



Testimony in Support of LD 1360:

“An Act to Preserve Traditional Driver's Licenses and Nondriver Identification Cards”

Senator Nangle, Representative Crafts, and the distinguished members of the Committee on Transportation, my name is Harris Van Pate, and I serve as policy analyst for Maine Policy Institute. Maine Policy is a free market think tank, a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that advocates for individual liberty and economic freedom in Maine. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of LD 1360, “An Act to Preserve Traditional Driver’s Licenses and Nondriver Identification Cards.”

This bill reaffirms Mainers' right to choose identification that does not comply with the federal REAL ID Act of 2005 while ensuring their IDs remain valid for all state purposes.

Maine Policy Institute has consistently advocated against unnecessary federal mandates that infringe on state sovereignty and individual privacy. The REAL ID Act, passed under the pretense of national security, created a de facto national identification system that raises serious concerns around data collection, surveillance, and the long-term expansion of federal authority into areas traditionally managed by states.

Requiring biometric data, centralized databases, and expanded document verification protocols, REAL ID poses risks to the privacy and security of every citizen. Even the Department of Homeland Security’s 2009 Secretary Napolitano has admitted that the REAL ID system was “unrealistic,” “inflexible,” and unquestionably more expensive.¹ States like Maine, which initially rejected the program, were right to be skeptical.

LD 1360 recognizes that many Mainers—particularly senior citizens, those in rural communities, and those with privacy concerns—do not need or want a federally compliant ID. This bill preserves choice by ensuring access to a non-REAL ID option for driver’s licenses and identification cards. It prevents Mainers from being forced into a federalized identification regime simply to satisfy arbitrary documentation rules.

This approach is consistent with the principles of limited government and individual autonomy. It also mirrors actions taken in other states. For example, New Hampshire,² Minnesota,³ and Missouri⁴ have all taken steps to offer non-compliant identification options in response to public demand for privacy-friendly alternatives.

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<https://www.dhs.gov/news/2009/07/15/secretary-napolitanos-testimony-identification-security-reevaluating-real-id-act>

² <https://www.dmv.nh.gov/drivers-licensenon-driver-ids/real-id>

³ https://www.house.mn.gov/hrd/pubs/MNreal_ID.pdf

⁴ <https://dor.mo.gov/driver-license/issuance/real-id/>



In a state where values of independence and self-governance run deep, Mainers deserve access to essential state services and identification without being compelled to share their personal information with the federal government.

For these reasons, Maine Policy Institute strongly supports LD 1360 and urges the Committee to vote “Ought to Pass” on this legislation. Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration.