

Secretary of State Denies Ballot Certification to Conservative Health Reform Initiative

The Secretary of State's Office announced last week that while four voter-initiated measures will appear on the November 2009 ballot, the measure that would have significantly changed the way health insurance is regulated in the state was not certified as eligible. While more than the required number of signatures were filed, thousands of signatures were found invalid for a variety of reasons and most of the remainder were thrown out because the pages of the proposal attached to the signatures were not in the order required by the law.

Most of the preparation of the measure has been done by the Maine Heritage Policy Center, a conservative think tank. One of the provisions would have allowed Maine citizens to purchase health insurance across state lines, but limited to the other New England states.

One of the four questions certified for the ballot would revise the medical marijuana law to create nonprofit drug dispensaries and a statewide ID card system to protect patients from arrest. The other three ballot questions involve a tax cap and two excise tax initiatives.

The questions now go before the legislature which must either enact them as drafted, or let them go on the ballot.