

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

From: Erica Rand, Portland Maine

Date: April 30, 2025

Subject: Testimony in support of LD 1787, *An Act to Strengthen the Maine Clean Election Act*.

My name is Erica Rand. I live in Portland, Maine.

I am here on April 30th 2025 to testify in favor of LD 1787, *An Act to Strengthen the Maine Clean Election Act*. I support the bill for a number of reasons. I will name three. First, I want to be confident that District Attorneys, Sheriffs, and County Commissioners are not, consciously or unconsciously, feeling obligated to stakeholders who funded their election. I don't presume that people elected *will* favor those who help pay for them to get into office, but I don't want it to be an issue. Second, Clean Elections allows people to run for office who don't have a lot of money themselves—or connections to people and organizations that do. I want a chance to choose among *all* contenders who have a vision of the good that they can do, not only people with affluent lives or connections.

Finally, I want to note personally that as a teacher of young people just getting to voting age, I want them to get excited about voting in state and local elections. The more we have races with Clean-Election candidates, the more we have races with a diversity of candidates and opinions to think about. To me, that's Democracy! Thank you for the opportunity to share my views.