

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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FIRST REGULAR SESSION

ONE HUNDRED AND NINTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document

No. 753

H. P. 609

House of Representatives, February 23, 1979

Referred to the Committee on Local and County Government. Sent up for concurrence and ordered printed.

EDWIN H. PERT, Clerk

Presented by Mr. Cunningham of New Gloucester.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED
SEVENTY-NINE

AN ACT to Provide Voter Approval of County Budgets.

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

Sec. 1. 30 MRSA § 252, first ¶, as repealed and replaced by PL 1977, c. 148, § 1, is amended to read:

In order to assess a county tax, county commissioners, prior to ~~November 7th~~ **September 15th** in each **even-numbered** year, shall prepare estimates of the sums necessary to defray the expenses which have accrued or may probably accrue for the ~~coming year~~ **next 2 years commencing the following January**, including the building and repairing of jails, courthouses and appurtenances, with the debts owed by their counties.

Sec. 2. 30 MRSA § 252, 4th ¶, first sentence, as enacted by PL 1977, c. 148, § 3, is amended to read:

The county commissioners shall hold a public hearing in the county on these estimates prior to ~~December~~ **October 1st**.

Sec. 3. 30 MRSA § 252-A is enacted to read:

§ 252-A. Authorization of county taxes; voter approval; submission to Legislature

The biennial estimates of expenditures shall not be authorized as county taxes until approved by the legal voters of the county at the next general election in the month of November following preparation of the estimates. Should the voters not approve the estimates at that time, the county commissioners shall resubmit the estimates, with such modifications as they deem appropriate, to the legal voters of the county at a special election to be held on the 2nd Tuesday in December following the general election. Should the voters not approve the estimates in December, they shall be transmitted to the Secretary of State and laid by him before the Legislature in accordance with section 253.

STATEMENT OF FACT

The purpose of this bill is to make county government responsive to the people by giving the voters the power to approve or disapprove biennial county budgets. Failing voter approval at 2 successive referenda, the county budget would go to the Legislature for adoption as it does now.