

Ashley Smith
Belgrade
LD 1666

Dear Senator Hickman, Representative Supica, and members of the joint standing committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs,

My name is Ashley Smith and I am a resident of Belgrade. I am providing this testimony in support of LD 1666. I became a resident of Maine in the summer of 2016 and I distinctly remember how excited I was to participate in an election outside of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for the first time. Obviously, there is always a lot of excitement and anticipation built in to a ballot that includes nominating the POTUS for the next four years. However, it was the referendum that made my heart skip a beat.

These citizen-initiated proposals only solidified my decision to make Maine my home. It became obvious to me, at that time, that the constituents of Maine had elected officials who took in consideration their needs and wants on a state and local level. One of which being voter reform and implementation of instant run off voting. I welcomed the idea whole-heartedly as did a majority of our neighbors and we were so fortunate to once again, become a beacon to the nation.

Ranked Choice Voting encourages people to actually vote for what they believe in and it helps strengthen and boost third parties and views that don't receive enough representation in our communities. This would create space for a wider diversity of thought. Ranked Choice Voting also always ends up with a majority, so there is in fact more legitimacy in the outcome. It is my strong opinion that RCV allows for everyone to participate in more fair elections and will allow more inclusivity on our ballots. Extending this method to our General and Special Elections the offices of Governor, State Senator, and State Representative and to Make Other Changes would be a true reflection of the desires of your constituents.

I urge the committee to support this bill. Thank you for your time and the opportunity to testify!