

Jacklyn Stanley
North Yarmouth
LD 38

Testimony Opposing LD38: An Act Requiring Photographic Identification for Voting
To the Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs

Dear Members of the Committee,

My name is Jacklyn Stanley and I live in North Yarmouth, Maine. I'm writing to share my opposition to LD38.

LD38 creates a higher hurdle to voting than we have to register. Voters already have to prove their identity when registering, and -- in acknowledgment of the wide variety of personal circumstances our citizens experience -- our registration process allows many avenues for applicants to prove their eligibility. It is thorough and fair. LD38 adds a new barrier for existing voters who have been safely and legally voting for decades.

The bill says the state will offer a free voter ID card, but it doesn't explain how people are supposed to get one, how the state will make sure everyone knows about it, or whether the process will be easy and accessible. It leaves all of that up to future rulemaking. Without clear plans and funding in place, there's no guarantee that the ID will actually be free in practice or easy for people to get.

On top of that, there's no long on-ramp or outreach strategy included. An implementation date of January 1, 2026 is short-sighted. That means voters who don't already have the right ID might show up at the polls and find out they can't vote. That's not fair, especially to people in rural areas, older adults, people with disabilities, and low-income residents who may not have a driver's license or passport.

I'm also concerned that the bill won't allow college or university IDs as valid proof. That decision shuts out many young voters, even though those IDs often include photos and are issued by official institutions.

Maine has a good track record when it comes to elections. There's no widespread problem with people pretending to be someone else at the polls. Our elections are safe and secure. This bill doesn't solve a real problem, but it creates new ones that could keep eligible voters from casting their ballot. Specifically, LD38 does nothing to support the voters it would impact most. Any bill that introduces new requirements to voting in the name of security must also shoulder the responsibility of mitigating the barriers it creates. By offering no outreach, no description of how the state will ensure access, and no timeline to ensure awareness, LD38 does not meet that standard.

Let's keep voting accessible for all Mainers.

Thank you for your time,
Jacklyn Stanley
North Yarmouth