

EASY-TO-READ VOTER GUIDE

MAINE

Referendum Election



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November 7, 2017



**LEAGUE OF
WOMEN VOTERS®
OF MAINE
EDUCATION FUND**



About This Guide



The League of Women Voters of Maine Education Fund produced this voter guide about the 2017 Referendum Election.

Maine voters will see three kinds of questions on their ballot:

- Citizen Initiative
- Bond Issue
- Constitutional Amendment

The Voter Guide provides information on both sides of an issue and does not endorse any ballot question.

The explanations of ballot and bond questions do not express the views of the League of Women Voters of Maine Education Fund or any of our distribution partners including any of the schools, nonprofit organizations, or agencies.



Questions & Copies of this Guide

If you have questions, call 1-888-207-1839 or email us at voterguide@lwwme.org

The text is online at www.lwwme.org



Why Vote?



Why vote?

You can help make important changes in the way your town, state, and country are governed.



Is my vote private?

Yes, your vote is private. No one will know how you vote unless you tell them.



Who can vote?

You must first register to vote.

You can **vote** in Maine if you are:

- A citizen of the United States
- A resident of Maine
- Age 18 or older



What will I be voting for?

On Election Day, you may vote Yes or No about whether Maine should:

(see more on pages 11-17).

- Create a new law
- Borrow money
- Amend Maine's Constitution



When is Election Day?

Election Day is **Tuesday, November 7, 2017.**



Registering to Vote

★ How do I register to vote?

You can register to vote in Maine if you are:

- An 18-year-old citizen of the United States residing in Maine
- A 17-year-old citizen who will turn 18 by Election Day
- Convicted of a crime or in jail. If you are in jail, you register to vote in the town where you lived before going to jail and vote by absentee ballot.
- Homeless

You can register to vote in Maine:

- In person at a voter registration drive or Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) office by Tuesday, October 10, 2017
- In person at your city or town hall up to Election Day
- In person at your voting place on Election Day
- By mail, which must be received by your city or town clerk by Tuesday, October 17, 2017. Follow complete instructions on the Voter Registration Card.

You must fill out a Voter Registration Card (see page 5):

- Complete the front and back of the card.
- Sign and date the card.
- You do not have to join a political party to vote. If you do not want to join a political party, check "Unenrolled" on the registration card.
- For detailed instructions, go to:


<http://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/voter-info/voterguide.html>

★ What is a political party?

- A political party is a group of people who share similar ideas about how the government should work.
- When you register to vote, you can join a political party if you want. It is free. You can change your party registration.
- Examples of political parties include Democratic, Libertarian, Maine Green Independent, and Republican.

Voter Registration Card

★ Voter Registration Card Example

MAINE VOTER REGISTRATION APPLICATION			PARTY AFFILIATION	
 Federally required questions:			<input type="checkbox"/> Democratic <input type="checkbox"/> Green Independent <input type="checkbox"/> Libertarian <input type="checkbox"/> Republican <input type="checkbox"/> Other qualifying party: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Unenrolled (no party choice)	
♦ Are you a citizen of the United States of America? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO ♦ Will you be 18 years of age on or before Election Day? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If you checked "no" in response to either of these questions, do not complete this form. You must be a U.S. citizen in order to vote.				
LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	MIDDLE NAME	DATE OF BIRTH MM / DD / YYYY	
CURRENT RESIDENCE ADDRESS (Physical address where you live)				
STREET NAME AND NUMBER, NOT A P.O. BOX			CITY, TOWN, PLANTATION OR TOWNSHIP	
CURRENT MAILING ADDRESS (Complete if different from above address)				
STREET NAME AND NUMBER, OR P.O. BOX, etc.			CITY/TOWN	ZIP CODE
Have you previously been registered to vote? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If the answer is "yes" provide address of previous registration below.				TELEPHONE (Optional)
CITY/TOWN	COUNTY	STATE		

COMPLETE BOTH SIDES OF THIS CARD - PLEASE PRINT

MAINE VOTER REGISTRATION APPLICATION

- COMPLETE BOTH SIDES OF THIS CARD -

CHANGE OF NAME (Prior legal name, if applicable) LAST _____ FIRST _____ MIDDLE _____ SIGN AND DATE THIS CARD. I certify that all the information I have provided on this form is true. Signature of Applicant on line above _____ Date on line above _____	VOTER ID: By federal law, NEW Maine voters must provide an applicable ID number as follows: 1. Your Maine driver's license/Maine State ID; or 2. The last 4 digits of your Social Security number (ONLY if you don't have a Maine driver's license/Maine State ID); or 3. Write "none" ONLY if you don't have either 1 or 2. _____
---	--

REGISTRAR'S USE ONLY: Date Received: _____ Ward-Precinct: _____

Source of Registration: ☐ In Person ☐ By Mail ☐ Agency ☐ BMV ☐ Voter Registration Drive/3rd Person

Type of Registration:
☐ **NEW Maine Voter Registration** Form of Proof for ID: _____ for Residency: _____
☐ **Change of Existing Voter Registration** (check boxes below) Form of Proof for Residency: _____
☐ Address Change to new municipality ☐ Address Change within municipality ☐ Party Enrollment Change
☐ Name Change ☐ Other Change _____
☐ **Duplicate Application** (no changes made)

INSTRUCTIONS TO VOTERS: Failure to complete this entire application may prevent registration.

