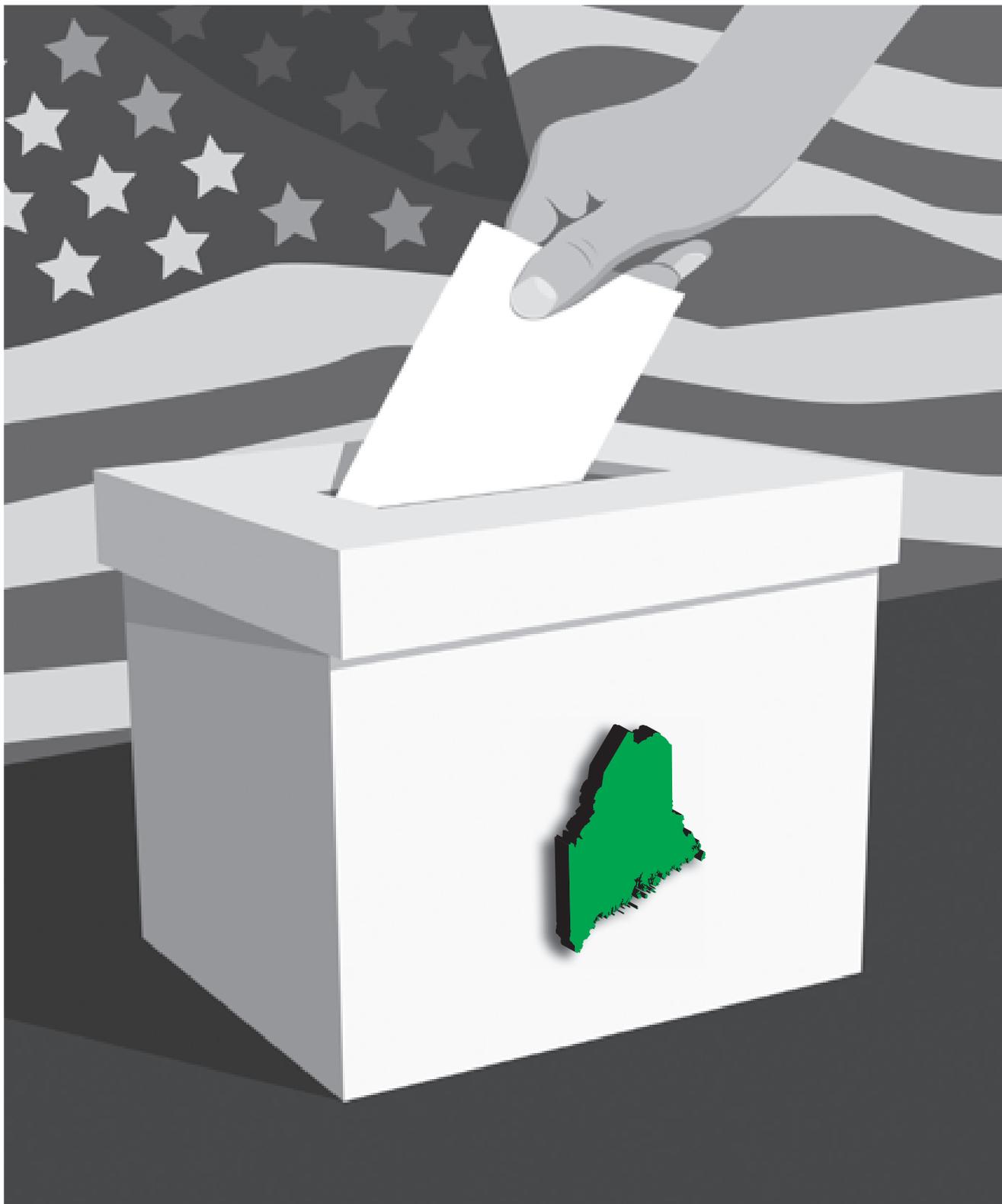


Easy-to-Read Voter Guide

Maine Referendum Election: November 8, 2011



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About this guide



The League of Women Voters produced this 2011 Easy-to-Read Voter Guide. We printed and gave away 25,000 copies in Maine. Literacy Volunteers of Maine helped make the guide easy to read.

The ballot questions are listed in the Guide:

- As you will read them on the ballot
- Easier version of the question
- The reasons for voting YES or NO

We have tried our best to make the Guide accurate. To comment on the Easy-to-Read Voter Guide, please e-mail voterguide@lwvme.org or call 1-888-207-1839.

Questions & copies of this guide

The text is online at www.lwvme.org or www.lvmaine.org.

If you have questions or would like more copies of the Guide, call 1-800-207-8438 or email voterguide@lwvme.org.

To hear someone read the Easy-to-Read Voter Guide on your computer go to www.theiris.org/Airs/MaineAirs/htm. You can ask for a CD by calling 1-800-207-1839.





Voting is important

Why vote?

You can help make important changes in the way your city and state are run. This year is a Referendum Election. Maine voters will see three kinds of questions on their ballot:

- People's Veto
- Citizen Initiative
- Constitutional Amendment

We have listed these questions exactly as you will see them on your ballot. Read page 10 to learn more about Referendum Elections. The ballot questions are explained on pages 11-14.

