MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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120th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2001

Legislative Document

of Poland, TREADWELL of Carmel.

No. 1481

H.P. 1112

House of Representatives, March 8, 2001

Millient M. Mac Failand

An Act to Permit the Ten Commandments to be Posted in Public Schools.

Reference to the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs suggested and ordered printed.

MILLICENT M. MacFARLAND, Clerk

Presented by Representative MacDOUGALL of North Berwick.
Cosponsored by Senator DAVIS of Piscataquis and
Representatives: ANNIS of Dover-Foxcroft, BOWLES of Sanford, CRESSEY of Baldwin,
DAVIS of Falmouth, KASPRZAK of Newport, MENDROS of Lewiston, SNOWE-MELLO

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Ma
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Sec. 1. 20-A MRSA §11 is enacted to read:

§11. Posting of Ten Commandments

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A public school may prominently display the Ten Commandments of the Bible.

Sec. 2. Statutory referendum procedure; submission at general election in 2002; form of question; effective date. This Act must be submitted to the legal voters of the State of Maine at a general election held in November 2002. The municipal officers of this State shall notify the inhabitants of their respective cities, towns and plantations to meet, in the manner prescribed by law for holding a statewide election, to vote on the acceptance or rejection of this Act by voting on the following question:

"Do you favor allowing, but not requiring, the Ten Commandments of the Bible to be displayed prominently at a school that is funded primarily with public funds?"

The legal voters of each city, town and plantation shall vote by ballot on this question, and shall designate their choice by a cross or check mark placed within a corresponding square below the word "Yes" or "No." The ballots must be received, sorted, counted and declared in open ward, town and plantation meetings and returns made to the Secretary of State in the same manner as votes for members of the Legislature. The Governor shall review the returns and, if it appears that a majority of the legal votes are cast in favor of the Act, the Governor shall proclaim that fact without delay, and the Act takes effect 30 days after the date of the proclamation.

The Secretary of State shall prepare and furnish to each city, town and plantation all ballots, returns and copies of this Act necessary to carry out the purpose of this referendum.

SUMMARY

This bill, if approved at the general election held in November of 2002, would allow the prominent display of the Ten Commandments of the Bible in public schools, which by definition of the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A, section 1, subsection 24 means a school governed by a school board of a school administrative unit and funded primarily with public funds.