

1 2	FIRST REGULAR SESSION
3 4	ONE HUNDRED AND ELEVENTH LEGISLATURE
5	Legislative Document No. 240
7	H.P. 196 House of Representatives, January 21, 1983
8	Received by the Clerk of the House on January 21, 1983. Referred to the Committee on Election Laws, and ordered printed pursuant to Joint Rule 14.
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10	EDWIN H. PERT, Clerk
. 11	Presented by Representative Racine of Biddeford. Cosponsors: Representative Lehoux of Biddeford, Representative Clark of Millinocket and Representative Pouliot of Lewiston.
12 13	STATE OF MAINE
14 15 16	IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-THREE
17 18 19	AN ACT to Amend the Election Laws Concerning Signatures and Names.
20 21	Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:
22	21 MRSA §2, sub-§4 is enacted to read:
. 23 24 25 26 27 28	4. Signatures and names. When this Title re- quires a name or signature on a document, if the identity of the person named is clear to the public official charged with reviewing that document, immaterial irregularities shall not invalidate the name or signature.
29 30 31 32	A. Immaterial irregularities include, but are not limited to, misspelling, inclusion or omis- sion of initials and substitution of initials for given names.

1B. This policy shall apply to circumstances2including, but not limited to, the following:3(1) Absentee ballot applications;4(2) Absentee ballot affidavits;5(3) Signatures on petitions; and6(4) Names appearing for write-in candidates7on ballots.

## STATEMENT OF FACT

9 From time to time, signatures on absentee ballot 10 applications and absentee ballot affidavits differ in 11 an immaterial manner, such as the inclusion or omis-12 sion of initials. Town clerks have sometimes refused 13 to accept an absentee ballot affidavit on which a 14 signature differs from that on the application in 15 such an immaterial manner. This has caused hardship 16 for potential voters and for those who have been 17 transporting applications and affidavits for the 18 voters. Also, the Secretary of State has received notification of persons whose signatures on petitions 19 by 20 accepted registrars because are not such 21 signatures differed in an immaterial manner from the 22 way their name appears on the voter registration 23 lists.

24 This bill allows a public official to accept a signature, even though it differs in an immaterial 25 26 manner from a reference signature or name, if the identification of the person named is clear to the public official. If the difference in signatures 27 28 29 the identification of the person signing makes unclear to the public official, then that official 30 31 may reject such a signature.

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