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An Act To Allow School Budget Validation Referenda To Be Held on a Saturday

Emergency preamble. Whereas, acts and resolves of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

Whereas, current law prohibits a municipality from conducting a school budget validation referendum on a Saturday; and

Whereas, many municipalities schedule and hold referendum questions on a Saturday as a matter of custom or historical tradition; and

Whereas, the residents of a municipality and their elected leaders are most qualified to determine which day of the week may be best suited for holding any referendum; and

Whereas, in some cases the provisions of a municipal charter may effectively require a municipal referendum to be conducted on a Saturday; and

Whereas, the 2009 school budget validation referenda around the State will be conducted prior to the adjournment of this Legislature; and

Whereas, in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now, therefore,

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 20-A MRS §1486, sub-§2, as amended by PL 2007, c. 668, §19, is further amended to read:

2. Validation referendum procedures. The budget validation referendum must be held on or before the 14th calendar day following the scheduled date of the regional school unit budget meeting. The referendum may not be held on a Saturday, Sunday or legal holiday. The vote at referendum is for the purpose of approving or rejecting the total regional school unit budget approved at the regional school unit budget meeting. The regional school unit board shall provide printed information to be displayed at polling places to assist voters in voting. That information is limited to the total amounts proposed by the regional school unit board for each cost center summary budget category article, the amount approved at the regional school unit budget meeting, a summary of the total authorized expenditures and, if applicable because of action on an article under section 15690, subsection 3, paragraph A, a statement that the amount approved at the regional school unit budget meeting includes locally raised funds that exceed the maximum state and local spending target pursuant to section 15671-A, subsection 5.

Emergency clause. In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this legislation takes effect when approved.

PUBLIC Law, Chapter 98 LD 698, item 1, 124th Maine State Legislature
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Effective May 8, 2009.