



Testimony of the Maine Municipal Association

In Opposition To

LD 53 - An Act to Establish the November General Election Day as a State Holiday

February 10, 2025

Senator Baldacci, Representative Salisbury and members of the State and Local Government Committee, my name is Rebecca Lambert, and I am providing testimony in opposition to LD 53 on behalf of the Maine Municipal Association's (MMA) elected 70-member Legislative Policy Committee (LPC). For reference, the LPC guides MMA's advocacy efforts and establishes positions on bills of municipal interest.

Municipal officials have shared concern over establishing the November general election as a state holiday for a myriad of reasons. Considering this proposal would be a state holiday, this means employers do not have to honor the holiday and could lead to inconsistencies throughout the state. Further, local leaders have cited potential cost implications associated with a new holiday for both state and local entities and question if the Secretary of State's office would be closed and unable to provide critical support to election workers across the state.

One of our LPC members mentioned the value of having a holiday on Election Day when schools are used as a polling place. It's worth drawing attention to the 131st Legislature who established a working group that studied the use of schools as polling places and seeks reestablishment in the 132nd Legislature. The Veteran & Legal Affairs Committee recently held a public hearing on *LD 13, An Act to Provide Funds Necessary for the Production and Delivery of Election Materials by the Secretary of State and to Reconvene the Working Group to Study Polling Places at Schools*, sponsored by Sen. Craig Hickman (Kennebec County) that would reinstate this working group to study schools as polling places. In her testimony, Secretary of State Shenna Bellows supported the continuation of the working group as they made great progress but could use more time to look at how other states use schools as polling places.

I understand there is an amendment to LD 53 that changes the holiday from a state holiday to a school holiday. This change would alleviate the concerns municipal officials have about increased costs to the state and local governments but should be considered by other interested parties within education.

Thank you for your time and for considering the municipal perspective on this issue.

