**MAINE’S 2016 PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATING CAUCUSES**

Maine’s political parties will begin conducting their 2016 presidential nominating caucuses this week, at locations throughout the state, with most of the caucuses slated for this weekend.

The Maine Department of the Secretary of State, which oversees statewide elections, would like to remind citizens that these caucuses are not the same as the primary election, which is slated for June 14. Voters will cast ballots on a variety of elected officials at the primary election, which is administered by the Bureau of Corporations, Elections and Commissions.

The caucus process is administered by Maine’s three recognized political parties: Republican, Democratic and Green Independent. It is not a primary election and its sole purpose is to allow party members to choose delegates for their respective party’s state convention, who will then select delegates for the party’s national convention.

Only those who are enrolled in a party can vote in that party’s caucus. Voters who are not enrolled in a party can register with that party by arriving early on the day of the caucus. However, voters who were enrolled in a party and desired to change their party status to participate in the caucus had to do so by the Feb. 19 deadline.

•The Republican Party’s caucus date is this Saturday, March 5. It will take place at 22 sites throughout the state. To participate, voters must bring a photo ID and go to the designated site for their town or city. Some counties have only one location and others have up to three. To find your local caucus site, visit www.MaineGOP.com/caucus. For more information, visit http://mainegop.com/caucusfaq/.

•The Democratic Party’s caucus date is Sunday, March 6. It will take place in several municipalities across the state. To find your local caucus site, visit http://www.mainedems.org/find-your-caucus For more information on the Democratic Party caucus, visit http://www.mainedems.org/page/caucus-faq

•The Green Independent Party is hosting caucuses on various dates, March 1-19, throughout the state. Visit http://www.mainegreens.org/scheduled\_caucuses?page= for a full listing of sites and more information.