

Amy Smith
Arrowsic ME
Hearing Scheduled for February 3, 2025
LC 234 Eliminate Ranked Choice Voting
Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs
Testimony submitted against LD 234

I write in opposition to LD234

I am among the majority of Maine voters who passed the 2016 referendum to bring Ranked Choice Voting to Maine. And I am among the even larger majority of Maine voters who passed the people's veto in 2018 when the Legislature sought to block implementation of RCV. I am among the many voters who have valued being able to express by choice via RCV in elections since then.

As a voter, I am very pleased to be able to express my ranked support in multi-candidate races. As a citizen, I see the outcome of our elections as much more legitimate knowing that the ultimate winner does indeed have the support of the majority, even when that does not include me.

As someone who served my town as Registrar of Voters for a decade, including during the implementation of RCV, I know that this is not a burdensome exercise – for either voters or for election officials.

And as a political scientist who has studied conflict around the world, I am well aware that in divided societies – as ours increasingly is – first-past-the-post elections deepen polarization and further erode legitimacy of government.

We need to do all we can to strengthen our electoral systems in ways that increase the legitimacy of government. The people of Maine did their part. We recognized that first-past-the-post elections were not serving us well, that we were repeatedly winding up with elected leaders who had only minority support. It was a very successful campaign to get RCV in Maine. The need for a people's veto, though unfortunate, only demonstrated that support further. RCV is working well for our democracy. It's what we voted for. Do not repeal us.