

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

Date: 2 May, 2025

Re: LD 1149, **An Act to Require an Individual to Present Photographic Identification for the Purpose of Voting**

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

My name is LeAnne Grillo and I live in Harpswell, Maine.

I am testifying in opposition of LD 1149. This bill is unnecessary and suppresses our right to vote. I urge you to vote against it.

While touted as a voter Identification bill, it seeks to severely limit absentee voting and misrepresents what it truly is doing—impacting Mainers ability and right to vote.

Maine is proud of its small towns and local communities and how we take care of each other. When the vast majority of people show up at their polling place, they are greeted by name by a poll worker. People in towns in Maine know each other. To depersonalize our voting process by requiring identification goes against the character of our state. With the possible few exceptions of larger cities (and I would suggest that even in the larger cities they see themselves as a cluster of small towns), this is an unnecessary burden to put on our citizens.

To require people to bring a photo ID to vote is simply voter suppression. It costs money to procure this form of ID. This immediately makes many people unable to secure the documentation necessary and therefore makes them unable to vote. But maybe that's the cruel purpose of this legislation. Making it impossible for "certain types" of people to not be able to vote?

Think about it. The penalties for voter fraud are substantial. It would take a significant number of people voting illegally to impact an election. Why would anyone think this is a good idea and a way to change election outcomes?

The fact that this piece of legislation attacks absentee voting in almost all its forms is another travesty—and the way this legislation is framed is dangerous.

Maine is the oldest state in the country. Older people are the ones who vote in the highest numbers. Why disenfranchise this population? Why make someone who lives on the back side of Katahdin make an extra trek to town to vote when currently they could stop by their Town Office and vote when they were already in town? Or they could have their ballot mailed to them and vote that way. About 45% of Mainers vote absentee. Republicans, Democrats, and Independents. Despite unfounded claims of voter fraud, our elections work great. They are safe and secure. Why mess with success?

Many, many of us vote absentee for many reasons. Why risk not being able to vote if a storm happens, someone gets sick, or in my case, an emergency trip to the deathbed of a dear, dear friend? In the 2023 election, I had decided to vote on Election Day. The day before, I got a call that I needed to get to Florida as soon as possible because my "bestest" friend was dying. Voting matters to me. A lot. I managed to get a flight that just barely allowed me to stop at my polling place where I was greeted by many of my friends and neighbors just as it opened. I swore that I would never risk that anxiety again. Maine's absentee and early voting laws serve us well. Our high voter turnout is a tribute to that.

I urge you in the strongest possible terms to vote **against** LD 1149, a bill that goes against the character of our state and is ill-advised.

I want Maine's people to be able to vote easily. I want people to continue to be proud of the fact that their voice and vote matters and not have to jump through unnecessary hoops to do that.

Again, please vote NO on this bill.