



May 2, 2025

Senator Hickman, Representative Supica, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs;

I join you today on behalf of the Maine Women's Lobby. For over forty years, the Maine Women's Lobby has worked to build gender justice in Maine through legislative advocacy and systems change.

We are here today **in opposition to LD 38 An Act Requiring Photographic Identification for Voting, LD 397 An Act to Require a Voter to Show Photographic Identification, and LD 1149 An Act to Require an Individual to Present Photographic Identification for the Purpose of Voting.**

Women face unique barriers to voting. They are more likely to be care providers in their families, providing the greater share of childcare duties, elder care, or other unpaid care labor. Women are more likely to be in low-wage positions with less flexibility. They are more likely to head single-parent households.

These factors are typically not discussed as part of the traditional barriers to voting, and yet we know that navigating these duties poses very real challenges in the daily lives of Mainers. For those with added barriers - lack of transportation, language or literacy needs, accessibility needs - it becomes that much harder.

Barriers to voting- including, superfluous documentation requirements, less availability for early voting, and more complicated processes for receiving a mail in ballot- just makes voting more difficult for those who already face disproportionate cultural and structural barriers to voting.

Having a photo ID is less common than you may think. Across the US, 18%—or almost 6 million—citizens over the age of 65 do not have photo ID. Among Americans who earn less than \$35,000, 10% do not have a photo ID.¹ In pursuit of in solving a non-issue, this bill makes it even more difficult for the women, especially elderly and low income women, of Maine to participate in their democracy,

Participation is critical to a healthy democracy. Yet, instead of supporting Mainers who vote this bill sets out to create new barriers to access on election day, barriers that will disproportionately impact the women of Maine.

We hope you will vote 'ought not to pass' on LD 38, LD 397 and LD 1149 . Thank you for your time, and I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Lily James, Maine Women's Lobby

¹ Indivisible. *Voter ID 101: The Right to Vote Shouldn't Come With Barriers*. n.d. <https://indivisible.org/resource/voter-id-101-right-vote-shouldnt-come-barriers>