

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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FIRST REGULAR SESSION

ONE HUNDRED AND TENTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document

No. 363

S. P. 155

In Senate, January 22, 1981

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

MAY M. ROSS, Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator Minkowsky of Androscoggin.

Cosponsor: Representative Berube of Lewiston.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-ONE

AN ACT to Prohibit Voter Registration on Election Day and the 7 Business Days next Prior to Election Day.

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

Sec. 1. 21 MRSA § 631, sub-§ 2, as enacted by PL 1977, c. 430, § 1, is amended to read:

2. Names to be placed on voting list.

A. In a municipality of 2,500 or less population, he shall accept registrations during the time prescribed by the municipal officers on at least ~~one business day during the week before election day~~ the 8th business day prior to election day. The names of such voters shall be placed on the voting list.

~~The registrar shall accept the registrations of applicants who appear in person on the business day next prior to election day. The names of such voters shall be recorded as provided in subsection 3~~

B. In a municipality of 2,501 to 5,000 population, the registrar shall accept registrations from 1 to 5 p.m. and from 7 to 9 p.m. on the ~~4th~~ 8th to ~~6th~~ 10th business days next prior to election day. The names of such voters shall be placed on the voting list.

~~The registrar shall accept the registrations of applicants who appear in person~~

~~on the 3 business days next prior to election day. The names of such voters shall be recorded as provided in subsection 3~~

C. In a municipality of 5,001 to 10,000 population, the registrar shall accept registrations from 1 to 5 p.m. and from 7 to 9 p.m. on the ~~6th 8th to 10th 12th~~ business days next prior to election day. The names of such voters shall be placed on the voting list.

~~The registrar shall accept the registrations of applicants who appear in person on the 5 business days next prior to election day. The names of such voters shall be recorded as provided in subsection 3~~

D. In a municipality of 10,001 to 24,000 population, the registrar shall accept registrations from 1 to 5 p.m. and from 7 to 9 p.m. on the 8th to 14th business days next prior to election day. The names of such voters shall be placed on the voting list.

~~The registrar shall accept the registrations of applicants who appear in person on the 7 business days next prior to election day. The names of such voters shall be recorded as provided in subsection 3~~

E. In a municipality of 24,001 or more population, the registrar shall accept registrations from 1 to 5 p.m. and from 7 to 9 p.m. on the ~~10th 8th to 18th 20th~~ business day next prior to election day. The names of such voters shall be placed on the voting list.

~~The registrar shall accept the registrations of applicants who appear in person on the 9 business days next prior to elections day. The names of such voters shall be recorded as provided in subsection 3~~

Sec. 2. 21 MRSA § 631, sub-§ 3, as repealed and replaced by PL 1977, c. 430, § 1, is repealed.

Sec. 3. 21 MRSA § 631, sub-§ 4, as repealed and replaced by PL 1977, c. 430, § 1, is repealed and the following enacted in its place:

4. Election day registration. The registrar shall be open on election day during the time the polls are open for the purpose of accepting the registration of those persons who became 18 years of age during the closed session and to make corrections to the voting list.

Sec. 4. 21 MRSA § 632, sub-§ 2, last sentence, as repealed and replaced by PL 1977, c. 430, § 2, is repealed as follows:

~~The names of such voters shall be recorded as provided in subsection 4~~

Sec. 5. 21 MRSA § 632, sub-§ 3, as enacted by PL 1977, c. 430, § 2, is amended to read:

3. Municipality of more than 2,500. In a municipality of 2,500 or more population, the registrar shall accept registrations during the time prescribed by the municipal officers on the 2nd 5th and 3rd 6th business days next prior to election day.

~~The registrar shall accept the registrations of applicants who appear in person on the business day next prior to election day. The names of such voters shall be recorded as provided in subsection 4~~

Sec. 6. 21 MRSA § 632, sub-§ 4, as enacted by PL 1977, c. 430, § 2, is repealed.

Sec. 7. 21 MRSA § 632, sub-§ 5, as enacted by PL 1977, c. 430, § 2, is repealed and the following enacted in its place:

5. Election day registration. The registrar shall be open on election day during the time the polls are open for the purpose of accepting the registration of those persons who became 18 years of age during the closed session and to make corrections to the voting list.

STATEMENT OF FACT

The present voter registration requirement does not allow sufficient time for the voting list to be updated and to control registration. It is impossible to determine residency and to handle the large number of registrations on election day and the week prior to election day. The uniform cut-off time statewide would allow for a voter education program to assure that all eligible voters have an opportunity to register and vote.