- Deliver or mail this completed card to your municipal registrar or to the Division of Elections: #101 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333-0101. This properly completed application must be received by the municipal registrar 21 days or more before an election. **If less than 21 days before an election, you must register in person.**
- **If you are a NEW Maine voter and mail this card,** you must include a photocopy of your Maine driver's license, Maine State ID, or current utility bill, bank statement or government document that shows your name and address.
- For election information, call 207-624-7650 or visit www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/ (rev. 01/17)



Before Voting

★ Where do I go to vote?

To find out where you vote:

- Call your city hall or town office.
- Go to http://www.maine.gov/portal/government/edemocracy/voter_lookup.php
- Vote by absentee ballot (more information on page 8).

★ What time can I vote?

Voting places open between 6:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. on Election Day.
The opening time is not the same for all cities and towns.

All voting places close at 8:00 p.m.

★ How can I avoid the crowds?

Voting places tend to be less crowded from 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. and from 1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

★ What if my name is not on the list?

- The election clerk will help you.
- You may need to register to vote.
- You may be sent to a different voting place.
- You may need to vote a challenged ballot.

★ Do I need an I.D. (Identification Card)?

You should bring your picture I.D. and proof of your address (for example, a driver's license and an electric bill) if:

- You are a first-time voter.
- You have moved.
- You need to register to vote on Election Day.

Don't worry – no eligible voter can be turned away.



At the Voting Place



What will I do at the voting place?

- Check in with the election clerk. Give your your name and address.
- You will be on the list if you are registered to vote.
- The election clerk will give you a ballot or ballots.
- A ballot is the paper on which you mark your votes.
- You will go into a private voting booth and complete your ballot.
- You will put the ballot in the ballot box or a machine.



What if I need help at the voting place?

Ask an election clerk for help if you have any questions. Election clerks can help you fill out a ballot and give you a new one if you need it. You will not be the only one with questions!



How do I fill out the ballot?

- Each ballot tells you how to mark your choices.
- If you have a question, ask an election clerk.
- You do not have to vote for everything. Only the parts you vote on will count.
- Check your ballot.
- If you make a mistake, you can ask for a new ballot.



What if I can't read the ballot?

- You can get help.
- A friend or a relative can help you. Your helper does not have to be a voter or be old enough to vote.
- An election worker can help you with your ballot.
- Your employer or union official cannot help you vote.
- The ExpressVote system will be available if you want to see a large print ballot or hear a ballot read to you (more on page 8).



Express Voting System



What is ExpressVote?

The ExpressVote ballot-marking device replaced the Vote-By-Phone system. A tabletop unit is shown here.

★ Can I use ExpressVote at my voting place?

- Tell the election clerk at your voting place you want to use ExpressVote.
- The election clerk will set up the ExpressVote for you to use.

★ How does ExpressVote work?

- ExpressVote has a video display screen and built-in ballot printer.
- The ballot can be seen in large print.
- The ballot can be read to you through headphones that will be provided.

★ You make selections by:

- Touching the screen.
- Using a key pad with different-shaped colored buttons with Braille labels.
- Selecting **green for YES** or **red for NO**.

★ Finishing:

- When you are done, the system prints a ballot marked with your choices.
- Check your printed ballot.
- Put your ballot in the ballot box or machine.

For more information on ExpressVote, go to

<http://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/voter-info/accessiblevoting.html>



Absentee Ballots



What is absentee voting?

- You can vote at home or at your city or town clerk's office prior to Election Day.
- If you are registered to vote, you can ask for an absentee ballot. You must do so by the Thursday before the election, November 2, 2017.



How do I get an absentee ballot?

- Ask for an absentee ballot from your city or town office. Absentee ballots are usually available 30 days before the election.
- Request an absentee ballot online from the Division of Elections at <http://www.maine.gov/cgi-bin/online/AbsenteeBallot/index.pl>
- You can also ask for an absentee ballot for an immediate family member. The city hall or town office will tell you who is considered an immediate family member.



What do I do with my absentee ballot?

- Fill out the ballot. Remember, you don't have to vote on every question. It is okay to leave questions blank.
- Mail or deliver it to your city or town clerk (*must be received by 8:00 p.m. on Election Day*).



