidate's immediate family as defined in section 1395, subsection 1, the account shall state such relationship;

Sec. 5. 21 MRSA § 1397, sub-§ 2, as last repealed and replaced by PL 1975, c. 759, § 1, is amended by adding after the first sentence a new sentence to read:

Any other candidate, person or committee engaging in activities in this State on account of which a report is required by federal law shall file with the commission a completed copy of the report required by federal law on the same day as required by federal law and no other report shall be required.

Sec. 6. 21 MRSA § 1397, sub-§ 4, 2nd ¶, 2nd sentence, as repealed and replaced by PL 1975, c. 759, § 1, is amended to read:

Such report shall contain an itemized account of each contribution in any election of an aggregate amount of \$50 or more received ~~and the name and address of each such contributor and the occupation and principal place of business, if any, of such contributor.~~

Sec. 7. 21 MRSA § 1397, sub-§ 8, is enacted to read:

8. Uses of reports restricted. The commission shall not sell or distribute the reports required to be filed under this section or any information contained therein for commercial purposes or for purposes of any form of solicitation of persons whose names and addresses are contained therein. No person shall use these reports for such purposes.

Sec. 8. 21 MRSA § 1577, sub-§ 1, as amended by PL 1975, c. 761, § 56, is further amended to read:

1. Exceptions. Ballots ~~absentee ballot application~~ and absentee ballot envelopes are not public records and may be inspected only in accordance with this Title.

STATEMENT OF FACT

Sections 1 and 2 of the bill set a limit on the amount which a municipality may charge for a copy of a voting list. At present, the municipal officers may set the fee. The bill would limit that fee to not more than \$2 for each 1,000 voters on the list. These sections also clarify the wording of the law.

Section 3 increases the limit on campaign contributions by individuals from \$1,000 to \$5,000. The purposes are to reduce the advantage held by the

wealthy candidate who can spend his own funds without limit and to make this limit equal with the limit on contributions by corporations, associations and political committees.

Sections 4 and 6 remove "occupation and principal place of business" as items of information which must be recorded for each contributor of \$10 or more to a candidate.

The purpose of section 5 is to allow committees and candidates from outside the State, including the national party committee, to conduct certain activities in the State without having to file separate reports with the commission, as long as a copy of their federal reports are filed with the commission.

Section 7 prohibits the commission from selling or distributing copies of required reports for commercial or solicitation use.

Section 8 would make absentee ballot applications public records once again.