MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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115th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-1991

Legislative Document	No. 683

| H.P. 489 | House of Representatives, February 20, 1991 |

Reference to the Committee on Legal Affairs suggested and ordered printed.
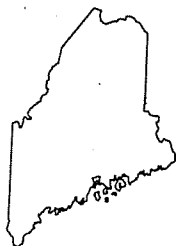
EDWIN H. PERT, Clerk

Presented by Representative LIPMAN of Augusta.
Cosponsored by Representative BAILEY of Township 27, Representative BOWERS of Sherman and Senator GAUVREAU of Androscoggin.

STATE OF MAINE

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

An Act to Allow Reasonable Inspection of Absentee Ballots.

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

21-A MRSA §755, as amended by PL 1987, c. 624, is further amended to read:

§755. Deadline

The office of the clerk ~~shall~~ <u>must</u> be open a minimum of 4 hours on the Saturday immediately preceding a statewide regular election and any election for federal or state office to allow voters to obtain or cast absentee ballots. In order to be valid, an absentee ballot must be delivered to the municipal clerk at ~~any-time~~ <u>least 2 hours</u> before the polls are closed.

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STATEMENT OF FACT

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This bill requires voters or their agents to deliver absentee ballots to the municipal clerk at least 2 hours before the polls close. This permits any interested party to inspect the ballot envelopes and applications before the polls close, to determine whether to challenge the ballots. Under current law, absentee ballot envelopes and applications are public records only until the polls close. If the ballots are not turned in to the municipal clerk until the last minute before the polls close, there is no opportunity to challenge the ballots without initiating a formal inspection process after the election is over.