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Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony on this bill. I am writing today to express my strong opposition to the proposed legislation that would impose new restrictions on voting access in Maine. This bill is not a serious attempt to improve election integrity—it is a bad faith effort to undermine civic participation in governance. It does not reflect the values of our state or the needs of our people. In fact, it runs directly counter to what Maine needs right now: policies that encourage broader engagement in the democratic process, not ones that discourage it.

This proposal targets key elements of our electoral system that have worked well for years. It would impose burdensome photo ID requirements that exclude student and tribal IDs, limit absentee voting options, and make it harder for voters—especially seniors, rural residents, and people with disabilities—to cast their ballots. Repealing ongoing absentee voting and limiting dropboxes will not make elections more secure, but it will certainly make them less accessible. These changes strike at the heart of the systems that have helped Maine earn its reputation for fair, secure, and high-turnout elections.

It's important to recognize that the push for this bill appears to come from out-of-state influences, both in terms of its design and its funding. This kind of imported voter suppression strategy may work elsewhere, but it has no place here. Mainers have long valued our local control, our direct democracy, and our ability to trust one another in civic life. Our election systems are already secure, efficient, and trustworthy. The high turnout we enjoy is not a problem to be solved—it is a success to be celebrated and protected.

I urge the committee not to pass this bill outright. Instead, send it to the ballot so Maine voters can make their voices heard and defeat this dangerous proposal. We have a proud tradition of democratic participation in Maine. Let's honor that tradition by rejecting efforts that seek to silence or exclude Mainers from their rightful place in our democracy.