



Janet T. Mills
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MAINE
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
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AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333-0001

January 10, 2020

The 129th Legislature of the State of Maine
State House
Augusta, Maine

Dear Honorable Members of the 129th Legislature:

By the authority conferred by Article IV, Part Third, Section 2 of the Constitution of the State of Maine, I am hereby vetoing L.D. 517, An Act To Facilitate Fair Ballot Representation for All Candidates.

L.D. 517 would permit a candidate's nickname, offset by quotes, to appear on the ballot, provided the candidate files a declaration that the nickname is the name by which the candidate is known to others.

Current law provides parameters for what name will be listed on the ballot for a candidate. A candidate's name must be one approved by the Probate Court or the name consistently used by the candidate during the past two years in filings with governmental agencies and in the transaction of public business.

While I do not want to dissuade candidates from using the name by which they are known in their communities, I am concerned about the potential of turning the ballot into an electioneering instrument. It is unclear whether any limitations would be permitted if, for example, a nickname such as "The Greatest" or "The People's Hero" were requested. A candidate can always identify themselves with their nicknames in their campaign materials, and if they desire a permanent change, there is a simple legal process in the Probate Court to accomplish this.

For these reasons, I return L.D. 517 unsigned and vetoed and urge the Legislature to sustain this veto.

Sincerely,

Janet T. Mills
Governor



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