How do I request an absentee ballot after the Thursday before the election?

You must complete a special application for one of these reasons:

- You will be out of town unexpectedly all day on Election Day.
- You have a disability.
- You live on an island and are unable to get to the voting place on Election Day.
- You have an illness and cannot leave home or treatment facility.

Your city or town clerk must receive your absentee ballot by 8:00 p.m. on Election Day!



More Information

★ How do I find my city or town clerk?

You can find the address and phone number for your city or town clerk at:
<http://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/munic.html>

★ You can also contact:

Office of the Secretary of State
Division of Elections
101 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0101

Phone: 207-624-7650

Email: cec.elections@maine.gov

Website: <http://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/index.html>

★ How can I see the ballot before the election?

You can print it from the website:

http://www.maine.gov/portal/government/edemocracy/voter_lookup.php

★ For more Maine ballot details

Go to the Citizen's Guide for the Referendum Election at:

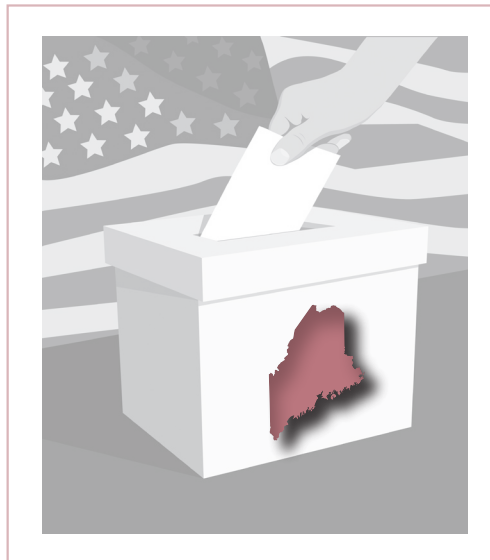
<http://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/upcoming/index.html>



Citizen Initiatives

★ What is a Citizen Initiative?

- Any Maine registered voter can create a citizen initiative, which is a proposed law.
- The voter must submit an application. It has to include the full text of the proposed law.
- If the application is approved, a petition form is created by the Secretary of State. The petition needs to be signed by Maine voters.
- In 2017, the petition must have 61,123 valid signatures to be put on the ballot (10% of the total votes for Governor in the 2014 election).
- Before the initiative is placed on the ballot, the Maine legislature has the chance to pass the proposed law.
- If the legislature does not pass the law, the initiative is placed on the ballot. Then Maine citizens will vote for or against the proposed law.



1

BALLOT QUESTION 1: Citizen Initiative

An Act To Allow Slot Machines or a Casino in York County

“Do you want to allow a certain company to operate table games and/or slot machines in York County, subject to state and local approval, with part of the profits going to the specific programs described in the initiative?”

What this question means:

This would allow gambling in York County. Part of the proceeds would benefit certain state programs.



Argument for **YES**:

- A casino may provide more jobs and economic growth in York County.
- The State of Maine and York County will receive income from gambling.
- The income will supplement harness racing purses and support education, veterans' assistance, and other state or county programs.



Argument for **NO**:

- The cost of town services like fire-fighters and police may go up.
- The problem of crime may increase.
- The problem of gambling addiction may increase and result in family and social problems.
- A casino in York County may compete with gambling facilities in other areas of the state, such as Bangor and Oxford County.
- The opportunity to develop the casino is limited to one specific company.

2

BALLOT QUESTION 2: Citizen Initiative

An Act To Enhance Access to Affordable Health Care

“Do you want Maine to expand Medicaid to provide healthcare coverage for qualified adults under age 65 with incomes at or below 138% of the federal poverty level, which in 2017 means \$16,643 for a single person and \$22,412 for a family of two?”

What this question means:

This law would expand Medicaid services for low-income adults. Most of the costs will be paid by the federal government.



Argument for **YES**:

- 70,000 more Mainers will have healthcare.
- In 2020, federal taxes would pay 90% and Maine taxes would pay 10% of the cost.
- Maine taxpayers are already paying for Medicaid expansion in other states. We should also get the benefits.
- It will provide preventative care and screenings which will reduce the number of people using the emergency room.
- It will decrease healthcare costs, making Maine more attractive to businesses.
- The expansion would create 3,000 new jobs in Maine.



Argument for **NO**:

- Medicaid is a government funded program that is already large enough.
- Over time, the federal government may reduce the portion it pays. Maine would then have to pay a larger portion of the cost.
- If health care is free, more people will use it, which will increase costs.
- Medicaid is broken and needs to be fixed.
- Mainers at this income level should get private insurance.



Bond Information

★ What is a Bond?

