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Testimony Opposed to LD 34 An Act to Require a Person to Show Photographic Identification for the Purpose of Voting

Greetings Senator Hickman and Representative Supica and Honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs. My name is Bridget Quinn, and I am an Associate State Director of Advocacy and Outreach for AARP Maine.

AARP is the nation's largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering Americans 50 and older to choose how they live as they age. On behalf of our more than 200,000 members statewide, thank you for the opportunity to share testimony. Today I am here to testify in opposition of LD 34.

AARP has been fighting to protect the rights of all Americans 50+ to vote freely, easily and safely for more than 35 years. We have a long history of *non-partisan* voter education and engagement, in addition to fair and straightforward election procedures that help increase the participation of voters aged 50 and older. LD34 concerns us because requiring photographic identification may inadvertently create barriers to voting by complicating the voting process for voters who may no longer have a photo ID because they no longer have a license, or other identifying document, particularly older adults and individuals living in very remote parts of the state

AARP opposes strict photo identification requirements because these laws threaten to reduce legitimate citizen participation – particularly by older voters – in the electoral process, without increasing the security of elections. LD 34's photo identification requirements also risk an adverse impact to voters living in nursing homes, assisted living facilities, or congregate settings. Many of these voters live with limited incomes and/or disabilities, and they may find it difficult to acquire the necessary identification to vote. Additionally, there are no provisions in LD 34 to educate voters on these changes, which could catch many off-guard, leaving them unable to exercise their constitutional right.

AARP supports your goals of secure elections, but changes to the voting process should ensure increased access, fairness, and simplicity; not added barriers and complexity.

Thank you for your time, and we urge the members of this committee to oppose LD 34. If you have questions for me, I can be reached at bquinn@aarp.org or at 207-272-8563.

Thank you,
Bridget Quinn
Associate State Director of Advocacy and Outreach