In some cities and towns, you may also be asked to vote on candidates for local offices or to vote on local issues.

Is my vote private?

Yes, your vote is private.

When is Election Day?

Election Day is **Tuesday, November 8, 2011.**



Who can vote?

You must first register to vote. You can register to vote in Maine if:

- You are age 17 or older. (You have to be 18 by Election Day to vote.)
- You are a citizen of the United States.
- You live in Maine.



How do I register to vote?

- You must fill out a voter registration card. These boxes must be filled out:
 - You are a U.S. citizen
 - You will be 18 years old on or before the Election Day
- You must write your full legal name, home address (not a P.O. box), date of birth and signature.
- Some people need to keep their address private for safety. You can keep your address private by contacting the Secretary of State's office at 207-624-7650.
- When you register for the first time, bring an I.D. or a utility bill that shows your name and address.

★ When can I register to vote?

You can register to vote anytime, even on Election Day.

★ Where do I register to vote?

You can register to vote:

- By mail. Your completed registration card needs to be received by your City Clerk's office by October 18, 2011.
- In person at your town office or city hall anytime, even on Election Day.
- At any Motor Vehicle branch office by October 11, 2011.
- At voting places on Election Day.
- Bring an ID and proof of where you live.

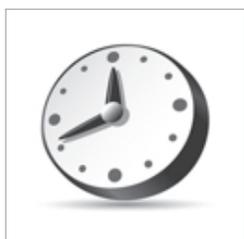
★ What is a political party?

- A **political party** is a group of people who share the same ideas about how the government should work.
- When you register to vote, you can join a political party. It is free. You may also change your party registration.
- Examples of political parties include: Democratic, Maine Green Independent, and Republican.
- You do not have to join a party to vote.



Where do I go to vote?

- Every town and city has its own place where people can vote. These are called **voting places, polls, or polling places**.
- Call your town office or city hall to find out where you should go. (See page 9 for more information.)
- Voting places open between **6:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.** The opening time is not the same for all voting places.
- All voting places close at **8:00 p.m.**



What will I do at the voting place?

- When you get to your voting place, you will need to tell the election clerk your name. Your name will be on a list.
- The election clerk will give you a ballot.
- You will go into a private voting booth and complete your ballot.
- You will put the ballot in the ballot box.



Do I need an I.D.?

- If you are a first-time voter, or you have moved, you should bring your I.D. and proof of your address.
- Don't worry. Anyone who is eligible to vote cannot be turned away.



How do I fill out the ballot?



- A **ballot** is the piece of paper where you mark your vote.
- Different towns and cities use different types of ballots.
- Each ballot tells you how to mark your choices.
- If you have a question, ask an election clerk.
- Check your ballot.
- You do not have to vote on everything. Only the parts you vote on will count.
- 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.





Other ways to vote: At the voting place or absentee



Is there another way to vote at the voting place?



- Yes. **Accessible Voting System (AVS)** lets you vote by phone at the voting place.
- Go to the voting place and tell the election clerk you want to use AVS.
- The election clerk will set up an AVS phone for you to use. You will hear the voting questions. Vote yes or no by pressing keys on the phone.
- A copy of your completed ballot will be faxed to you at the AVS phone.
- You put your ballot in the ballot box.



Do I have to go to the voting place on Election Day to vote?

- No. If you are registered to vote, you can ask for an **absentee ballot**. You must do so by November 3, 2011.
- If you ask for an absentee ballot after November 3rd, you must complete an application. You must give a reason you cannot go to your polling place on Election Day. These are the only reasons that you can choose:

- (1) You will be out of town all day on Election Day.
- (2) You are ill or disabled and cannot leave home.
- (3) You live on an island and cannot get transportation on Election Day.

What is absentee voting?

Absentee voting lets you vote at home and mail your absentee ballot to your town clerk. You can complete an absentee ballot in person at your town office or city hall. The town or city clerk must receive absentee ballots by 8:00 p.m. on Election Day for your vote to count.

How do I get an absentee ballot?

- Ask for an absentee ballot from your town/city hall.
- Request an absentee ballot 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 town/city clerk's 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 answer every question.
- Mail or deliver your ballot to your town or city clerk so it is received by 8 p.m. on Election Day.

How do I find and contact my town or city clerk?

- You can find the address and phone number for your town/city clerk at: www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/munic.htm
- 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: www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/



Things to remember



What if my name is not on the list at the voting place?

- The election clerk will help you.
- You may be sent to a different voting place.
- You may need to register to vote. (See page 5 for more information.)



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. They can also help you use AVS. You will not be the only one with questions!



How can I avoid the crowds?

- Go to the voting place when it is less crowded: 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. or 1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
- You can vote at home with an absentee ballot. Your absentee ballot must get to your town office or city hall before 8:00 p.m. on November 8, 2011.



How do I vote in a referendum election?

