

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# 126th MAINE LEGISLATURE

## FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2013

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Legislative Document

No. 769

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H.P. 520

House of Representatives, February 28, 2013

### An Act To Create Fairness in Political Party Enrollment Deadlines

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

*Millicent M. MacFarland*  
MILLICENT M. MacFARLAND  
Clerk

Presented by Representative CHIPMAN of Portland.

Cosponsored by Representatives: FOWLE of Vassalboro, GOODE of Bangor, JOHNSON of Eddington, KESCHL of Belgrade, SAUCIER of Presque Isle, Senator: PATRICK of Oxford.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 21-A MRSA §144, sub-§2**, as amended by PL 2005, c. 453, §27, is  
3 further amended to read:

4 **2. Party designation removed.** On receipt of the application, the registrar shall  
5 remove the party designation of the applicant from the central voter registration system.  
6 The registrar shall indicate in the central voter registration system that the applicant is  
7 ineligible to vote at a caucus or primary election for 15 days by designating the party  
8 enrollment field with the letter "X." Fifteen days after receiving the application, the  
9 registrar shall enroll the applicant in the party requested and enter the new party  
10 designation in the party enrollment field.

11 ~~This subsection does not apply in the case of a voter who changes enrollment under~~  
12 ~~subsection 4.~~

13 **Sec. 2. 21-A MRSA §144, sub-§3**, as amended by PL 1995, c. 459, §16, is  
14 further amended to read:

15 **3. Restrictions during change of enrollment.** ~~Except as provided in subsection 4, a~~  
16 A voter may not vote at a caucus, convention or primary election for 15 days after filing  
17 an application to change enrollment. A voter must file an application to change  
18 enrollment prior to January 1st to be eligible to file a petition as a candidate in that  
19 election year.

20 **Sec. 3. 21-A MRSA §144, sub-§4**, as enacted by PL 1985, c. 161, §6, is repealed.

21 **SUMMARY**

22 Under current law, a voter must file an application to change party enrollment prior to  
23 January 1st to be eligible to file a petition as a candidate in that year's election, except that  
24 a person who changes residence from one municipality to another may change the  
25 person's enrollment in a political party and file a petition for candidacy without adhering  
26 to any deadlines. This bill removes that exception and extends the January 1st deadline to  
27 all prospective candidates.