

## Montell, Karen

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**From:** Christine Keller <miltoncpk@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 31, 2019 4:22 PM  
**To:** Luchini, Louis; Schneck, John; VLA; Cyrway, Scott; Farrin, Bradlee; Rudnicki, Shelley  
**Subject:** LD 245 - proposed Presidential Primary election  
**Attachments:** LD 245 - Reinstatement of Presidential Preference Primary elections.pdf

Committees on Veterans and Legal Affairs  
c/o Legislative Information  
100 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333

Senator Luchini, Representative Schneck, esteemed members of the Veterans & Legal Affairs Committee, et al. -

I am writing in opposition to *LD 245 An Act To Reestablish a Presidential Primary System in Maine* due to the tremendous burden this prospective law would place on Municipal Clerks and Maine municipalities. There are several deficiencies and conflicts with the proposed legislation that would interfere with the legal compliance administering elections.

The election process, which is entirely overseen statutorily by Municipal Clerk, is a long, labor-intensive and time-consuming task proudly undertaken. Elections require detailed and accurate preparation and comprehensive administration commencing 90 days out; and 30-60 days of wrap-up responsibilities. Absentee voting, now ever prevalent – is additionally labor intensive; as each and every ballot is handled physically and administered online more than a half-dozen times. Every election requires months of time-consuming, multi deadline, reams of paperwork - administration.

The proposed March election would require peak administration in the concurrently peak time of year for most Clerks/municipalities; posing direct conflict with Municipal Clerks other State-mandated functions and duties. This period's responsibilities are not limited to but typically include:

- Annual municipal Budget season, Town Report preparation season, Annual Town Meeting preparation; local/school district budget/elections preparation and administration, poverty tax abatement/tax foreclosure season, municipal officer Annual Organizational meeting preparation, substantial dog, fish licensing & snowmobile registration season. Then there is the regular day-to-day responsibilities of municipal clerks: municipal officials support, meetings/agenda/minutes, public notices/hearings, various licensing/permitting/registrations, petition certification, birth/marriage/death vital records, administering oaths, etc., and for the many Maine Clerks wearing multiple hats - peak Welfare/General Assistance season.
- For many Clerk/Registrars, it would a great difficulty during regular full-time business hours - to add the labor-intensive demands of another election during this particularly challenging period.

Clerk responsibilities including administration of elections, requires specialty training, adding this election would create unsubstantiated burden on Clerks and municipalities; that do not have the option of unfunded/untrained additional staffing.

Bear in mind most municipalities have slashed ancillary/support staffing, consolidated multi-job descriptions > in mindfulness of ever rising mil rates. The work municipal personnel perform are State-mandated services in State-mandated positions.

Clerk/Registrars are already required to work weekends in even numbered years for political party caucuses for 3 and sometimes more political parties. Administering another election would require budgeting for the required evening hours and personnel to facilitate election day mobilization and facilitation. There is not time or budget to support the substantial additional expense related to this proposal.

This topic is a political party concern; not a state or municipal mandate nor should it be the fiscal responsibility of the taxpayers at the state or municipal level - it should be funded and sorted out by the political parties and caucus organizers.

I appreciate your every consideration in opposing this unsupported, burdensome, and unfunded proposed legislation.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Christine Keller  
Maine Taxpayer  
Maine Municipal Clerk/Registrar