

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# 131st MAINE LEGISLATURE

## FIRST SPECIAL SESSION-2023

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Legislative Document

No. 1604

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S.P. 636

In Senate, April 11, 2023

**RESOLUTION, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of  
Maine to Extend the Time That a Signature on a Petition for a  
Direct Initiative of Legislation Is Valid**

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D M Grant'.

DAREK M. GRANT  
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator BENNETT of Oxford.

Cosponsored by Senators: BRAKEY of Androscoggin, HICKMAN of Kennebec.

1           **Constitutional amendment. Resolved:** Two thirds of each branch of the  
2 Legislature concurring, that the following amendment to the Constitution of Maine be  
3 proposed:

4           **Constitution, Art. IV, Pt. Third, §18, sub-§2** is amended to read:

5           **2. Referral to electors unless enacted by the Legislature without change;**  
6 **number of signatures necessary on direct initiative petitions; dating signatures**  
7 **on petitions; competing measures.** For any measure thus proposed by electors, the  
8 number of signatures shall not be less than 10% of the total vote for Governor cast in the  
9 last gubernatorial election preceding the filing of such petition. The date each signature  
10 was made shall be written next to the signature on the petition. A signature is not valid if  
11 it is dated more than ~~one year~~ 18 months prior to the date that the petition was filed in the  
12 office of the Secretary of State. The measure thus proposed, unless enacted without change  
13 by the Legislature at the session at which it is presented, shall be submitted to the electors  
14 together with any amended form, substitute, or recommendation of the Legislature, and in  
15 such manner that the people can choose between the competing measures or reject both.  
16 When there are competing bills and neither receives a majority of the votes given for or  
17 against both, the one receiving the most votes shall at the next statewide election to be held  
18 not less than 60 days after the first vote thereon be submitted by itself if it receives more  
19 than 1/3 of the votes given for and against both. If the measure initiated is enacted by the  
20 Legislature without change, it shall not go to a referendum vote unless in pursuance of a  
21 demand made in accordance with the preceding section. The Legislature may order a  
22 special election on any measure that is subject to a vote of the people.

23           **Constitutional referendum procedure; form of question; effective date.**

24 **Resolved:** That the municipal officers of this State shall notify the inhabitants of their  
25 respective cities, towns and plantations to meet, in the manner prescribed by law for holding  
26 a statewide election, at a statewide election held in the month of November following the  
27 passage of this resolution, to vote upon the ratification of the amendment proposed in this  
28 resolution by voting upon the following question:

29                   "Do you favor amending the Constitution of Maine to extend from one  
30                   year to 18 months the period of time that signatures are valid on a petition  
31                   for a direct initiative of legislation?"

32           The legal voters of each city, town and plantation shall vote by ballot on this question  
33 and designate their choice by a cross or check mark placed within the corresponding square  
34 below the word "Yes" or "No." The ballots must be received, sorted, counted and declared  
35 in open ward, town and plantation meetings and returns made to the Secretary of State in  
36 the same manner as votes for members of the Legislature. The Governor shall review the  
37 returns. If it appears that a majority of the legal votes are cast in favor of the amendment,  
38 the Governor shall proclaim that fact without delay and the amendment becomes part of  
39 the Constitution of Maine on the date of the proclamation.

40           **Secretary of State shall prepare ballots. Resolved:** That the Secretary of State  
41 shall prepare and furnish to each city, town and plantation all ballots, returns and copies of  
42 this resolution necessary to carry out the purposes of this referendum.

**SUMMARY**

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This resolution proposes to amend the Constitution of Maine to extend from one year to 18 months the period of time that signatures are valid on a petition for a direct initiative of legislation.