

## Testimony in Support of LD 1666

TO: The Honorable Craig Hickman, The Honorable Laura Supica, Co-Chairs, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs

FROM: Christine Hart, South Portland

DATE: April 24, 2025

RE: LD 1666 — An Act to Include in the Ranked-choice Election Method for General and Special Elections the Offices of Governor, State Senator and State Representative and to Make Other Related Changes

Dear Senator Hickman, Representative Supica, and members of the Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee,

My name is Christine Hart, and I live in South Portland. I am writing in strong support of LD 1666.

As a voter, I believe one of the most powerful responsibilities we have in a democracy is the right to choose leaders who truly reflect our values and vision for the future. Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) expands that opportunity. It allows us to vote our conscience without fear of “wasting” our vote or unintentionally helping elect someone we disagree with. This is especially important in an era of intense political polarization, where voters often feel trapped in a two-party system that doesn’t fully represent the diversity of perspectives in our communities.

RCV promotes a more inclusive, representative democracy. It encourages candidates to reach beyond their base, to build broader coalitions, and to engage respectfully with voters across the political spectrum. That leads to more substantive campaigns and more responsive leaders. It also opens space for independent and third-party candidates, giving voters more meaningful choices on the ballot.

Mainers have already shown that they support Ranked Choice Voting — not once, but twice at the ballot box. We know how to use it, we trust it, and the data show that over 80% of voters find it easy to understand. Expanding RCV to gubernatorial and state legislative general elections is a logical next step — and one that would bring much-needed clarity and consistency to our election process.

This bill is also an opportunity to reaffirm the will of the people and to modernize our electoral system to better reflect the values of fairness, majority rule, and real choice. I urge the committee to support LD 1666 and to move Maine forward as a national leader in democratic reform.

Thank you for your service and consideration of my testimony.