

Dear Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs,

My name is Margaret MacDonald, and I am a resident of Portland. I am testifying against the bill LD1149, an Act to Require an Individual to Present Photographic Identification for the Purpose of Voting. This is a thinly disguised voter suppression act, enabled via a referendum effort that was imported into Maine—and paid for-- by out of state groups working nationwide to limit access to voting.

Maine has never had a problem with voter fraud. There have been only a handful of proven cases in decades of free and fair elections. LD1149 is a solution in search of a problem—and an expensive solution, the cost of which will fall on Maine taxpayers.

Worse than being a waste of money, it will create needless obstacles for eligible voters to vote. This is a nakedly partisan effort to keep a demographic that tends to vote Democratic from voting. One of those groups is young voters.

I know for a fact, from personal experience, that it will prevent many students from voting. For five years I have managed a student voter registration drive on campuses across southern Maine. We registered over 1000 students. Many of these students do not possess either a driver's license or a state ID. I assured them that they could use their student ID at the polls, and they were deeply relieved to hear that they could do that. This will no longer be the case under LD 1149.

Young people should be encouraged to vote, to begin a lifetime of engagement and civic participation—not driven away! They are the future of democracy.

Personally, I have always used absentee ballots to vote, because it is difficult for me to get to the polls on election day. As have thousands of elderly and disabled voters, as well as rural voters. This will no longer be possible for most of us. This act is really an effort to disable absentee voting, which is a disgrace.

Why are you throwing up roadblocks to voting in a state that has an enviable national reputation for voter turnout and engagement? For fair and unblemished elections? I would genuinely like to know the answer to this question.

Please don't let this bill become law!

Yours,

Margaret MacDonald