

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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**Legislative Record**  
**House of Representatives**  
**One Hundred and Twenty-Fifth Legislature**  
**State of Maine**

**Daily Edition**

**First Regular Session**

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An Act To Preserve the Integrity of the Voter Registration and Election Process

(H.P. 1015) (L.D. 1376)

Was reported by the Committee on **Engrossed Bills** as truly and strictly engrossed.

On motion of Representative CAIN of Orono, was **SET ASIDE**.

The same Representative **REQUESTED** a roll call on **PASSAGE TO BE ENACTED**.

More than one-fifth of the members present expressed a desire for a roll call which was ordered.

The **SPEAKER**: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Portland, Representative Chipman.

Representative **CHIPMAN**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. I cannot myself allow this bill to be passed without speaking one more time on it and offering a few comments on this bill.

Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House, for the last forty years, Maine has allowed people to register to vote on Election Day and cast a ballot if they have proof of residency and some form of identification. This bill, if passed, would prohibit same-day voter registration and eliminate voting rights we have had in Maine since 1972.

It is hard enough to get people to vote now. I don't know why anyone would want to make voting more difficult. Some have said that processing new registrations on Election Day is too much of a burden for city and town clerks and that allowing people to register and vote the same day opens up the potential for fraud.

I serve on the Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee. When we held the hearing on this bill we did not hear from clerks that there are any problems with the current law. In fact, with so many people voting by absentee ballots compared to five or ten years ago, there are far fewer people going to the polling place, which means poll workers have more time to process new registrations than they did in the past.

In terms of fraud, Mr. Speaker, we only heard evidence of four cases since 1972 and only two were prosecuted and neither one would have been prevented by this bill.

Maine has the third highest voter turnout in the country. There are only two states with higher turnout and they also have same-day registration. Before allowing this bill to be enacted in 1972, our turnout was twenty-first in the country. I don't know why we'd want to turn back the clock to a time when voting was not as accessible and reduce our voter turnout.

The people who register to vote on Election Day tend to be young voters voting for the first time, college students, single mothers, homeless, and low-income people who move frequently, mostly about 50 percent of my district. There are a lot of people in my district that I represent, that would be impacted if this bill is passed, and that's why I'm speaking on it again today.

According to the Secretary of State's Office, and we heard this at the public hearing, if this bill had been in effect during the 2008 presidential election, ladies and gentlemen, 56,000 people would not have been able to vote in Maine. With another presidential election around the corner next year, in my opinion it would be morally wrong to pass this law today that we know would disenfranchise so many voters.

Whether you are Democrat, Republican, Green, or Independent, everyone has a right to vote and a right to register to vote regardless of what the timing is of that registration. I hope that we can defeat this bill today and protect this basic right for all Maine residents. Thank you.

The **SPEAKER**: A roll call has been ordered. The pending question before the House is Passage to be Enacted. All those in favor will vote yes, those opposed will vote no.

**ROLL CALL NO. 160**

**YEA** - Ayotte, Beaulieu, Bennett, Black, Burns DC, Burns DR, Cebra, Chase, Clark T, Cotta, Crafts, Cray, Crockett, Curtis, Cushing, Davis, Dow, Dunphy, Edgecomb, Espling, Fitts, Fitzpatrick, Flood, Fossil, Foster, Fredette, Gifford, Gillway, Guerin, Hamper, Harmon, Harvell, Johnson D, Johnson P, Keschl, Knapp, Knight, Libby, Long, Maker, Malaby, McClellan, McFadden, McKane, Morissette, Moulton, Nass, Newendyke, O'Connor, Olsen, Parker, Parry, Picchiotti, Plummer, Prescott, Richardson D, Rioux, Rosen, Sanderson, Sarty, Sirocki, Tilton, Timberlake, Turner, Volk, Waterhouse, Weaver, Willette A, Willette M, Winsor, Wood, Mr. Speaker.

**NAY** - Beaudoin, Beavers, Beck, Beliveau, Berry, Blodgett, Boland, Bolduc, Briggs, Cain, Casavant, Chapman, Chipman, Clark H, Cornell du Houx, Dill J, Driscoll, Duchesne, Eberle, Flemings, Gilbert, Goode, Graham, Hanley, Harlow, Haskell, Hayes, Herbig, Hinck, Hogan, Hunt, Kaenrath, Kent, Kruger, Kumiega, Lajoie, Longstaff, Lovejoy, Luchini, MacDonald, Maloney, Martin, Mazurek, Morrison, Nelson, O'Brien, Peoples, Peterson, Priest, Rankin, Rochelo, Rotundo, Russell, Sanborn, Shaw, Stevens, Strang Burgess, Stuckey, Theriault, Treat, Tuttle, Valentino, Wagner R, Webster, Welsh.

**ABSENT** - Bickford, Bryant, Carey, Celli, Clarke, Damon, Dion, Eves, Innes Walsh, McCabe, Pilon, Richardson W, Wintle.

Yes, 72; No, 65; Absent, 13; Vacant, 1; Excused, 0.

72 having voted in the affirmative and 65 voted in the negative, 1 vacancy with 13 being absent, and accordingly the Bill was **PASSED TO BE ENACTED**, signed by the Speaker and sent to the Senate.

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

**First Day**

In accordance with House Rule 519, the following items appeared on the Consent Calendar for the First Day:

(H.P. 954) (L.D. 1302) Bill "An Act To Extend Fire Code Rules to Single-family Dwellings Used as Nursing Homes for 3 or Fewer Patients" Committee on **CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY** reporting **Ought to Pass**

(H.P. 1095) (L.D. 1490) Bill "An Act To Amend the Laws Regarding Custody of the Remains of Deceased Persons" Committee on **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES** reporting **Ought to Pass as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (H-596)**

Under suspension of the rules, Second Day Consent Calendar notification was given.

There being no objection, the House Papers were **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED** or **PASSED TO BE ENGROSSED as Amended** and sent for concurrence.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

The following matters, in the consideration of which the House was engaged at the time of adjournment yesterday, had preference in the Orders of the Day and continued with such preference until disposed of as provided by House Rule 502.

Bill "An Act To Promote the Hiring of Seasonal Workers" (H.P. 829) (L.D. 1117)

- In House, Minority (5) **OUGHT TO PASS AS AMENDED** Report of the Committee on **LABOR, COMMERCE, RESEARCH AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT** READ and **ACCEPTED** and the