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An Act To Provide Notice to the General Public about Proposed Initiative Questions

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

Whereas, this legislation needs to take effect before the expiration of the 90-day period in order to provide the public with its benefits in advance of the next statewide election; 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. 21-A MRSA §906, sub-§6, ¶C-1 is enacted to read:

C-1. The Secretary of State shall give reasonable notice to the general public of the proposed initiative question and provide a period of no less than 30 days for comments from the general public with respect to the accuracy of the proposed initiative question. After accepting and reviewing that commentary, the Secretary of State shall finalize the initiative question.

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

SUMMARY

This bill requires the Secretary of State to provide notice to the general public when the Secretary of State drafts a question that will be on a ballot for a citizen initiative. The bill also requires the Secretary of State to provide a 30-day opportunity for members of the general public to provide comments with respect to the accuracy of the proposed question. After accepting and reviewing all commentary submitted, the Secretary of State would then finalize the initiative question.