



Maine Conservation Voters

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Testimony of Sarah Woodbury, Legislative Director, Maine Conservation Voters
In Support of LD 590 *“An Act Regarding the Inclusion of Racial and Other Demographic Data from State Agencies in the Legislative Process”*
Before the Committee on State and Local Government
January 21, 2026

Senator Baldacci, Representative Salisbury and distinguished members of the Committee on State and Local Government. My name is Sarah Woodbury and I'm the Legislative Director at Maine Conservation Voters. MCV is a statewide non-profit organization with 13,000 members and supporters building a just, thriving future for all by acting on the climate crisis, protecting the environment, and safeguarding our democracy. Please accept this testimony in support of LD 590 *“An Act Regarding the Inclusion of Racial and Other Demographic Data from State Agencies in the Legislative Process”*.

LD 590 is a crucial step in helping the state to utilize the data and analysis capabilities to support equitable policies, public access and engagement that were laid out under LD 1610, passed in the 130th legislative session, and interdepartmental data sharing laid out under LD 1948 which was passed in the 131st legislative session. LD 590 is the next step by creating the position and funding for the role to oversee this data collection and assessment. This bill provides funding for a legislative analyst position in the Office of Policy and Legal Analysis for a period of 4 years to support the work of the office including half-time during session collecting and assembling demographic data from state agencies related to legislation.

It is important for lawmakers to have this information when they are making decisions on legislation that impacts Mainers lives. This data and analysis will help lawmakers to develop anti-racist policies. While racial impact statements will not end structural racism, much like environmental impact statements, they will help legislators make informed decisions before moving forward with policies that will impact those communities. For instance, when looking at impacts of climate change, this data could be used to highlight how low-income communities and communities of color are disproportionately impacted by climate change. It can be used to help legislators come up with specific solutions to mitigate impacts by utilizing the data to come up with specific solutions, such as pollution reduction or green

infrastructure, rather than generic solutions. For these and many other reasons we urge the committee to vote “ought to pass” on LD 590.

Thank you.