

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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118th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-1997

Legislative Document

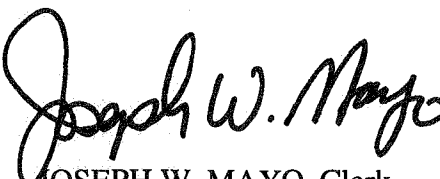
No. 1161

H.P. 856

House of Representatives, February 20, 1997

An Act to Extend Political Party Status to 4 Years.

Reference to the Committee on Legal and Veterans Affairs suggested and ordered printed.


JOSEPH W. MAYO, Clerk

Presented by Representative GERRY of Auburn.

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

Sec. 1. 21-A MRSA §301, sub-§1, as enacted by PL 1985, c. 161, §6, is amended to read:

1. **Primary election.** A party qualifies to participate in a primary election if its designation was listed on the general election ballot in the last preceding gubernatorial election or the last preceding presidential election and if:

A. The party held municipal caucuses as prescribed by Article II in at least one municipality in each county in the State during that election year, during intervening general election years and ~~fulfills this same requirement~~ during the year of the primary election;

B. The party held a state convention as prescribed by Article III during that election year and during any general election year intervening between that year and the primary election year;

C. Its candidate for Governor or for President polled at least 5% of the total vote cast in the State for Governor or President in the last preceding gubernatorial election or the last preceding presidential election or its designation was listed on the last preceding general election ballot for the first time since qualifying as a party pursuant to section 302 or 303; and

D. Each ~~The~~ state party committee ~~must--file~~ filed a statement, signed by the party chair or the chair's designee, with the Secretary of State on or before April 4th certifying that the party has held the municipal caucuses required by paragraph A. ~~The statement must be signed by the party chairman or his designated agent.~~

SUMMARY

This bill provides that political parties are required to satisfy the 5% presidential or gubernatorial vote or the 5% petition requirement only once every 4 years instead of every 2 years. To qualify for inclusion on a primary election ballot for the first time, a new political party must either obtain petition signatures in a number at least equal to 5% of the votes cast at the last gubernatorial election or must organize around a recent presidential or gubernatorial candidate who got at least 5% of the votes cast for that office. The party must also hold municipal caucuses and, following the primary, must hold a state convention to qualify for placement on the general election

2 ballot. After initial qualification, a party may be included in
the next primary election ballot only if it had a presidential or
4 gubernatorial candidate at the most recent general election who
received at least 5% of the vote cast. This bill allows a 5%
6 vote or petition with the required number of signatures to
qualify a party for the ballot for 4 years. The caucus and
8 convention requirements would still apply to each general
election year.

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