Susan Bulay
Register of Deeds, Penobscot County
LD 1399

LD 1399 An Act to Provide for Remote Notarization

Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary

My name is Susan Bulay and I am the Register of Deeds for Penobscot County and I represented the Registers of Deeds Association on the working group that put forth LD 1399 for your consideration.

I urge you to vote Ought to Pass on this bill. Almost all documents submitted for recording in the several registries of deeds in the State Must be notarized and an incorrect notarization is one of the leading causes of document rejection. We don't like to reject submitted documents, but the signing and notarizing are crucial as the recordings become a permanent public record and we try to ensure that the documents are properly executed to prevent any legal issues arising in future transactions.

Although a notary public is required to complete training before receiving their commission, it seems that over time they forget simple things, like putting in a date or adding their commission expiration or even signing their name . More frequent refresher training through a shortened commission time period and separating out those folks who didn't really pay much attention because they only intended to use their commission to perform a wedding ceremony would be very helpful.

In addition, the sections of the bill that set out guidelines for remote notarization are very important at the registry of deeds. We need clear direction on what to accept and how the certifications should be worded and this bill does that. We realize that remote notarization is very common in other parts of the country and many of our documents are currently prepared and signed out of state. Because we are a small state, we cannot be left behind in this area and we need to participate in remote notarization to enable our citizens to take advantage of whatever low mortgage rates they can find.

I consider myself to be conservative and to not seek change just to change. I try to weigh all sides of an issue and seek the answer that is best for the most in the long run. I feel that LD 1399 meet these criteria and myself and the other Registers of Deeds urge you to vote Ought to Pass on this legislation.

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