127th MAINE LEGISLATURE

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Legislative Document No. 1449

S.P. 552

In Senate, June 23, 2015

An Act To Amend the State Election Laws

Reported by Senator CYRWAY of Kennebec for the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs pursuant to Joint Order 2015, S.P. 551.

HEATHER J.R. PRIEST
Secretary of the Senate
Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 21-A MRSA §783, sub-§5, as enacted by PL 2009, c. 563, §9, is amended to read:

5. **Electronic receipt of absentee ballots.** Authorizing the electronic receipt of an image of voted absentee ballots transmitted by e-mail or fax from uniformed service voters or overseas voters by a method authorized by the Secretary of State.

Sec. 2. 21-A MRSA §809-A, sub-§1-A, as amended by PL 2007, c. 455, §50, is further amended to read:

1-A. **Prohibition not applicable.** For the purpose of providing a voting system equipped for individuals with disabilities as required by section 812-A, subsection 1 and the federal Help America Vote Act of 2002, Public Law 107-252, the prohibition in subsection 1 does not apply to the connection of individual voting devices to a central server using a wired, point-to-point telephone connection that is not Internet-enabled when the central server is operated or managed by the Secretary of State.

Sec. 3. 21-A MRSA §809-A, sub-§3, as enacted by PL 2003, c. 651, §4, is amended to read:

3. **Internet voting.** Use of the Internet for the casting of votes online is prohibited. This subsection does not apply to a ballot-marking system or software that is used for voters with disabilities, uniformed service voters or overseas voters to mark a ballot online and securely transmit the marked ballot to a central server operated or managed by the Secretary of State, as long as the system does not tabulate the votes marked on those ballots.

**SUMMARY**

This bill makes the following changes to the election laws.

1. It allows the Secretary of State to accept voted absentee ballots from uniformed service voters and overseas voters by an electronic means authorized by the Secretary of State.

2. It allows for the connection of individual voting devices to a central server operated or managed by the Secretary of State for voting systems equipped for individuals with disabilities by other than a wired, point-to-point telephone connection.

3. It allows for the use of the Internet to provide a ballot-marking system or software that is used for voters with disabilities, uniformed service voters or overseas voters to mark a ballot and transmit the marked ballot online, as long as the system or software does not tabulate the ballots or transmit the ballot tabulations online.