

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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STATE OF MAINE  
SENATE  
109TH LEGISLATURE  
FIRST REGULAR SESSION

(Filing No. S-98)

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A " to S.P. 121, L.D. 230, Bill, "AN ACT Pertaining to Absentee Voting."

Amend the bill by striking out everything after the enacting clause and inserting in its place the following:

'21 MRSA §1, sub-§1, as amended by PL 1973, c. 782, §1, is further amended to read:

1. Absentee voter. "Absentee voter" means a person who is unable to cast his ballot in the municipality in which he is registered to vote, for one of the following reasons: Absence from the municipality during the time the polls are open on election day; physical incapacity not adversely affecting his soundness of mind; religious belief which prohibits his doing so; confinement in a jail or penal institution; and unreasonable distance from the polls, if he is a resident of a township or a coastal island ward or district.'

Statement of Fact

This amendment provides that persons confined in prison qualify as absentee voters. It is necessary to address this situation with direct language because a person may be incarcerated in the same municipality in which he is registered to vote. In that case he would not be qualified to vote absentee since he would not be absent from that municipality on election day. At present, a prisoner who is registered in a municipality other than that in

which he is incarcerated is allowed to vote absentee because he is absent from the municipality in which registered on election day. Coastal island residents now must take the ferry to the mainland when the voting place is located there and must in many cases take additional transportation from the ferry to the voting place. This represents an undue hardship for these residents.

Reported by the Committee on Election Laws.

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