In this referendum election, you will vote **YES** or **NO** to questions about:

- Changes to Maine laws
- The creation of new Maine laws
- Changes to the Maine Constitution

1

Ballot question 1:

“Do you want to reject the section of Chapter 399 of the Public Laws of 2011 that requires new voters to register to vote at least two business days prior to an election?”

What this question means:

Do you want to continue to allow voters to register at any time including on Election Day?



Argument for **YES**:

- Continues the tradition of registering on and before Election Day.
- Same-day registration helps bring voters to the polls.
- More than 18,000 voters registered on Election Day during the last election. In 2008, more than 49,000 voters registered on Election Day.
- If you move the week before the election, you can still vote at your new polling place.



Argument for **NO**:

- Gives the town and city clerks more time to process the registration forms.
- Fewer poll workers may be needed on Election Day.
- You may not have to wait so long to vote.

2

Ballot question 2:

Do you want to allow a slot machine facility at a harness racing track in Biddeford or another community within 25 miles of Scarborough Downs, subject to local approval, and at a harness racing track in Washington County, with part of the profits from these facilities going to support specific state and local programs?

What this question means:

Do you want to allow gambling on slot machines at harness racing tracks in the Biddeford area and Washington County?



Argument for **YES**:

- There may be more jobs and economic growth in the Biddeford area and Washington County.
- The new businesses will pay taxes to Biddeford, Calais and the State of Maine
- The State of Maine will receive income from the slot machines to benefit harness racing, the Fund for a Healthy Maine and for other programs.



Argument for **NO**:

- The cost of town services like fire fighters and police officers may go up.
- The problem of crime may increase.
- The problem of domestic violence may increase.
- The problem of gambling addiction may increase.
- Casinos in Biddeford and Calais may compete with gambling facilities in other areas of the state such as Bangor and Oxford County.

3

Ballot question 3:

Do you want to allow a casino with table games and slot machines in Lewiston, with part of the profits going to support specific state and local programs?

What this question means:

Do you want to allow a new place in Lewiston for the public to gamble that could have slot machines and table games like blackjack?



Argument for **YES**:

- There may be more jobs and economic growth in the Lewiston area.
- The new business will pay taxes to the City of Lewiston and the State of Maine.
- The State of Maine will receive income from the slot machines to restore the Androscoggin River, revitalize downtowns throughout the state, provide grants and loans to homes and businesses to convert to clean, renewable energy, and for other programs.



Argument for **NO**:

- The cost of town services like fire fighters and police officers may go up.
- The problem of crime may increase.
- The problem of domestic violence may increase.
- The problem of gambling addiction may increase.
- A casino in Lewiston may compete with gambling facilities in other areas of the state, such as Bangor and Oxford County.

4

Ballot question 4:

Do you favor amending the Constitution of Maine to change the years of redistricting the Maine Legislature, congressional districts and county commissioner districts after 2013 from 2023 and every 10th year thereafter to 2021 and every 10th year thereafter?

What this question means:

Do you want the Legislature to draw new districts for the Legislature, Congress and County Commissioner in 2021 instead of 2023 and every ten years after 2021?



Argument for **YES**:

- The Legislature will draw new voting districts in the same year that new Census data becomes available, instead of two years later. This means that districts will become more equal in population sooner.
- The Maine Constitution will require all redistricting plans to pass the Legislature by a 2/3 majority. This will almost always require support from both major parties.



Argument for **NO**:

- Constitutional amendments are hard to change because they require a 2/3 vote of the Legislature and a majority vote of the people.



Thank you

Published in 2011 by:

League of Women Voters of Maine, www.lwvme.org

Project Coordinator: Sarah Robinson, SCR Contract Services

www.scrcontractservices.com

League of Women Voters of Maine Volunteers:

Martha Dickinson, Polly Ferguson, Ann Luther, Barbara McDade, Anne Schink, Colleen Tucker, Sarah Walton and Jill Ward

Readability: Kathy Kilrain del Rio & Abbie Embry Turner

Literacy Volunteers of Maine, www.lvmaine.org, 1-800-322-5455

Guide Design, Layout and Production:

Danielle Silva, Literacy Volunteers of Greater Saco-Biddeford

Donors:

League of Women Voters of Maine Education Fund

Guide Distribution: Thank you to all of our partners and volunteers, including adult education programs and public libraries across Maine.

Additional Thanks:

Jim Phipps and the staff at The Iris Network for storing guides and recording the audio version on the Maine AIRS program.

Printing:

Alliance Press

EASY-TO-READ VOTER GUIDE



League of Women Voters of Maine

207-622-0256

www.lwvme.org

The League of Women Voters of Maine is a nonpartisan political organization encouraging informed and active participation in government. It influences public policy through education and advocacy. We never support or oppose any political party or candidate.

LWVME is the organization where hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to civic improvement! We have members throughout the state of Maine, with local chapters in the Portland area, in Bath/Brunswick, and in Hancock County.

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. Or mail your contact information and a check for \$55 for one membership, or \$82.50 for two members at the same household to: League of Women Voters of Maine, PO Box 863, Augusta, ME 04332-0863.