



129th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2019

Legislative Document

No. 374

H.P. 283

House of Representatives, January 24, 2019

**RESOLUTION, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of
Maine To Require That Signatures on a Direct Initiative of
Legislation Come from Each State Senatorial District**

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

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "R B. Hunt".

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative STEWART of Presque Isle.
Cosponsored by Representative STETKIS of Canaan and
Representatives: ANDREWS of Paris, DeVEAU of Caribou, DILLINGHAM of Oxford,
HEAD of Bethel, KINNEY of Knox, MILLETT of Waterford, WADSWORTH of Hiram.

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

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

30 "Do you favor amending the Constitution of Maine to require that
31 signatures on direct initiative petitions come from voters from each state
32 senatorial district?"

33 The legal voters of each city, town and plantation shall vote by ballot on this question
34 and designate their choice by a cross or check mark placed within the corresponding
35 square below the word "Yes" or "No." The ballots must be received, sorted, counted and
36 declared in open ward, town and plantation meetings and returns made to the Secretary of
37 State in the same manner as votes for members of the Legislature. The Governor shall
38 review the returns. If it appears that a majority of the legal votes are cast in favor of the
39 amendment, the Governor shall proclaim that fact without delay and the amendment
40 becomes part of the Constitution of Maine on March 1, 2020.

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

4 **SUMMARY**

5 This resolution proposes to amend the Constitution of Maine to require that the
6 signatures on a petition to directly initiate legislation be of voters from each of the State's
7 senate districts and that the number of signatures from each senate district be not less than
8 10% of the total votes for Governor cast in that senate district in the previous
9 gubernatorial election. The resolution provides that, if the required votes are cast in favor
10 of the proposed amendment to the Constitution, the proposed amendment becomes part of
11 the Constitution on March 1, 2020 instead of on the date of the Governor's proclamation.