

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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E I G H T Y - E I G H T H L E G I S L A T U R E

Legislative Document

No. 1025

S. P. 505

In Senate, April 10, 1937.

Tabled by Sen. Laughlin of Cumberland pending printing of New Draft.
500 copies ordered printed.

ROYDEN V. BROWN, Secretary.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED
THIRTY-SEVEN

AN ACT to Extend Suffrage to Qualified Voters in Unorganized Territory.

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

Sec. 1. Census; assessment of taxes; voting. It shall be the duty of the state tax assessor to procure annually on or as of April 1 through agents as hereinafter provided a sworn return enumerating all persons, male and female, 21 years of age and upwards, who are residents of the various unorganized units, government reservations excepted, of the unorganized territory as defined in section 133 of chapter 19 of the revised statutes, and the state tax assessor shall give a certificate of residence to all such residents as shall make written application therefor upon the form provided for such persons by the state tax assessor. Said enumeration shall designate persons therein as qualified voters, alien and others.

Said state tax assessor, for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this act, shall have the authority to appoint agents for the whole or any portion of the unorganized territory and said agents shall perform such duties, including the collection of the poll tax as hereinafter provided, as said assessor may authorize or delegate in each particular appointment. Said agents in the collection of the poll tax aforesaid shall have the same powers and may exercise the same methods as the collectors of taxes in towns are authorized to exercise and use for the collection of personal and

poll taxes committed to them. Said tax assessor may require, in his discretion, a filing of surety bonds by said agents in such amount as he deems necessary.

Poll taxes shall be assessed annually on or as of April 1 on all residents of said unorganized territory who are required by law to pay a poll tax, and said poll tax shall be paid to the state tax assessor or to his duly authorized agent; and the state tax assessor or the agent to whom such payment is made shall give a receipt in proper form therefor. Poll taxes paid to any such agent shall be remitted by such agent to the state tax assessor. The state tax assessor shall have authority to abate such tax in any case where conditions warrant such action, and in such case the person whose tax is abated shall not forfeit any right or privilege to which payment of said tax would entitle him. Persons having legal residence in the unorganized territory may upon presentation of satisfactory evidence of such legal residence and of the legal qualifications of a voter to the proper officials of an adjacent town, vote in all county, state and national elections, if such town is in the same county; if not so situated then only in state and national elections. The poll taxes paid by electors in unorganized territory who register in a town as voters shall be paid by the state tax assessor to such towns upon proper notice to him by the officials of such towns of such registration and such payment shall be considered as an assessment on said electors by said town officials. The balance of the poll taxes collected if any shall be paid by the state tax assessor to the treasurer of state who shall credit them to the state school fund for the current year.

In the case of unorganized units located in remote sections of the state the secretary of state shall upon written request of an elector designate the town wherein said elector may vote and shall notify the proper town officials thereof.

An elector who shall become a resident of the unorganized territory, or remove from one unorganized unit to another, shall have the privilege of voting in the town where previously registered for 3 months after such change of residence and thereafter as a resident of the unorganized territory under the same conditions as heretofore provided.

Electors of the unorganized territory, who are unable to present themselves because of distance or other good and sufficient reasons in the adjacent town where registered as a voter, may vote by absentee ballot.

Sec. 2. Penalties. Any agent of said assessor who shall fail to remit poll taxes collected, to the said assessor within 3 months after collection, upon request therefor by the said assessor, shall be guilty of embezzlement and shall be punished accordingly.

Any person who certifies to a false statement relative to qualifications as a voter or as a resident of the unorganized territory for the purpose of securing the privilege of suffrage under this act, shall be punished for each offense by a fine of not more than \$100, or by imprisonment for not more than 6 months.

The selectmen of a town or the assessors of a plantation who wilfully refuse to permit an elector of the unorganized territory, who furnishes proper evidence of the legal qualifications of a voter and residence in the unorganized territory, to vote in accordance with the provisions of this act, shall be punished by a fine of not less than \$10 nor more than \$100, or by imprisonment for not more than 6 months.

Sec. 3. Repealing clause. Paragraph 1 and the last sentence of section 139 of chapter 19 of the revised statutes, as amended, and so much as relates to voters in unincorporated places and on islands as mentioned in section 76 of chapter 8 of the revised statutes and all other acts or parts of acts in conflict with any of the provisions of this act are hereby repealed.