



TO: The Honorable Mike Tipping  
The Honorable Sean Faircloth  
Members of the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs

DATE: 3.8.2025

RE: LD 734 - An Act to Promote Voter Registration for Students in Maine's High Schools

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Good morning Senator Tipping, Representative Faircloth, and honorable members of the committee,

My name is Hannah Boyle, and I'm a resident of Veazie. I am testifying in support of LD 734, which seeks to increase voter registration among young people in Maine by embedding registration in schools.

Though I am now a graduate student at the University of Maine, my experiences as an active and civically engaged citizen have been greatly affected by the opportunities I was provided as a teenager. Having worked in the civic/voter engagement space for over five years now, especially with nonpartisan organizations such as the League of Women Voters and the Andrew Goodman Foundation, I have seen first hand just how valuable young people are to our democracy.

High schools are responsible for preparing students for their futures, and that includes helping them understand their role in the democratic process. Students and young people today care deeply about their community and the world, yet only 6% of students are asked to register in high school<sup>1</sup>. In fact, as of September 2024, just 35.6% of eighteen year olds in Maine were registered to vote, which is among the lowest of states with the same voter registration laws<sup>2</sup>. This number is low, and compounded by the fact that rural counties are pre/registering students at *half* the rate of their more urban counterparts<sup>2</sup>.

With a bill like LD 734, schools and educators would be supported in the effort to create a more civically engaged tomorrow, and would be backed by this legislation against potential backlash as they work in a nonpartisan capacity to register students to vote. By providing schools with a Voter Registration Drive Coordinator (VRDC) and by not imposing repercussions against a school that does not participate, LD 734 is beneficial without negatively affecting Maine schools financially or otherwise.

I can speak first hand to the benefit that being registered to vote in my high school had on me. As we turn eighteen, there are many milestones and experiences that are expected of us, but that we are not always provided clear information about. High schools are institutions that allow students to ask questions without fear of judgement or ostracism from those who hold answers. Registering students in this capacity only aids the students in their future endeavors to become civically engaged and community-focused members of our democracy.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify, and for your continued work on behalf of Mainers.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.thecivicscenter.org/why-high-school>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.thecivicscenter.org/blog/virgina-and-maine-young-voter-registration-rates>

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