- The State of Maine borrows money by issuing bonds.
- The State pays interest on the amount it borrows.
- The people must vote on the ballot to approve a bond issued by the State of Maine.
- If the voters approve the bond, the treasurer sells the bond to fund the projects. These projects might include roads, bridges, schools, clean water, and research.
- The State pays back the amount it borrows plus interest within a fixed time period (usually ten years).

★ How does a Bond work?

As a citizen, you get to choose what projects the state will fund by voting for or against a bond issue.

★ How does passing these Bonds impact Maine?

- The state's total budget for next year is nearly \$3.54 billion.
- The total increase in Maine's debt if the bond issue passes would be \$134 million.
- The state of Maine currently has \$548 million in outstanding debt.
- Maine's debt is 2.87% of personal income. The national average is about 2.6%.
- Maine's most recent bonds were given a national rating as "stable."

★ For more Maine Bond details

Click on the Citizen's Guide to the Referendum Election at
<http://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/upcoming/index.html>

3

BALLOT QUESTION 3: Bond Issue***An Act To Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Improve Highways, Bridges and Multimodal Facilities and Upgrade Municipal Culverts***

“Do you favor a \$105,000,000 bond issue for construction, reconstruction and rehabilitation of highways and bridges and for facilities or equipment related to ports, harbors, marine transportation, freight and passenger railroads, aviation, transit and bicycle and pedestrian trails, to be used to match an estimated \$137,000,000 in federal and other funds, and for the upgrade of municipal culverts at stream crossings?”

What this question means:

The state would borrow money to pay for construction of transportation projects. More money would come from the federal government and other sources.

**Argument for YES:**

- If Maine agrees to borrow the \$105 million, our share will be matched by \$137 million in federal and other funds.
- It will improve highways, bridges and other transportation in Maine.
- It may make our roads and bridges safer.
- These improvements may benefit the Maine economy.
- Interest rates are at an historic low. This means that borrowing now will cost less than it might in the future.

**Argument for NO:**

- Maine would add \$105 million to its debt.
- It will cost a total of \$134 million in principal and interest over ten years to repay the money.
- Other projects may be more worthy of the state's money.



Constitutional Amendment

★ What is a Constitutional Amendment?

- Constitutional amendments originate in the legislature.
- The Maine Constitution is the highest law of the state.
- Since it is so important, it cannot be changed without approval of the people by voting.
- Constitutional amendments are first voted on by the legislature. If two-thirds of the House and two-thirds of the Senate approve the amendment, it is put on the ballot for voters' approval. If a majority of voters approve the amendment, it becomes part of the Maine Constitution.
- There is one constitutional amendment on the Maine ballot. The proposed amendment is about the pension system for employees of the State of Maine.



4

BALLOT QUESTION 4: Constitutional Amendment

Resolution, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine To Reduce Volatility in State Pension Funding Requirements Caused by the Financial Markets

“Do you favor amending the Constitution of Maine to reduce volatility in state pension funding requirements caused by the financial markets by increasing the length of time over which experience losses are amortized from 10 years to 20 years, in line with pension industry standards?”

What this question means:

This constitutional amendment would make changes to the state pension system. This would allow investment losses to be spread out over a longer period.



Argument for **YES**:

- A longer period can help reduce the ups and downs of investments.
- Most state pension plans use a 20-year time frame. Maine will then be in line with the industry standard.
- The financial industry has changed a lot since 1995 when the 10-year time limit was created.



Argument for **NO**:

- Keeping with a 10-year time frame prevents the fund from making risky investments.
- The 10-year time frame was only added to the Constitution in 1995. It should not be amended again so soon.



Thank You

Thank you

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About LWVME



League of Women Voters of Maine

Phone 207-622-0256

Website www.lwvme.org

The League of Women Voters of Maine promotes and encourages informed and active participation in government through education and advocacy. We never support or oppose any political party or candidate.

League of Women Voters of Maine Education Fund is a nonpartisan, nonprofit, public-policy educational organization. It builds citizen participation in the democratic process, studies key community issues at all government levels in an unbiased manner, and enables people to seek positive solutions to public policy issues through education and conflict management.



Visit our Facebook page
www.facebook.com/LWVME



And our Twitter feed @LWVME
<https://twitter.com/LWVME>

★ Join the League of Women Voters of Maine!

Since women gained the right to vote in 1920, we have educated voters to register and vote. We invite you to become a part of this organization, which is rich in history and accomplishments.

The League of Women Voters of Maine is one of the most respected groups directly involved in keeping citizens engaged in local, state, and national government.

Join online at: www.lwvme.org/join.html to pay by credit card or PayPal. Or mail your contact information and a check to:

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Available membership categories: \$55 one member, \$85 two members in the same household, \$25 for students and first-time members, and \$100 for mentors whose dues support discounted memberships for others. Dues are not tax deductible.